

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD *Newsbulletin*

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Calls for sales tax hikes must get on ballot soon

Resulting revenue can help pay for school construction

Under a still-new law adopted last fall school districts have the chance to place a referendum on the ballot calling for a retail sales tax to be enacted in quarter-cent increments up to one cent. School districts, in turn, are permitted to lower their levy on the building and maintenance portion of local real estate taxes, resulting in lower tax bills for property owners.

The state law allowing this, Public Act 95-675, was passed Oct. 11, 2007. It permits school districts representing 51 percent of the school enrollment in a county to request a ballot question. Cook is the only county prohibited by the new law from seeking the school improvement sales tax. If voters approve such a sales tax, the revenue is collected in a special tax fund and divided among school districts according to enrollment by regional school superintendents. The schools can use the money to build new buildings, renovate existing ones, do safety or energy conservation work or pay off building bond debt.

“This would be a way to do some great things to our facilities without having to raise (property) taxes to do it,” **Champaign CUSD 4** Board of Education President Dave Tomlinson said. “We think this is real important. This could be a real plus for every school district.”

Tomlinson noted that he and the other district superintendents in Champaign County recently agreed they will be working with county board members and state legislators to build support for imposing the county sales tax there. He expects the school districts to ask the county board to pass a resolution in June to put the sales tax question on the November ballot. By law the deadline for doing so this year is Aug. 18. A similar push is under way in Lake County and in other areas around the state.

In Lake County, school boards at **Woodland CCSD 50**, Gurnee; **Millburn CCSD 24**, Wadsworth; **Waukegan CUSD 60**; and **Big Hollow SD 38**, Ingle-side, all have passed resolutions supporting a sales tax increase referendum in November. The topic was also discussed in April by board members at

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Steve Clark



Dean Langdon

Staff changes to address growing IASB member needs

With an increasing number of requests for IASB services coming in this year, and the resulting need for additional staffing, a number of staff changes have been announced:

Steve Clark will be joining IASB’s Targeting Achievement through Governance (TAG) staff on May 12. Clark will fill a position vacated by TAG consultant Barb Toney’s move to Field Services. Clark has served for over 30 years on the **Rock Island SD 41** Board of Education, one of the first boards to participate in the TAG program. He has also served as the resolutions chair for IASB’s Blackhawk division.

Toney, who was a member of the **West Chicago District 33** board of edu-

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IASB Annual Conference mailing date is set for June 6

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English Language Learning applications are due soon

Local school districts and Regional Offices of Education are advised that the FY09 Consolidated Application to Serve English Language Learners is available for downloading at http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/consolidated_application.htm. Short video segments explaining how to complete the application forms for program approval and funding will also be found at the same website.

To qualify for both state and federal funding, the completed application must be received or postmarked by June 30. Applications postmarked after the June 30 deadline will *not* be eligible for federal Title III funding.

Interested applicants may submit written questions concerning the application via e-mail to: dell@isbe.net.

Conference calls took the place of the regional application workshops held in previous years. For further information contact the ISBE's Division of English Language Learning at 312/814-3850.

Segregation of drivers' ed fees and revenue is required

A still-new state law, Public Act 94-0426, enacted in January 2006, requires that all driver education fees and state reimbursements for drivers' education must be deposited into the receiving school district's drivers' education fund. In addition, it must be deposited as a separate line-item budget entry.

The money in the district's driver education fund can only be used for the funding of a high school driver education program approved by the Illinois State Board of Education that uses instructors certified by the ISBE.

State submits food service rules to lawmaker, public review

As reported in the April Newsbulletin, the Illinois State Board of Education had been preparing to submit new rules regarding school food service and "junk food." The new rule proposal was finally published in the Illinois Register on April 4, thus beginning the process used by the legislature's Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) to review proposed state regulations. The new rules are even more stringent than those rules currently in operation, according to school lobbyists.

The new proposal is a result of the report from the School Wellness Policy Task Force. The task force standards incorporated into the new rule proposal differentiates between students in pre-k through 5th grade versus those students in grades 6-12. So the calorie intake for the 6th grader is the same as that for the senior in high school. Example: a 5th grader would be limited to 4 ounces of 100% juice while the 6th grader would be allowed 12 ounces (also, a 5th grader could not eat a yogurt "smoothie" but a 6th grader could).

The complete rule proposal can be found in the Illinois Register on line at: http://ilsos.net/departments/index/register/register_volume32_issue14.pdf; scroll down to page 282.

The Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance was encouraging its members to review the proposal and send in written comments regarding their concerns to the address listed in the Illinois Register. Also, they were asked to send copies of their remarks to the legislative members of JCAR.

The proposed new requirements:

- establish separate requirements for elementary and middle school students;
- define "school day" as being 30 minutes before the start of classes until 30 minutes following the end of the last class of the day;

More on school breakfasts, see page 10

- prohibit certain food items (i.e. whole milk in grade 5 and below), smoothies and beverages other than those listed;
- apply to the sale of a la carte items; and
- apply to food sold anywhere at the school during the school day, excluding foods sold as part of a reimbursable meal.

