

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD *Newsbulletin*

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School finance referenda get high approval rate from voters

Voters approved school finance referendums at a higher rate than usual at the April 17 consolidated election, giving the thumbs up to 11 of 27 school tax increase referendums (41 percent), and 23 of 36 school bond issues (64 percent). Three districts won approval for both a tax and bond referendum, namely Central District 51, Washington; Kenilworth District 38; and Olympia CUSD 16, Stanford.

The 41 percent success rate for school tax increase propositions ranks well above average for all such propositions advanced since 1989, which have encountered a 36 percent success rate. It also surpasses the success rate seen at the most recent election during April of an odd-numbered year, which was 30 percent in April 2005.

In addition to the three school district winners already mentioned, the list of districts winning tax increases in April included: **Atwood Heights District 125**, Alsip; **Aurora West CUSD 129**; **Franklin Park District 84**; **Hartsburg-Emden CUSD 21**; **Monroe District 70**, Bartonville; **Oak Lawn Community High School District 229**; **Park Ridge-Niles CCSD 64**; and **Wethers-**

More on school board elections, page 3

field CUSD 230, Kewanee.

Bond propositions also were met with an uncommon success rate. The 64 percent passage rate in the April 17 election exceeds the 59 percent success rate for all bond issues (building bonds and working cash propositions combined) proposed since November 1989.

The list of bond issues winning voter approval in April included 17 of 31 building bond proposals, four of five working cash propositions, and both of the so-called funding bond issues earmarked to pay claims against schools. One district, **Vandalia CUSD 203**, passed two bond propositions, one for working cash, and another to pay claims against the district.

The list of districts where bond issues were approved (all of them building bond propositions unless otherwise noted) also includes: **Barrington CUSD 220**; **Atwood-Hammond CUSD 39** (Working Cash); **Batavia CUSD 101**; **Casey-Westfield Community District**

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NSBA presenters

NSBA's annual conference featured many presenters from Illinois, including Bill Schewe, superintendent of SD 45, Dupage County, and Michelle Skinlo, board member of Mattoon CUSD 2, IASB's Illini Division Director. (See page 6)



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Veteran ISBE official picked to be state superintendent

Christopher Koch was chosen by the Illinois State Board of Education on April 19 to serve as the state superintendent of Education. Koch, who has been with ISBE since 1994, had served as interim state superintendent since December, and was selected after a national search. The state superintendent serves as the chief education officer in Illinois for elementary and secondary schools.

The nine-member board unanimously approved Koch's appointment. He replaces Randy Dunn, who left the post last year.

To help fill the position, the state hired the search company of Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates. The Glenview-based firm has been paid \$29,000 of a contract worth a total of \$44,000 allotted for a nationwide search.

Among the priorities for Koch and the state board is to implement the governor's Helping Kids Learn plan, which they say will invest \$10 billion in new education funding over the next four years. The plan would boost funding by \$1.5 billion in Fiscal Year 2008.

Governor reappoints five to state board of education

Gov. Rod Blagojevich recently announced that he has asked five members of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to continue their service through 2011. Those members include board chairman Jesse Ruiz, along with Andrea Brown, David Fields, Edward Geppert, Jr., and Vinni Hall.

The terms of the other four state board members – Dean Clark, Brenda Holmes, Joyce Karon, and Christopher Ward – are due to expire in 2009.

Funding called biggest barrier to providing breakfast at school

Despite growing evidence that students who eat breakfast retain more of what they are taught and do better on tests, funding still stands in the way of implementing more school breakfast programs.

Numerous studies dating back to 1989 demonstrate a link between good breakfast and student performance. That belief was also reinforced in the latest survey of Illinois school districts conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education, in compliance with Public Act 94-981.

The survey results, released in the April 2007 edition of *The Outlook*, published by ISBE's Nutrition Programs, showed that 80 percent of respondents either agree or strongly agree that students benefit from a Breakfast Program (SBP). But limiting school funds topped the list of barriers to implementation. Barriers ranked by school staff from most difficult to least difficult to overcome were:

- Limited school funds
- Bus schedules
- Requires additional staff
- School schedule
- Lack of time before the start of the school day
- Perception that only low-income students eat school breakfast

- Too many state/federal guidelines to follow
- Lack of parental support
- Not enough students to use the program
- Lack of space and facilities

In addition to surveying school staff, ISBE also offered a parent survey. Of the 31 respondents, representing 12 Illinois counties, 84 percent have one or more children in a school with a breakfast program. All respondents who indicated their school did not operate a SBP indicated they would like their school to implement one, and 57 percent of that group indicated their child would eat school breakfast every day if it was offered.

Just 25 percent indicated their child never ate at school because he/she does not like the food.

ISBE conducted the survey electronically and elicited 80 responses from 43 Illinois counties. Of those, 85 percent currently operate a breakfast program.

To view the entire survey, visit the Web site at www.isbe.net/nutrition. Under "What's New," click on Annual Report on School Breakfast Incentives.

RECENT IASB MAILINGS

IASB regularly sends informational materials to all member districts. Here is a list of such items recently mailed.

Delegate Assembly resolution submission form and cover letter, 4/02/07 to board presidents and district superintendents.

Letter announcing New Board Member Packets, 4/11/07 to district superintendents..