The first notice period is open for a minimum of 45 days, although requests for extensions of this public comment period are often granted, extending the comment period up to 14 more days. Interested parties may submit written comments to the director of the state agency issuing any new rules (ISBE in this case). Comments must pertain to the content of the proposed new rules.


Note: The public comment period shall commence and expire in accordance with the provisions of Section 5-40 of the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act.

Illinois
SCHOOL BOARD
Newsbulletin

Illinois Association of School Boards

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ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

Challenge to 'moment of silence' widened by judge

Court broadens action into class-action lawsuit

A federal judge decided on March 28 to widen into a class-action lawsuit a legal challenge to a state law mandating a moment of silence in classrooms, thus causing the lawsuit to include all Illinois school districts.

Judge Robert W. Gettleman moved to expand the plaintiff's side of the lawsuit to include all Illinois students, instead of just one suburban teenage girl, who had sued to block the state's Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act. The ruling was issued in the case cited as *Sherman v. Township High School District 214 and Koch*, No. 07 C 6048 (N.D.Ill., March 28, 2008).

After being amended by state lawmakers last year, the Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act requires each teacher to "observe a brief period of silence with the participation of all the pupils therein assembled at the opening of every school day," as an "opportunity for silent prayer or for silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day."

A student sued her school district and Christopher Koch, as State Superintendent of Education, alleging that the Act was unconstitutionally vague

and violates her rights under the First Amendment's Establishment Clause. Last November, the court issued a preliminary injunction to prevent the plaintiff-student's school district from implementing the Act and to prevent State Superintendent Koch from enforcing the law. After the merits of the case are heard, the preliminary injunction was made permanent.

On plaintiff's motion, the court analyzed the prerequisites for a class action, particularly whether the defenses of District 214 are typical of those of school districts across the state, and whether District 214 will fairly and adequately represent the class. The court was not bothered by the fact that District 214 has expressed no opinion as to the constitutionality of the Act. The court observed: "Whatever the position of any individual school district on the constitutionality of the Act, the common obligation to implement it gives rise to a common defense. In fact, District 214 has indicated its intent to raise its obligation to enforce state law as a defense."

Suggestions offered

So where does this leave school boards that have adopted a policy implementing the Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act? (Including,

for example, the IASB sample policy 6:20, School Year Calendar and Day, which requires a "brief period of silence [to be] observed at the opening of the school day.") The court directed the parties to confer about a notice to be sent to school districts through the office of the State Superintendent of Education. The court reviewed the proposed forms of notice on April 17. Soon after that date school districts were to be informed of their options.

Meanwhile, according to IASB General Counsel Melinda Selbee, school officials "may want to gather information about their district's response to the legislation." After they review the court-approved notice of options, they could use the information they have gathered to decide their next steps.

Meanwhile, legislation has been moving through the legislature in Springfield to remove the words "student prayer" from the law and make it optional.

The lawsuit was filed by talk show host Rob Sherman, an outspoken atheist, and his daughter, a freshman at Buffalo Grove High School. Sherman contends the law represents an attempt to inject religion into the public schools. Lawmakers passed the measure over Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich's veto.

Improved student performance is goal of High School Challenge in June

High school leaders are being asked to make plans now to attend the High School Challenge: Leadership and Learning: Connecting the Dots, June 16 and 17, at the Doubletree Hotel in Bloomington.

This conference is sponsored by the Coalition for Illinois High Schools, made up of 21 organizations, with IASB as one of the founding members. It is designed for all those involved with and interested in the work of Illinois' high schools; the aim is to create a statewide awareness of the changing global economy and the need

to prepare Illinois students for the world in which they will live and work.

Those encouraged to attend include superintendents, principals, teacher leaders, school board members, curriculum directors, special education and ELL directors, ROE/ISC staff, RESPRO staff, and business leaders.

Organizers say conference participants will leave the event with:

- Practical strategies that have improved student performance in Illinois high schools;
- Tools that can be used for data analysis and decision making;
- Research-based strategies that sup-

port student learning.

The workshop fee is \$180 per participant, which 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 (\$90/night) at 1-309/664-6446; or from the Eastland Suites (\$85/night) at 1-309/662-0000.

Conference registration form and a brochure are available at: http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/pdf/hsc_leadership_conf08.pdf. The registration deadline is June 6.

Illinois General Assembly wrestling with deficit estimated at \$750 million amid darkening finances

ISBE slashes \$25 million from its budget proposal

In early April the Illinois State Board of Education slashed \$25 million from its proposed budget for schools, including a \$5 million cut for gifted education programs.

“The state is looking at a \$750 million deficit and, in working with the governor’s office, we were trying to do our part and see where we could save money,” said Matt Vanover, spokesman for the board.

Concerns about under-funded state pensions, rising Medicaid costs, and a darkening financial picture for the state and nation, led to the revised budget proposal, ISBE said.

Just days earlier the Illinois House had approved a plan on April 1 to reduce the governor’s influence over the State Board of Education.

The approved bill, H.B. 4232, would remove the current board members, most of who were first appointed by Gov. Rod Blagojevich. Then a newly created state panel would nominate 27 possible new board members for the governor to choose from. The nomination panel would be comprised of seven members: two former school superintendents, two former school teachers, two retired state legislators with education appropriations backgrounds, and one member of a nonprofit agency committed to education reform.