Illinois
SCHOOL BOARD
Newsbulletin

**Illinois Association
of School Boards**

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James Russell, Director of Publications
Gary Adkins, Editor
2921 Baker Drive
Springfield, Illinois 62703-5929
(217) 528-9688
One Imperial Place
1 East 22nd Street, Suite 20
Lombard, Illinois 60148-6120
(630) 629-3776
www.iasb.com


**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

Board candidates provide mix of age, experience

Teens run for board member seats

Most high school students worry about prom dates, lunch money and choosing a college. Teenagers Jeremy Cribb, Joe Eberle and Jacob Novar have those same concerns. But all three have had more on their minds this year, with recent high-profile runs for school board seats ranking near the top.

Only one won a seat, however, as Eberle, an 18-year-old Dunlap High School junior, now will have to be concerned about contract agreements with a teacher's union, the 2007-2008 fiscal budget and the feasibility of constructing a new elementary school. He beat out two other hopefuls in the April 17 general election to capture a seat on the **Dunlap CUSD 323** Board of Education.

Teen candidate Jeremy Cribb, a 19-year-old graduate of Waukegan High School, was not elected to a board seat in **Waukegan CUSD 60**. But he did finish fifth in a race for three board seats, ahead of several other candidates, receiving over 1,500 votes.

Finally, Evanston high school senior Jacob Novar had turned a class project into his own candidacy for an

Evanston **District 202** school board seat. Novar said he wanted to give students a voice on the board, but he finished seventh in a race for three open seats.

Three IASB Directors depart

IASB will see three division directors go off the Association's Board of Directors this year as a result of their decision not to run for another term on their local school board.

Those three who chose not to



Fred Blue



Lowell Beggs



Gerald White

run for reelection were: Lowell Beggs, **Amboy CUSD 272**, representing the Northwest Division of IASB; Fred Blue, **Waltham CCSD 185**, representing the Association's Starved Rock Division; and Gerald White, **West Prairie District 103**, who represents the IASB Western Division.

The April 17 elections sadly arrived too late for two northern Illinois board members whose untimely deaths came as a shock to voters. The deaths occurred in Hincley-Big Rock CUSD 429 in DeKalb County and Lake Zurich CUSD 95 in Lake County.

In the Lake Zurich case, school board President Gary W. Robillard won re-election two days after he died of complications from cancer at age 48. Upon hearing of her late husband's victory Laura Robillard said: "He would be very proud and honored and he would be humbled" by the local voters' decision. Robillard was serving in his fourth year as a member of the District 95 school board in Lake Zurich, and was board president. The District 95 school board has 45 days once votes are canvassed to seek applicants and appoint someone to fill Robillard's seat. The seat will be up for election in 2009 as an unexpired two-year term.

Also passing away before the April election was Gerald E. Riedelsperger, 58, of Hincley, who died Sunday, March 11 as the result of a blood clot.

Riedelsperger began serving on the school board in 1991. He was an avid reader and photographer who spent his time and money on cameras, books and education conferences.

REFERENDA *from page 1*

4C; DuPage High School District 88, Villa Park; **Edwardsville CUSD 7**; **Geneva CUSD 304**; **Joliet THSD 204**; **Lake Bluff District 65**; and **Matteson District 159** (to pay claims).

Other districts passing bond propositions: **New Berlin CUSD 16**; **O'Fallon THSD 203**; **Peru Elementary District 124**; **Prairie Hill CCSD 133**, South Beloit; **Saratoga CCSD 60C**, Morris; **South Pekin District 137** (Working Cash); **Sycamore CUSD 427**; **Troy CCSD 30C**, Plainfield; **Virginia CUSD 64** (Working Cash); and **Winnetka District 36**.

The building bond issues approved in April ranged from a \$104.7 million proposition in DuPage High School District 88, Villa Park, to a \$4.4 million

proposition in Barrington CUSD 220. The Villa Park bond issue will be used to pay for extensive repair and renovation work at two separate high schools. The Barrington bond issue will be used to pay for much more modest building repairs.

Besides tax propositions and bond issues, voters approved both of the school district consolidation questions on the ballot. Voters said yes to combining **Barry CUSD 1** with **West Pike CUSD 2**, Kinderhook, both located about 30 miles southeast of Quincy. Voters also gave their approval to joining **Thompsonville District 62** with **Thompsonville Community High School District 112**. Thompsonville is locat-

ed about 10 miles east of West Frankfort in southern Illinois.

In other referendum action, voters authorized the school board to build and equip a new high school in **Maroa-Forsyth CUSD 2**. The vote was strongly in favor, with 81 percent saying yes to the advisory referendum. The proposition was accompanied by an innovative finance mechanism, which features a half-cent sales tax imposed by the village of Forsyth that is expected to raise \$15 million to build the new school. The school district, located adjacent to Decatur, would have 20 years to repay the funds to the village.

Fully 82 percent of voters in Forsyth approved the sales tax.

Officials poised to reform high schools

State Superintendent Christopher Koch attended the Council of Chief State Schools Officer's Secondary School Redesign National Meeting in Austin, Texas, in late March and said he came away impressed with the proven strategies research has uncovered. He particularly praised the consensus that has been reached in regard to effective reading instruction at the high school level.

Koch attended the high school reforms meeting with state board member Joyce Karon, Superintendent Robert Gillum from **Sherrard CUSD 200**, and Principal William Freyman, of Central High School in Champaign.