The House approved the bill by a wide margin, 86-21, sending it to the state Senate for action.

Rep. Lou Lang, D-Chicago, said the board should do a better job of advocating for students, regardless of what the governor’s office wants. But some critics call the plan unnecessary and complicated.

Like nearly all state agencies, the Illinois State Board of Education has been ordered by the governor to make cuts in its budget. State board members agreed-upon plan calls for cutting a \$4 million rural learning initiative

and getting rid of a program that would have increased pay for teachers and principals who work in hard-to-staff schools. Money would be slashed for the proposed funding increases for 17 city schools in the city of Chicago, including a technical high school.

In the current fiscal year, FY ’09, state revenue growth is expected to be limited. State coffers are forecast to grow about \$600 million, yet to just cover the inflationary cost of continuing service levels into FY 2009 would require over \$1.3 billion in new funds. This helps create an anticipated deficit of at least \$570 million, between revenue growth and service cost growth.

Additionally, the Illinois comptroller has found that the state owes \$3.4 billion in unpaid Medicaid bills. It remains unclear how much of this Medicaid liability was paid in FY ’08 and how much deferred to FY ’09. But the pension cost increase is scheduled to grow by \$720 million from FY ’08 to FY ’09.

The governor has proposed a three percent across-the-board spending reduction in all areas outside of health-care, K-12 education, and public safety. Yet those three line items together account for over 60 percent of the General Revenue Fund, meaning the 3 percent cut would unintentionally hit all of those programs, according to non-partisan budget analysts.

Constitutional amendments debated

Budgetary matters are not the only concerns facing state policy makers. The Illinois House of Representatives during the second week of April voted on two proposed amendments to the Illinois Constitution. Such measures must be approved by a 3/5 vote in both the House and the Senate. House Joint Resolution Constitutional Amendment 42 (Smith, D-Canton) proposed to change the Illinois Constitution to increase the State income tax rate for taxpayers who earn \$250,000 or more per year. The resolution was narrowly defeated on the

House floor on April 10, although the idea could resurface in some other joint resolution calling for a constitutional amendment.

Currently all taxpayers in the state pay a flat income tax rate equal to 3 percent of their annual income. Under HJRCA 42 those earning less than \$250,000 would have continued to pay at the 3 percent rate, but those earning \$250,000 or more would have paid income taxes at a rate of 6 percent of their annual earnings. The estimated \$3 billion from the increased rate would have been earmarked for education, tax relief, and a statewide infrastructure program.

Yet another constitutional amendment suggestion, this one still working its way through the state legislature, would permit voters to recall certain elected officials. On Apr. 8 the House approved HJRCA 28 (Franks, D-Woodstock) by more than the 3/5 margin required to move it to the Senate. This resolution aims to change the Illinois Constitution in order to provide for elections to recall state executive branch officers (Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Comptroller, and Treasurer) and members of the General Assembly. The measure was sent to the Senate for further consideration. In order for the question to appear on the November General Election ballot, the Senate must approve the resolution by a 3/5 vote by May 4, 2008. Both the recall proposal and the State Board of Education overhaul are widely seen as legislative repudiations of the governing style and substance of the current governor, and both were approved by the Illinois House. But neither is expected to win approval in the Illinois Senate.

Superintendent mentoring bill

A new bill to require all new school district superintendents to receive mentoring from an experienced super-

See **LEGISLATION** on page 5

SALES *from page 1*

nearby **Diamond Lake District 76**, Mundelein. At a minimum it would require support from the equivalent of the 11 largest of Lake County's 45 school districts to get the question on the ballot.

Schools can use money received from this new tax approach only for capital improvements such as, but not limited to, new buildings, building repair, energy conservation, safety, disabled accessibility, school security, and land acquisition.

The referendum, however, does not work the same way as a traditional school funding referendum. The key difference is that the school funding referendum must be approved by the county board before it is placed on the ballot. That's because the tax will be collected by the county and then dispersed to all school districts in the county.

County boards can put the tax hike to a vote on their own or at the request of schools. The county board can vote to not allow the referendum, and even can vote to end it once it passes, unless the money has been bonded. What's more, the county board may impose all or only a portion of the sales tax approved by the voters.

All districts in an adopting county would benefit from the new revenue from the tax. Once it is approved, no school district can opt out.

The funds cannot be used for operations or classroom instruction. They

can only be used for construction and to replace or repair aging buildings, or simply to pay off existing building bond debt.

Even if a district has no such debt, it could use the money to make improvements, such as adding air-conditioning, new windows, upgrading the heating system and making buildings more energy efficient. If a district's share of the county's new tax revenue is not enough to cover the cost of a given project, however, a local property tax increase could be sought through a referendum to pay for the balance.

Opposition to sales tax as school revenue

There is opposition to the concept in certain quarters, however, particularly among some municipal officials in areas located near the state's borders. Gurnee Mayor Kristina Kovarik says schools have better ways to seek more revenue to pay for construction-related expenses than a one percent increase in Lake County's sales tax. Part of her concern is that shoppers might bypass Gurnee for Wisconsin if Lake County's 6.5 percent sales tax goes up.