"This [meeting] is timely given the State Board's approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governor's office, ISBE and the Gates Foundation for an Illinois College and Work Readiness Partnership and having recently attended the High School Coalition meeting in Bloomington. It appears that Illinois is poised to reflect

on high schools in a major way," Koch stated.

He added that substantial concerns remain. Indeed, he noted that according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress:

- Approximately two-thirds of 8th and 12th graders read below the proficient level
- Almost 29 percent of 12th grade public school students scored below the basic level on NAEP 2005 reading assessment (a figure which excludes those students who drop out)
- Trend data with NAEP indicated that the 2005 scores for most 12th graders were lower than those in 1992.
- NAEP figures show that only 11 percent of African Americans and 14 percent of Hispanics are reading at or above the proficient level compared to 37 percent of white 8th graders.

"The good news is that we now have proven strategies about what constitutes effective reading instruction -

including such instruction for students in high school. The not-so-good news is that we have not yet been able to implement those strategies in a systemic or sustainable way," Koch said.

He listed five strategies for effective high school reform: multiple assessments, personalized learning, flexible use of time and structure, professional development for teachers and school leadership, and business and community engagement. "Similarly, the National Association of State Boards of Education in their April 2007 publication, 'From state policy to classroom practice: Improving literacy instruction for all students,' by Mariana Haynes, discusses components of effective literacy instruction which expand on some of these same reform elements," Koch said.

"The vast majority of educators and administrators I have met realize that one-size-fits-all strategies, 'sit and get' professional development, and annual standardized assessments aren't

See **REFORM** on page 5

Plan now to attend June conference on high schools

High school leaders are being urged by organizers at the Illinois Principals Association and the state to make plans now to attend High School Challenge: Rigor + Relevance + Relationships = Results, June 14 and 15 at the Doubletree Hotel in Bloomington.

This conference, sponsored by the Coalition for Illinois High Schools, is made up of 18 organizations, with IASB as a leading member. It is designed for all those involved with and interested in the work of Illinois' high schools, and the aim is to create a statewide awareness of the changing global economy as well as the need to prepare Illinois students for the world in which they will live and work.

Those who should plan to attend include superintendents, principals, teacher leaders, school board mem-

bers, curriculum directors, special education and ELL directors, ROE/ISC staff, RESPRO staff, business leaders and university personnel.

Organizers say conference participants will leave the event with:

- Practical strategies that have improved student performance in Illinois;
- Tools that can be used for data analysis and decision-making;
- Relevant work place trends;
- Research-based strategies that support student learning;
- Information about practical, follow-up support for Illinois high schools.

Featured speakers will include:

- Willard Daggett, President, International Center for Leadership in Education
- Pedro Noguero, Professor of Teach-

ing and Learning at New York University

Selected schools and districts also will be on hand to present information on the strategies they use to improve student achievement/performance and their strategies for closing the achievement gaps between NCLB subgroups.

The workshop fee is \$169 per participant and includes two continental breakfasts, two buffet lunches, sponsored social hour and all materials. Overnight accommodations at a special conference room rate are available from the Doubletree Hotel at **1-309/664-6446**; or from the Eastland Suites at **1-309/662-0000**.

The conference registration form and brochure is available at: http://www.isbe.net/high_school/pdf/bloomington_june.pdf The registration deadline is June 7.

Bush administration announces looser NCLB rules

President George W. Bush recently announced rules changes to loosen federal requirements so that many more disabled children can take new, simplified tests under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) without penalties to schools and school districts. The changes announced on April 4 would triple the number of those students who could take simplified tests, although the new tests would not be as easy as the simplified tests used for the most severely disabled students.

Special education students with the most serious cognitive disabilities already are allowed to take simplified tests under NCLB with the results counting toward a school's annual progress goals. Under the final regulations released by the Bush administration, roughly 20 percent more special education students now could take simplified tests. Roughly 3 percent of all students – or about 30 percent of all students diagnosed with disabilities – will be allowed to be tested on simplified standards.

The new easier tests will be designed for students who are not severely disabled but who are not able to work at grade level due to their disabilities,

because of moderate forms of dyslexia, for example.

The new tests will not be quite as simplified as those previously taken by special education students being exempted from the regular tests, but they will not be as difficult as those given to students in regular education.

“No Child Left Behind has put the needs of students with disabilities front and center, and this regulation helps continue to drive the field forward in developing better tests for students with disabilities,” said U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings.

NCLB requires every student to be tested in math and reading in grades three through eight, and once during high school. If too many students miss annual progress goals, schools face sanctions, such as being required to overhaul their staff. NCLB sanctions can be invoked even when only a single subgroup of students, such as special education students, fall short of benchmarks.

Advocacy groups for students with disabilities have raised concerns about the new testing changes. Some say they are concerned the changes might weaken the promise of NCLB.

“When we set the bar higher, more kids do better than we ever thought they could,” explained Katy Neas, a lobbyist for Easter Seals.

But under pressure from school leaders, federal lawmakers have agreed there needs to be additional flexibility in how special education students are tested and accounted for by NCLB.

Congress is also considering relaxing the testing rules for students learning English, another group of students who often find it hard to keep up with grade-level standards. Federal lawmakers may grant new flexibility in how student progress is measured.

Currently schools and school districts that fall short of progress goals by the narrowest of margins are treated the same as those that badly miss those goals, something lawmakers acknowledge is unfair. Educators had been expressing concern about the problem ever since NCLB became law in 2002.