Kovarik said Lake County schools instead should support an existing idea in the state Senate, which is to raise the personal and corporate income taxes while reducing education-related property taxes. The state would boost its minimum per-pupil funding

as part of the proposal, commonly known as the "tax swap."

Kovarik recently made a pitch for that approach before the Gurnee-based board. She asked the board to withdraw its recently approved support of a November ballot measure designed to hike the county's sales tax by 1 percent.

Under the tax swap idea, education-related property taxes would be reduced by 20 percent. The minimum state funding level for schools would be boosted to \$6,004 per student in the beginning, along with \$1 billion being placed in a fund annually for capital projects.

But **Woodland CGSD 50** board member Lawrence Gregorash said the Senate proposal has been considered only at the committee level and might not go anywhere. Indeed, the idea has been around for years and has not shown much momentum. Gregorash said the sales tax exists in statute, and offers an available revenue source.

"We have to take the (sales tax) option," Gregorash said. "This is the only thing we have on the horizon."

Woodland board member Michael Bond helped bring about his schools' ability to seek a sales tax while acting in his other role as a state senator. Sen. Bond (D-Grayslake) was among the state legislators who voted successfully last October to override Gov. Rod Blagojevich's total veto of the new law.

LEGISLATION *from page 4*

intendent was approved by the Senate on April 2. SB 2500 (Demuzio, D-Carlinville), initiated and drafted by the Illinois Association of School Administrators, was passed in the Senate unanimously during the first week of April. The bill requires a person who begins serving as a superintendent in Illinois on or after July 1, 2008, and who has not previously served as a school district superintendent in

the state, to participate in a new superintendent mentoring program established by the ISBE for the duration of his or her first two school years as a superintendent.

Under the plan, anyone who has demonstrated success as a school district superintendent for at least three years is eligible to apply to become a mentor. If the bill is adopted mentors would have to complete training

through a provider selected by the ISBE. Then a provider (again selected by the ISBE) would assign a mentor with a new superintendent based on specific criteria (i.e. type of district, geographical proximity, learning needs of the new superintendent, etc.).

The Senate approved the bill and sent it to the Illinois House for consideration.

Newspaper contest entries sought for 'best school board coverage'

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 that annually draws thousands of entries from journalists.

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.*" Contest 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.

A group of journalists will judge this year's contest in mid-July. The deadline for Illinois newspapers to enter the annual contest will be in early June. Winners will be announced at the IPA's annual convention this September.

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 "2008 Better Newspaper Contest" should be directed to the Illinois Press Association, at 217/241-1300.

58 town hall meetings set to fight underage drinking

Much more is known today than in past decades about underage drinking and the impact that it can have on the lives of students. According to the United States Surgeon General's office, nearly 10.8 million young people between the ages of 12 and 20 are underage drinkers. Nationally, alcohol use by children and adolescents is more prevalent than tobacco or illegal drug use.

To address underage drinking concerns the Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Community Health and Prevention is organizing 58 town hall meetings statewide. The meetings are part of a national effort to increase understanding and awareness of the problem and its consequences, and to encourage individuals, families and communities to address it. (See the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking, available at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/underagedrinking/calltoaction.pdf>.)

But school liaison officer for the Galesburg Police Department Joe Luna says in his experience it is "unfortunately not prevention programs and organizations" that stop underage drinking, but having harsh consequences, such as losing athletic eligibility or the opportunity to participate in after-school activities, that act as a deterrent.

Using alcohol can result in a number of more serious consequences for teens. In fact, 5,000 people under age 21 die each year as a result of underage drinking, including 1,900 young people killed in auto crashes. Underage drinking can result in serious physical problems, including death from alcohol poisoning. It can limit a teen's ability to reason, lead to risky sexual behavior, and increase the risks of physical or sexual assault.

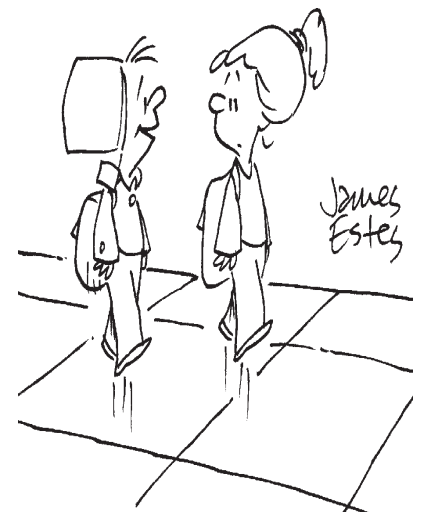
The local meetings will provide communities an opportunity to discuss the problems they face and begin



Underage drinking can limit a teenager's ability to reason, lead to risky behavior and increase the risks of being assaulted.

to formulate a plan of action. For a list of the Illinois communities participating in the town hall meetings, visit <http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov>.

LINCOLN
ELEMENTARY



"My pediatrician says I need to reduce the stress in my life — I'm gonna quit taking tests."

NEWS HEADLINES

Aurora (April 9, *The Beacon News*) The Aurora East USD 131 Board of Education might have to reauthorize some of its actions after learning that one board member was not properly chosen through a vote taken at a public meeting. The board learned in March of the failure to properly appoint the new member sworn in two months earlier. Although it does not appear that the new member changed the outcome of any board action, some votes may be revisited to be on the safe side.

Aurora (April 15, *The Beacon News*) Indian Prairie CUSD 204 Board, Naperville, approved the purchase of 84 acres from a local church for the construction of Metea Valley High School. The purchase should allow the district to open a new 3,000-enrollment high school in the fall of 2009.

Channahon (April 4, *Morris Herald*) Freshman and sophomore students next year will be attending the new “Minooka Community High School – South Campus, Channahon, IL.” Minooka CHSD 111 sent out 15,000 surveys with four options for school names on the back of a recent newsletter. Board member Debra Warning said that from the responses received, it was obvious to her that “far more wanted Channahon in the name.” Later, however, village officials expressed their disappointment with the decision and at least one trustee pledged to support any Channahon resident who runs for the high school board in spring 2009.

Elgin (April 9, *The Daily Herald*) A nine-page document recently filed by lawyers for School District U-46 may indicate why costs in the local four-year-old racial discrimination lawsuit continue to rise – and show no signs of letting up. The judge overseeing this stage of the lawsuit in federal court called a \$14,775 bill for the nine-page legal motion “shockingly excessive,” according to the

Daily Herald.

Freeport (April 9, *The Journal Standard*) At a recent meeting of the Freeport SD 145 board two secondary school principals presented their plans for a successful response to potential NCLB sanctions. Two schools could face NCLB-required restructuring next year unless Adequate Yearly Progress goals are met. This would mean using one of four options: reopening as charter schools, replacing all or most of the staff, entering into a contract with an outside entity to run one or both of the schools, or implementing a restructuring plan under local school governance.

Freeport (April 9, *The Journal Standard*) Freeport SD 145 will begin monitoring some classrooms with video cameras. Ten special education classrooms will be visually monitored once the installation is completed, said Patrick McDermott, Freeport School District 145’s assistant superintendent for business. “We’ll be putting them in classrooms basically where there [are] students with diminished communications or communication ability,” he said. Silent recording discs would then be collected and stored for five years. Audio recording has been held up by a court challenge from four teachers.

Galesburg (April 14, *The Journal Star*) If audience members at this year’s Galesburg District 205 graduation ceremony are disruptive they will be given one warning, but they can be removed unless they stop misbehaving, according to a policy approved by the school board. The policy was created after audience members last year violated an agreement signed by parents and students to avoid cheering, clapping and shouting during the formal ceremony.

Granville (April 1, *The Journal Star*) The local school board has chosen the contractors for a delayed project to rebuild the Granville elementary

school lost to a tornado in April 2004. The board of Putnam County CUSD 535, Granville, voted unanimously to accept a \$5.36 million bid. District officials hope to have the building substantially finished by Christmas.

Gurnee (April 4, *The Daily Herald*) Gurnee’s mayor tried to convince Woodland CCSD 50 board members to drop their support of a referendum for a 1 percent increase in Lake County’s sales tax. The funds would go to help finance construction at all schools in the county. The mayor said shoppers might flee for nearby Wisconsin if the county’s sales tax rises from 6.5 percent.

Huntley (April 8, *The Daily Herald*) The state’s largest teachers union has filed a grievance against Huntley Unit District 158, saying the district has overburdened elementary music teachers, leaving them little time to grade assignments and plan lessons. In an unfair labor practice claim filed earlier this year, the Illinois Education Association says District 158 assigned elementary music teachers 17 classes this year – one more than the 16 they have taught in the past.

Statewide (April 2, *The Daily Herald*) News reports suggest portable classrooms in suburban Chicago and around the state are not being tested for air safety. In February, the federal Centers for Disease Control warned that many mobile homes contain potentially dangerous levels of formaldehyde. In Illinois, the state does not require schools to test toxic fume levels in trailers – so many schools don’t. Illinois requires each county’s regional office of education to inspect all mobile classrooms annually. County inspectors check for unobstructed exits, proper emergency lighting, functional fire alarms and sprinkler systems, and a number of safety hazards. They do not examine air quality.

IASB announces LeaderShop Academy Symposium plans

LeaderShop Academy sessions to promote board learning

The Third Biannual LeaderShop Academy Invitational Symposium is set for June 21 in Lombard, and the theme, “Finding common ground between public education and business leadership” could not be more practical or more useful. The School Board LeaderShop Academy promotes and recognizes board members’ efforts toward continuous learning and professional development. As board members work their way through IASB’s School Board LeaderShop curriculum, they earn and maintain membership in the Academy.

One of the benefits of Academy membership includes an invitation to participate in the Academy Symposium. The event program this year features two educational leaders who will help participants find the common ground between public education and business practices:

- Ray Lauk, a former superintendent in Lyons, Sheldon and Cerro Gordo school districts in Illinois, who also has extensive corporate experience, will lead the morning session. Leadership practices and techniques in business can be incorporated into the school culture to



Lawrence Baskin



Ray Lauk

improve student achievement and to create “more engaged, dynamic and results-driven” organizations, according to Lauk.