“It’s frustrating from a superintendent’s view because the community is not getting an accurate picture of the achievement level of our children,” explained Pekin Grade School District 108 Superintendent Don White.

REFORM *from page 4*

going to result in the changes they are seeking for the diversity of their student populations. They also realize that by the time many top-down, non-participatory change strategies reach the classroom they are often dead on arrival.

“Effective school leaders understand that high school students need to feel connected in order to excel and that the demographic representation of their high school population should be distributed in everything high schools do – from advanced placement classes to cheerleading to drama club,” Koch said.

For more information about NASBE’s State Adolescent Literacy network, visit online at www.nasbe.org/Adolescent_Literacy/.

Illinois ASBO seeks executive ASST. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR—EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Full-time, salary position, plus benefits in DeKalb, Illinois (not affiliated with Northern Illinois University). Prerequisites: Experience in association professional development leadership, public school administration, or equivalent experience and education. Must have expertise in the administration and development of professional development programs, possess excellent supervisory/leadership skills, have documented success as an education or association professional development leader, have the ability to function independently, be able to develop an effective professional development staff and professional development committees through a collaborative leadership philosophy, possess strong personal technology skills, be able to travel throughout Illinois when required and be open and adapt easily to change and/or new projects. Job description is available upon request.

Salary and association paid benefits will be negotiable commensurate with experience.

Applicants should mail, fax or e-mail resumes and up to three letters of recommendation to Julie Warner, Illinois ASBO, NIU (IA-103), 108 Carroll Ave., DeKalb, IL 60115; fax: 815-753-9378, jwarner@niu.edu.

San Francisco hosts 67th annual NSBA conference

381 school leaders attend from Illinois

Representatives of school districts from around the country were greeted by windier conditions in the “City by the Bay” than they experienced in 2006 when they visited Chicago.

The 67th National School Boards Association Annual Conference was held April 14-17 at the Moscone Center in San Francisco. Windy conditions along the west coast plus storms in the east played havoc with flights and caused numerous travel delays, as well as chilling conference attendees. The four-day event drew approximately 7,800 board members and school administrators, with exhibitors and guests bringing attendance to nearly 15,000. Illinois had 381 registered attendees.

This year’s NSBA conference featured scores of new board member development sessions and workshops and offered topical program tracks to make it easier to identify the programs most relevant to attendees. For 2007 the national association also added a new hot topics “mini-track” series to provide information on the most-requested issues.

Featured speakers were Nobel Prize winner and former President of South Africa F.W. de Klerk; former President Bill Clinton; actress and children’s author Jamie Lee Curtis; and Erin Gruwell, who spoke at the 2006 Illinois Joint Annual Conference. Gruwell, who was accompanied by her former student Maria Reyes, spoke about her teaching experience on which her book and the movie “Freedom Writers” were based.

During the closing session, **Niles THSD 219** was honored as the recipient of the 19th annual Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network and NSBA Award for outstanding support of arts education. For the first time, the award also came with a cash prize of \$10,000 for the district. (See related story on page 8.)

Michael D. Johnson, IASB executive director, also was recognized dur-



School leaders from Illinois (above) included IASB Directors Tariq Butt, Chicago 299; Barbara Somogyi, Elk Grove CCSD 59; and Joseph Alesandrini, Pekin CHSD 303. IASB’S Executive Director Michael D. Johnson (left) with NSBA’S Secretary/Treasurer Sonny Savoie (in bow tie at right) and other dignitaries at the event.

ing the closing session as chairman of the state association directors who will serve on the NSBA board for the coming year. This is his second year of a three-year commitment to the leadership position.

Pre-conference workshops

IASB staff presented two workshops on Friday prior to the conference. IASB Field Services Director John Cassel paired with Tim Holt, former director of governance team development with the Kentucky School Boards Association, for a half-day workshop, “The Servant-Leadership of Governing Board Teams.” Angie Peifer, IASB’s senior director for board development, and Cathy Talbert, associate executive director, teamed up for a day-long presentation, “Targeting Student Learning and The Key Work of School Boards.”

Along with the regular workshops, a so-called board support professionals’ workshop on Friday featured a second presentation from one Illinois district. **Wheaton Warrenville CUSD 200** consultant and facilitator Don Owen and Administrative Assistant to

the Superintendent, Mary Lou Sender, explored job satisfaction and professional development questions.

In addition, Western Illinois University professors Donna McCaw and Sandra Watkins presented a half-day workshop, “School Board Members: 20 Questions You Need to Ask to Get Student Achievement Results.”

Share the Success panels

Illinois had presenters from 13 districts showcasing their success with panel sessions, including a Saturday presentation by representatives from **Mattoon CUSD 2**, featuring Michelle Skinlo, board president, and IASB’s Illini division director. Others from the district were: Anieta Trame, media coordinator; and Belinda Hendrix, special education teacher. Together they showcased their Ready-to-Read program, which challenges the community of Mattoon to ‘read along’ with the students of Mattoon Middle School.

The book each year is selected by a student reading committee. The feedback to their program has been tremen-

See NSBA on page 7

dous with a marked increase of interest and participation over its five years. This year students passed out 750 copies of their chosen book, *Abduction!* (they passed out 100 books the first year). This community literacy awareness program is funded through donations and grants. Trame said of community members: "They are out there waiting to be involved in your schools" and this program gives them a chance.