- The afternoon session will be led by Lawrence Baskin, whose experience includes superintendent positions in Libertyville and Glen Ellyn school districts. He has since been an administrator for a graduate school of management, working with legislative, municipal and corporate leaders. Baskin will show participants proven corporate concepts and leadership skills required to increase learning, customer satisfaction and resource utilization.

Tuition for the one-day Symposium is \$185 per person and includes materials, breakfast and lunch. The event will be held at the Westin Hotel at the Shops on Butterfield at Yorktown Center, an outdoor shopping and recreation center in the western Chica-

go suburb of Lombard.

Invitation is limited to current Academy members and their superintendents. Admission to the Academy requires completion of three School Board LeaderShop programs:

- At least two of these programs must be from the core curriculum and one of those must be the school district governance overview
- The third program may be either a core or an elective offering

Academy membership is maintained by completing at least one additional program (either core or elective) over a two-year period. Upon the completion of seven core and five elective programs, members are also recognized as Academy Fellows.

The Symposium is just one of several membership benefits of the *School Board LeaderShop Academy*. Information about the symposium is available online at <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/leadershopacad.pdf>.

To learn more about School Board LeaderShop, curriculum offerings or the Academy, contact Angela Peifer, Associate Executive Director for Board Development, at 217/528-9688, ext. 1124, or visit the IASB Web site at http://www.iasb.com/training/leadershop_info.cfm.

School project entries sought for ‘EEE’ architectural awards

School leaders who are particularly proud of a new building or renovation in their district are being encouraged to help the architect or other design professional responsible earn recognition and awards in the 2008 Exhibition of Educational Environments (EEE) program. The awards program is sponsored by IASB Service Associates.

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, but construction must be com-

pleted in time for occupancy with the start of school in the fall of 2008.

The entry deadline is July 7, and entries 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.

A total of 22 projects were chosen for the competition last year and were placed on display during the Joint Annual Conference. Chosen entries this year will be displayed out-

side the general sessions location and outside the bookstore at the conference on Nov. 21-23, as well. Plans call for preliminary materials to be submitted by Sep. 15 and evaluated on Sep. 18. The judging will be carried out in Springfield on a blind basis by a jury of school officials and architects, all of them experienced in facilities or design.

Criteria include suitability for stated program requirements, functional relationships, aesthetics, etc.

For information or entry forms contact IASB’s Dana Heckrodt, ext. 1131.

Joint Annual Conference rooms expected to go quickly again

June 6 is the target mailing deadline for the conference registration packet, including hotel accommodations and registration information, for the 2008 Joint Annual Conference to be held Nov. 21-23 in Chicago.

Because rooms always go quickly, there is considerable urgency about making reservations while accommodations and choices at conference group rates are available. Conference housing rates range from \$147 to \$167 per night.

One venue has been added to the list of available hotels, as the newly renovated but stately Palmer House is back on the list after an extended absence. In addition to the Palmer House, the Chicago hotels available include: Hyatt Regency Chicago (Conference Headquarters), Sheraton Chicago (Conference Headquarters), Chicago City Centre, Chicago Marriott, Embassy Suites, Fairmont Hotel, Intercontinental Hotel, and the Swissotel.

In addition to registration and housing, districts should also be preparing their proposed resolutions to set policy for the Association for

the coming year. The deadline for member districts to submit IASB resolutions is June 25. The Association sent out letters on April 1 to all member school districts containing submission forms for resolutions.

Consideration of the resolutions is a key function of the IASB Delegate Assembly. One voting delegate is invited from each local school district. Resolutions adopted by these delegates become official policy of IASB and help govern the Association in the coming year.

The 2008 Joint Annual Conference will be headquartered at the Hyatt Regency Chicago and Sheraton Chicago hotels. This will be the 94th annual conference of IASB and the 76th joint conference with IASA and Illinois ASBO.

Conference goers must register by Oct. 14 to get the lowest registration rate of \$330; after that date the cost is \$355. IASB plans to mail out official badges to conference registrants on approximately Nov. 7.

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

STAFF from page 1

education for 16 years, including 14 years as board president, will be taking the place of Field Services Director Dawn Miller, who is transferring to the Executive Searches Department on a part-time basis. Miller has been a director since 1992, and is a former member of the **Mundelein High School District 120** board of education, and a former vice president of IASB (1991).

In addition, Senior Director of Field Services Doug Blair will be transferring full time to the search department. Blair, a former school superintendent, has been with IASB since 1976.

Blair's field service position, which covers the Blackhawk, Central Illinois Valley, Corn Belt and Western divisions, will be filled by Dean Langdon, currently the superintendent at **Lincoln CHSD 404**.

Finally, Bob Morenz will be reducing his work time to part-time status, and his position as Chief Financial Officer will be filled by Jennifer Feld. She currently is the CFO for Panther Creek Golf Club in Springfield.

For a list of IASB staff or to contact a staff member by phone or e-mail, visit the IASB Web site at: <http://www.iasb.com/whatis/staff.cfm>.

NEWS FROM IASB

Nominations sought for Association officers for 2009

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 the local board
- involvement with other education-related associations or organizations
- other leadership experiences
- special talent or interests of benefit to IASB as now constituted

Nominating forms are due 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 2008 Joint Annual Conference in November.

To request necessary forms, interested candidates should write: IASB, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703, or call IASB at 217/528-9688 or 630/629-3776, at ext. 1102.

Help plan fall division meetings this summer

Want to help plan the program for upcoming dinner meetings? Some divisions have summer governing committee meetings that are open to all members. Get the 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."

Illinois to help lead 'early childhood' talks

A bipartisan team of Illinois educators, legislators and foundation leaders has been selected to participate in the National Symposium on Early Childhood Science and Policy. The event is to be held at the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass., on June 26 and 27. Illinois is one of 14 state-based teams nationwide selected to participate in this two-day discussion on early childhood policies.

"This confirms what we already know — that Illinois is a leader in early childhood education — and I am proud we have been chosen to participate in this important discussion on the impact, challenges and opportunities that each state faces in providing the early building blocks for learning," Governor Rod Blagojevich said.

The national symposium is designed to build leadership capacity in the states for developing and implementing science-based policies that enhance children's learning, behavior, and health. The symposium is designed for world-renowned researchers and Harvard faculty members to come together with state-based teams of policy advisors, legislators, and business and civic leaders to learn

about recent advances in neuroscience, molecular biology, medicine, and developmental psychology — which together form an integrated science of early childhood development — as well as evidence-based policy implications from four decades of rigorous program evaluation research.

Illinois was recently singled out for being the first state committed to serving all three-year-olds with quality preschool, according to a report published by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) of Rutgers University (see *April Newsbulletin*, p. 6).

Illinois' state-funded pre-kindergarten program was ranked first nationally for enrolling 19 percent of the state's three-year-olds, according to *The State of Preschool 2007: State Preschool Yearbook*. Nationwide, enrollment of three-year-olds was up 10 percent, mostly due to increases here in Illinois, which became the first state to commit to serving all three-year-olds. Illinois was also ranked 12th for percentage of four-year-olds enrolled — 27 percent. The state's pre-kindergarten initiatives also meet nine of 10 quality benchmarks cited by the report.

Illinois' team members attending the symposium include: Christopher A. Koch, State Superintendent of Edu-

cation; State Senator Don Harmon, D-Oak Park; State Senator Pamela Althoff, R-McHenry; State Representative Barbara Flynn Currie, D-Chicago; State Representative Jerry Mitchell, R-Sterling; Kelly King Dibble, senior vice president and director of Public Affairs and Government Relations at Northern Trust and board member for Ounce of Prevention; Jerome Stermer, president of Voices for Illinois Children; and Elliot M. Regenstein, Co-Chair, Illinois Early Learning Council.

"We are delighted with the high level of leadership, focus, and policymaking expertise represented on these teams," said Jack P. Shonkoff, M.D., Director of the Center on the Developing Child. "We're looking forward to bringing together our own 'dream team' of experts in neuroscience, child development, economics, health services research, program evaluation, and systems building to help these highly motivated civic leaders find the answers they need to take their states to the next level of impact from their early childhood policies and practices."

The 14 teams attending the symposium include Illinois, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington.

State offers start-up funds for 2007-08 school meals programs

School districts interested in starting a School Breakfast Program may wish to join the 42 schools that have taken advantage of \$3,500 in state-funded start-up grant for 2007-2008, according to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Funds can be used to help defray any non-recurring costs (costs related to start-up of the program only), equipment (refrigeration equipment, serving equipment, warming trays, carts, menu boards, toasters, cereal dispensers, etc), outreach and materials (conference attendance, brochures, flyers, menus, etc).

Any school that does not currently operate a School Breakfast Program, but agrees to operate a program for at least 20 serving days in the start-up year and three years beyond, is eligible to apply, according to ISBE.

The application process is simple, ISBE says: go to <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition> and click on the box entitled "School Breakfast Program." Funds are still available for the 2007-2008 school year. Application materials for the 2008-2009 school year will be available online in early July.

Summer Food Service Program

The ISBE also says now is the time to submit applications for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Visit the SFSP Web site at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/summer.htm> and click on the Application link or the New Sponsor link, whichever is applicable. Mandatory workshops for all new sponsors are also in full swing.

For more information and to register, access the Web site above and go to Workshop Information. If you have any questions, contact Amy Bianco, Nutrition Division, at 1/800-545-7892 or e-mail: abianco@isbe.net.

IASA attendees hear bad news on funding

The state is unlikely to have money available to make its 23rd and 24th payments to school districts early, according to Christopher Koch, Illinois state superintendent of schools.

Koch, speaking at the Illinois Association of School Administrators' 43rd annual conference in Springfield, said he understands that districts are concerned about late payments because of rising fuel and food costs. But, he said, questions about when payments will be coming should be posed to legislators who need to answer how they will address the revenue shortfall.

"We have much to be proud of," Koch told the superintendents, including a decrease in the high school drop out rate and an increase in both the number of students taking Advance Placement exams and scores on the ACT portion of the state's Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE). "Illinois is also a national leader in the movement for pre-school for all."

Koch also said that the ISAT "pre-

view" results being offered for \$1.08 a student by Pearson Education Measurement, the state's testing company, are just a subset of the test scores. All of the scores should be available in June at no extra cost to a district.