Other Share the Success panel sessions included:

- **DeKalb Community Schools 428**, Andy Small, board president; Linell Lasswell, assistant superintendent of curriculum; Paul Beilfuss, superintendent; Christine Sorensen, dean, College of Education, Northern Illinois University; Harold Kafer, dean, College of Visual and Performing Arts, NIU; Sharon Smaldino, partnership office director; and Gina Greenwald, Wright School principal
- **Indian Prairie CUSD 204**, Naperville, Mark Metzger, board member and vice president, IASB
- **Keeneyville ESD 20**, Barbara Toney, consultant, IASB Targeting Achievement Through Governance Program; Carol Auer, superintendent; Carola Majewski, board member; and Tim McHugh, board secretary
- **Lyons District 103**, Jennifer Hoff, teacher, and Janice Bernard, principal
- **Minooka Community High School District 111**, David Middleton, superintendent; Gay Campbell, senior advisor, C&M Communications; Terry Fielden, project manager, Turner Construction Company
- **Northbrook SD 27**, David Kroeze, superintendent; Theresa Fournier, assistant superintendent of personnel and student services; Ann Potter, director of communications
- **Northbrook SD 27**, Debbie Rabishaw, board member; David Kroeze, superintendent; Sally Lane, board member; and Sheila Streets, teacher association president
- **Rich THSD 227**, W.A. "Tony" Brun-



The buffet line at the Illinois reception at NSBA featured a delightful array of entrees and leaders.

son, board vice president; Yvette Moten, board member; Betty Owens, board president; and Howard Hunigan, superintendent

- **SD 45, DuPage County**, Villa Park, Matt Kerr, board secretary; Susan Schwicardi, assistant superintendent; William Schewe, superintendent; and Jay Tovian, business manager
- **Wheaton Warrenville CUSD 200**, Marie Slater, board member and president, IASB; Lori Belha, assistant superintendent for human resources; Lynn Miller, physical education teacher/lead negotiator; Bill Farley, assistant superintendent of business operations; Rosemary Swanson, board vice president; and Gary Catalani, superintendent
- **Wilmington CUSD 209-U**, Wendy Flaherty, vice president, public finance; Kit Dailey, strategic communications advisor; Jay Plese, superintendent; Bill Welch, board president; and Denise Issert, board member
- **Woodstock CUSD 200**, Barbara Banker, director of community services; Ellyn Wrzeski, superintendent; and Paul Meyer, board president

Magna Awards presented

The American School Board Journal honored 33 districts, including two from Illinois, at the Magna Awards Luncheon on Monday.

Woodstock CUSD 200 was one

of five winners in the 5,000 to 20,000 enrollment category for its *School Talk200* community engagement initiative, an award-winning program to deal with burgeoning enrollment growth. The program helped lead the way to voter approval of a referendum last March to build two new schools in the district.

Pembroke CCSD 259, Hopkins Park, received an honorable mention for its program to enrich student learning through a partnership with a local museum and university. Called the Lorenzo R. Smith Archaeological Summer Field School, it was developed by the school board as part of a five-year plan.

School Architecture Exhibition

An Illinois middle school designed by a California architectural firm was the grand prize winner in the Exhibition of School Architecture. The design for Herget Middle School in **Aurora West USD 129** was praised by the judges for its "strong connection to the community" and "respect for national resources" as well as its "great concepts, extremely innovative plan and amazing execution."

The design, prepared by Architecture for Education Incorporated of Pasadena, California, offers a joint use partnership with a local university and the YMCA.

Other Illinois projects on display

See NSBA on page 11

IASB's 2007 Conference planning underway

Districts asked to submit their resolutions for Delegate voting

June 8 is the target mailing deadline for the registration information, including hotel accommodations, for the 2007 Joint Annual Conference.

Conference goers must register by Oct. 12 to get the lowest registration rate of \$315; after that date the cost is \$340. IASB will mail out official badges to conference registrants on Nov. 2. Because of that, no refunds will be issued after Nov. 1.

The conference, which is sponsored by the Illinois Association of School Boards, Illinois Association of School Administrators, and Illinois Association of School Business Officials, will be held Nov. 16-18 in Chicago.

Demand for housing is always very high; therefore, officials recommend that reservations be made as soon as possible. The Fairmont Hotel has returned after a one-year hiatus. Other participating hotels include: Hyatt Regency Chicago (Headquarters), Sheraton Chicago (Headquarters), Chicago City Centre, Chicago Marriott, Embassy Suites, Intercontinental Hotel, Swissotel, and Westin Chicago River

North.

Another approaching conference date is June 20. That's the deadline for local districts to submit their resolutions to be considered for the Delegate Assembly at the fall conference. Information about the resolution process and submission forms was mailed on April 2.

Consideration of the resolutions is a key function of the IASB Delegate Assembly and those resolutions adopted by the delegates become official policy of IASB and help govern the Association in the coming year. Each member district is entitled to one voting member at the Delegate Assembly in November.

The "Share the Success" panel session ideas for the 2007 Joint Annual Conference have been evaluated, and up to 30 proposals will be chosen from among the 69 submitted. School districts that made proposals will receive mail notification of the outcome of panel evaluations.

Association co-chairs for this year's conference are IASB Directors Carol Farnum, of **Aurora East CUSD 131**, and Steve Hawk, of **Erie CUSD 1**.

The 2007 Conference will be the 93rd annual conference of IASB and the 75th joint conference with IASA

and Illinois ASBO.

Both first-timers and veterans will find a full agenda sure to meet their needs, according to conference planners. The Conference this year will offer:

- three general session speakers;
- more than 110 different panel sessions, plus small group discussions in a Carousel of Panels and Sunday morning roundtables;
- more than 225 exhibits of school equipment and services;
- an exhibition of recent school construction and renovation projects;
- a bookstore and food fair;
- the Delegate Assembly where major IASB policies are enacted;
- workshops and training for board secretaries;
- and numerous "networking" events.

Plus, on Friday morning before the Conference opens, the sponsoring organizations offer a variety of full-day and half-day workshops and a tour of Chicago Public Schools.

Questions concerning registration procedures for the conference should be directed to IASB Meetings Management, at ext. 1115 or 1102.

Conference general sessions to show student talent

The IASB/IASA/IASBO Joint Annual Conference has decided to bring back student performance to its general sessions ... but with a new twist.

With the aid of technology, three districts will be selected to showcase their programs ... whether a single performance or their overall arts program ... with DVDs that will be shown for 30 minutes prior to the opening of each general session in 2007.

The decision grew from seeing a DVD presentation prepared for the National School Boards Association

conference in San Francisco where Niles THSD 219 received the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network and NSBA Award for outstanding support of high-quality arts education.

Because of this year's national recognition, the Niles DVD will be shown at the opening general session. DVDs from two additional districts will be needed for the other two sessions for this year. If the program is successful, DVDs will be selected for each of the three sessions in subsequent years.

Selection will be based on both performance and production quality

of the DVD. Districts should submit their entries to IASB, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703, ATTN: Arts DVD no later than September 28, 2007, for review by IASB staff. Districts will be notified by October 19 if they have been selected. All decisions will be final.

Once a district has been selected and showcased, it will not be eligible for the program for four years to give all districts an opportunity to participate.

For specific information on submissions, check the IASB Web site at www.iasb.com.

Glaub retires after 38 years of devoted service to IASB

One of IASB's longest-serving staff members has decided to enjoy life a little more. After nearly 38 years of dedicated service, award-winning communicator Jerry Glaub has chosen to retire from full-time employment, effective May 1.

"Needless to say, we owe Jerry a tremendous debt of gratitude for his many contributions to the Association over the years. We will greatly miss his candid counsel and wonderful sense of humor, not to mention his vast knowledge of Association history," said IASB Executive Director Michael D. Johnson.

"Fortunately, Jerry has agreed to continue working on some specialized writing projects as a consultant so we will still see him several days a month for the foreseeable future," Johnson added.

"IASB will always be in my thoughts, and will have a place in my heart," said Glaub. "I've always enjoyed working at this place, and I feel confident in the direction the Association is headed," he added.

The Association has hired veteran communicator John Lyday as an associate executive director to succeed Glaub. Lyday's involvement with IASB dates back more than 20 years to when he was president of the Illinois Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. He has spoken at the Joint Annual Conference on numerous occasions and has provided communications training at various divisional and statewide meetings.

Lyday's public education communications experience has been with **THSD 214**, Arlington Heights, and



Jerry Glaub

John Lyday

School District U-46, Elgin. He served in corporate communications at Tribune Company for six years; including developing and implementing the first public relations plan for Tribune Education, the company's educational publishing division.

He is an accredited public relations professional and was elected to the College of Fellows of the Public Relations Society of America, a distinction held by only about 450 of PRSA's 20,000 members. For the last several years, he has been a senior counsel for Jackson Jackson & Wagner, a behavioral public relations and management consulting firm founded in 1956. As a consultant, Lyday served as interim director of school and community relations for **St. Charles CUSD 303**.

He joined IASB on March 19 and has spent several weeks working side-by-side with Jerry Glaub to ensure a smooth transition.

"I am extremely pleased to be joining such an excellent organization and I look forward to contributing and continuing to provide great publications and services to the membership that makes up IASB," Lyday said.

NEWS FROM IASB

IASB seeks nominations for next slate of officers

The nominating committee of the Illinois Association of School Boards is now seeking candidates for the offices of president and vice president.

The following criteria will be used by the committee in considering nominees:

- leadership experience and participation in IASB activities
- leadership on a local school board
- involvement with other education related organizations
- other leadership experiences
- special talent or interests of benefit to IASB as now constituted

Nominating forms are due to be submitted by early August, and candidates will be interviewed that same month. A slate of candidates will be presented to the Delegate Assembly meeting in Chicago at the 2007 Joint Annual Conference in November.

To request necessary forms, interested candidates should write: IASB, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703 or phone 217/528-9688, ext. 1102.

Help plan division meetings: attend governing sessions

Want to help plan the program for upcoming dinner meetings in your division? Attend your division governing committee meeting. Get the complete schedule from the IASB calendar of coming events at <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/>.

On the calendar page you can look over All Upcoming Events or search to look only at the list of upcoming IASB division meetings. To view the division meetings list, use the appropriate drop-down menu, headed "Event Type," then highlight your selection, "IASB Division Meetings," and click on "Search."



"That was the best cereal box I've ever read."

N NEWS HEADLINES

Arlington Heights (April 18, *The Daily Herald*) An election win by three Township High School District 214 incumbents shows their message and their method worked, they say. They raised tens of thousands of dollars, raked in several big-name endorsements, and spread word that their defeat could pave the way for a Kansas-style conservative board takeover.

Bloomington (*Pantagraph*, April 2) Reunions and celebrations are especially appropriate this year as Bloomington District 87 celebrates its 150th birthday. A historical video has been produced, along with 6,000 cookies for students to enjoy, and one alum is even planning to attend his first class reunion in 80 years.

Chicago (*Chicago Tribune*, April 15) A homeless advocacy group has withdrawn its three-year-old lawsuit against Chicago District 299, saying the district has made strides to protect the rights of homeless children being displaced by school closings.

Coal City (*Morris Daily Herald*, April 18) The school board of Coal City CUSD 1 recently approved hiring Interquest Detection Canines to conduct searches at district schools. The company says it uses an approach that makes students see it as more a part of the community rather than a hunt.

Des Plaines (*The Daily Herald*, March 20) A flier distributed by the Des Plaines School Board Caucus caused a stir in a race for three seats on the Maine Township High School District 207 board. The teachers' organization president said the flier wrongly implied the union on its own endorsed all caucus candidates.

Freeport (*The Journal-Standard*, Freeport, April 11) A school board write-in candidate in Freeport District 145 recently announced he supports a lawsuit, which originat-

ed there and became the model for similar suits across the state, challenging broad use of the tort immunity fund. The Freeport lawsuit claims the district improperly spent tort fund monies for employee salaries, instead of restricting expenditures to legal and insurance costs, as might be expected under the narrowest interpretation of the tort fund law.

Huntley (*Northwest Herald*, April 11) Environmental experts sealed off part of a service lot at a school on April 10 in connection with a spill of hydraulic fluid that went unreported to District 158 officials for several weeks. The toxic spill, which allegedly leaked from a vehicle from the district's snow-removal contractor, poses no immediate threat to students or employees.

Mannheim (*Pioneer Press*, March 22) Superintendent Bruce Lane of Mannheim District 83 summed up the feelings of many of his area colleagues for reporters when asked what makes a good school board member: "As a superintendent, I make decisions based on what's best for kids," Lane said. "I expect the board to do the same." Area superintendents also agreed that personal agendas have no place in school board business.

Naperville (*The Daily Herald*, March 22) Indian Prairie CUSD 204's attempt to speed up a real estate deal for its new high school won initial approval from state lawmakers on March 21, but it still faces several hurdles. One plan would give the district "quick-take" powers to gain immediate access to 55 acres.

Naperville (*The Naperville Sun*, March 22) Two high school students in Indian Prairie CUSD204 are suing their school's board, principal and dean for the right to wear anti-gay clothing during school hours.

Plainfield (*Joliet Herald News*, March 27) Officials in the Troy CCSD

30C, Plainfield, are seeking a designation as a district with exploding growth. The school board recently voted to seek the designation in order to raise the district's debt ceiling.

Quincy (*Quincy Herald-Whig*, March 27) About 50 people turned out for a Quincy PTA Council forum on March 26 at which nine school board candidates shared their ideas. Board candidate Jeff Mays, president of the Illinois Business Roundtable and a former legislator, stressed the need to raise expectations for Quincy schools while living within the district's means. He objected to paying part of teachers' salaries from the tort immunity fund, which he equated to a tax hike without voter approval. Mays was elected.

Rockford (*Rockford Register Star*, April 11) Principals from two elementary schools ask the school board to support their desire to join a growing number of Rockford schools that are turning to uniforms to improve discipline and to make sure kids are dressed properly. Already 10 of the district's 38 elementary schools and four of the district's seven middle schools have uniforms.

Streator (*The Times*, Ottawa, March 22) Streator Elementary District 44 and Streator Township High School District 40 may share a curriculum coordinator as early as next academic year to make way for smoother advancements through the grade levels. The schools hope to find someone with a master's degree in advanced development, or an equivalent degree with experience in the field of curricular development. The two districts, which would split salary costs, are still working out details.

Sycamore (*DeKalb Daily Chronicle*, April 11) Sycamore CUSD 427 officials announce that the district made Adequate Yearly Progress under NCLB at all its schools last year.

School successful in student t-shirt speech case

by Melinda Selbee

DEVELOPMENTS IN SCHOOL LAW

Earlier this year the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the dismissal of a class action brought on behalf of 24 eighth graders. *Brandt v. Chicago Board of Education*, 480 F.3d 460 (7th Cir., 2007). The students unsuccessfully claimed that the school violated their First Amendment free speech rights by disciplining them for protesting the outcome of a class T-shirt contest.

The facts demonstrate the volatility of student clothing and speech issues. The dispute arose following a school contest in which the eighth graders selected a class T-shirt. Students in the gifted program voted as a block for a T-shirt designed by a fellow *giftie*, as they called themselves. Math principles being what they are, the T-shirt should have won. However, the school named another design as the winner. The gifted students put *gifties 2003* on the back of the T-shirt and wore it to school rather than the selected design. The principal believed their defiance showed disrespect for him and created a risk to an orderly environment. He punished the students over a short period by confining them to their homeroom during P.E., several labs, and after-school. A

district *Crisis Intervention Team* ultimately permitted the students to wear their T-shirt at school.

The T-shirt itself was not protected speech under the First Amendment. The Seventh Circuit recognized that clothing itself is not normally constitutionally protected speech – only by expressing ideas or opinions does clothing become protected. Messages such as “I am rich,” “I am sexy,” “I have good taste,” are not the type of message that entitles clothing to constitutional protection. Neither were the picture and few words on the *gifties* T-shirt.

The students argued that by wearing the T-shirt to protest the election, the T-shirt became entitled to First Amendment protection. Rejecting this claim, the court thankfully looked to the interest of school officials to “manage their affairs and shape their destiny free of minute supervision by federal judges and juries.” This interest implies that schools “have discretion to regulate students’ conduct in order to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning.”

The Seventh Circuit went one step further. Even if the T-shirt were entitled to First Amendment protection, the court found that schools have broad limits on the exercise of discretion to maintain a proper atmosphere. This includes prohibiting stu-

dents from wearing clothing at school that contains inappropriate words or slogans.

How this applies to you

This decision is clearly good news for school officials. It endorses judicial restraint over school operations and recognizes the schools’ interest in protecting the education environment. It confirms that school officials may restrict student clothing that does not express ideas or opinions and, even if the clothing contains a message, it supports the schools’ authority to regulate student speech that is inconsistent with the school’s basic educational mission.



Melinda Selbee
is IASB's general
counsel

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NSBA from page 7

included:

- **Chicago Public Schools 299**, Tarkington School of Excellence by OWP&P of Chicago
- **Consolidated SD 158**, Algonquin, Marlow Middle School by Wold Architects and Engineers of Palatine
- **Lyons THSD 204**, Lyons Township High School — South Campus expansion, Western Springs, by Dahlquist and Lutzow Architects of Hinsdale
- **Indian Prairie CUSD 204**, Naperville,

Metea Valley High School by DLR Group of Chicago

- **Grayslake CHSD 127** High School, by FGM Architects Planners Inc., of Oak Brook
- **Wheaton Warrenville CUSD 200**, Wheaton North High School addition and renovation, by Legat Architects Inc., of Waukegan

National Affiliate Roundtable

Representatives of **Woodstock CUSD 200** also presented a roundtable

discussion about its School Talk200 program.

For more information on this year's NSBA conference, visit their Web site at: <http://www.nsba.org/>.

Founded in 1940, the National School Boards Association is a not-for-profit federation of state associations of school boards representing 95,000 local school board members throughout the United States.

The 2008 conference is scheduled for March 29-April 1 in Orlando, Fla.

Newspapers that cover school boards invited to enter contest

Every year at this time, the Illinois Press Association solicits entries from local newspapers to participate in Illinois' only statewide journalism competition. The contest – which is open to newspapers of all sizes and circulation frequencies – is a huge event, with thousands of entries from dozens of newspapers.

One contest category, “Best School Board Coverage,” is sponsored and presented by the Illinois Association of School Boards.

The Robert M. Cole Award, named for the first full-time Executive Director of IASB, recognizes “*outstanding coverage of education issues that emphasize the community’s connection with its local public school district.*” Entries are judged on:

- their contribution to public understanding of local school governance
- their support for effective dialogue that helps the community and school board define major public policy issues

Judges also consider enterprise, depth of reporting and clarity of writing. Up to four issues or articles can be submitted.

This contest is not directed at public relations campaigns or school district newsletters. Rather, it is intended

for general circulation newspapers that cover local districts or schools. Competition for the Cole Award is divided among four separate circulation categories, in order that newspapers of varying sizes can compete fairly.

A school district may have one or more outstanding reporters or newspapers that cover school news, events and issues. If those efforts warrant consideration for this competition, IASB is asking school leaders to encourage them to enter the Illinois Press Association contest. *This does not involve or require a nomination*; however, such a recommendation may influence their decision to enter the contest.

Members of the Virginia Press Association will judge this year’s contest in mid-July. The deadline for Illinois newspapers to enter the contest will be in early June. Winners will be announced at IPA’s annual convention in September.

So contact your local reporter or editor soon if you would like to see them compete for the Robert M. Cole Award in the Best School Board Coverage category.

Questions and details about how to enter the “2007 Better Newspaper Contest” should be directed to the Illinois Press Association, at 217/241-1300.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 1-2 – Basics of School Law & Finance Workshop, Doubletree Hotel, Bloomington, Friday: 11:00 am - 5:30 pm; Saturday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

June 5 – Two Rivers Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Red Dome Inn, Pittsfield, 6:00 p.m. Registration

June 8-9 – Basics of School Law and Finance Workshop, Season’s at Rend Lake, Whittington, Friday: 11:00 am-5:30 pm; Saturday: 8:00 am-3:00 pm

June 8-9 – Basics of School Law and Finance Workshop, NIU Naperville, Friday: 11:00 am-5:30 pm; Saturday: 8:00, am-3:00 pm

June 14-16 – Basics of School District Governance & Basics of Law and Finance - (3 Day Workshop), Hilton, Springfield, Thursday: 9:00 am-5:30 pm; Friday: 8:00 am-5:00 pm; Saturday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

June 15 – Board Presidents Workshop, Hilton, Springfield, 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

June 17 – Father’s Day

June 20-21 – ISBE Board Meeting, Chicago

June 28-30 – Basics of School District Governance & Basics of Law and Finance (3 Day Workshop), Swissotel Chicago, Hours same as June 14-16



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