Also at the Friday breakfast session, Walter Warfield, former IASA executive director, was presented with the Van Miller Award for being a change agent and scholarly practitioner in the field of education. The award, named for the 1970 IASA president, has been presented since 1986.

In accepting the award, Warfield said he felt honored to have met Miller and to understand what's behind the award, in addition to being on a list that includes previous recipients like the late G. Alan Hickrod and Ben C. Hubbard, both who were professor emeritus at Illinois State University.

Also recognized were: 2008 Superintendent of the Year, Blondean Y. Davis, superintendent of Matteson ESD 162; incoming IASA president



Panel sessions were well attended at the 43rd IASA conference, particularly this one on Response to Intervention (RtI).

Robert E. Gillum, superintendent of Ball-Chatham CUSD 5; and eight recipients of James V. and Dorothy B. Moon scholarships.

Out-going IASA president Tom Leahy, Quincy SD 172, also gave presidential awards to his school board president, Tom Dickerson; his son, Jason Leahy, executive director of the Illinois Principals Association; and his wife, Joyce.

State Web publication explains ins and outs of General State Aid

A revised version of the helpful document General State Aid – Frequently Asked Questions can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/gsa_faq.pdf. This Web publication from the state contains important information to accurately report attendance for the State Aid claim and includes topics pertaining to full and part-time attendance, home/hospital instruction, school calendar, alternative schools, special education as well as other related attendance issues.

Key excerpts:

What constitutes a full-day of student attendance?

A full-day of attendance for students in grades 2nd through 12, must be a minimum of five clock hours (300 minutes) of instruction under the direct supervision of:

(i) a certified teacher, or

(ii) non-teaching/volunteer personnel when engaging in non-teaching duties and supervising those instances specified in Section 10-22.34(a) and Section 34-18.

A full-day of attendance for students in full-day Kindergarten or 1st grade must be four clock hours (240 minutes) of instruction or more.

Attendance days may be less than 300 minutes on the opening and closing day of the term, and the first or last day of student attendance, if preceded by a day or days used as an institute or teachers' workshop.

Adverse weather conditions causing an interrupted day or delayed start to the day as well as a condition which occurs beyond the control of the school which poses a hazardous threat to health and safety of students does not prevent a school from recording a full-

day of attendance for students present; but, the school must provide at least 60 minutes of instruction.

Statutory Citations: 105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(F)(1), (F)(2)(b), 5/18-12 and 5/10-22.34
Administrative Rule: 23 Ill. Admin. Code Part 1.420(f)(4)(B)

Can students be counted present if they are in attendance for a portion of the class period?

Yes, for schools that offer a regular schedule (i.e. class periods of 40-60 minutes in length). Students in a block schedule format must accumulate minutes of actual instruction to determine a half or full-day attendance.

If you have questions regarding this document or the General State Aid claim, please contact Jim Mathes, Funding & Disbursements, at 217/782-5256 or by e-mail at jmathes@isbe.net.

IASB ally Krent receives NSBA honors for service

Nancy Fredman Krent, a partner in the firm Hodges, Loizzi, Eisenhammer, Rodick & Kohn, was recently named the recipient of the NSBA Council of School Attorneys' 2008 Award for Distinguished Service.

The award was given to Krent "for her outstanding contributions in support of the mission of the Council," according to NSBA. That mission is "to improve the practice of school law and support attorneys in their representation of public school boards by providing leadership in legal advocacy for public schools."

"I am deeply honored to receive this award from people I so admire and respect," Krent said.

Bennett Rodick and Michael A. Loizzi Jr., Krent's partners, shared with the NSBA awards committee a compelling story of her contributions to the Council and the profession of law. In their supporting letter they stated that ever since she became a partner in 1996, Krent "has always understood that representing the public schools has an extra obligation to provide *pro bono* service



Nancy Krent

to public education and to her fellow practitioners." The law firm partners praised Krent's "enormous intelligence tempered by sound judgment and, perhaps most important for someone who is a 'natural,' a generosity of spirit towards her fellow practitioners and clients."

Krent has been a member of the NSBA Council for more than 15 years, including service in various leadership posts over an 11-year period, culminating in her election as chair of the Council in 2003. She also has chaired the Council's publications committee and its Urban Law Forum.

She has long been a friend of IASB, having served as a member of the Illinois Council of School Attorneys since 1994, and having appeared on panel presentations at several joint annual conferences.

Krent has taught public school law, as well, and is a frequent speaker for NSBA's Council of School Attorneys. She is co-author of NSBA monographs on the Americans with Disabilities Act, and on selecting a school attorney, and investigating claims of sexual harassment.

Prior to joining her firm, she practiced law for 11 years in Washington, D.C., and Charlottesville, Va., in the areas of private and public sector employment law and school law.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 3 – Two Rivers Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Red Dome Inn, Pittsfield, 6 p.m. Registration

June 21 – LeaderShop Symposium
The Westin, Lombard ,
8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

August 22-23 – IASB Board of Director Retreat, Pheasant Run, St. Charles

August 23 – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting, Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles

September 16 – Professional Advancement Seminar: Seeking the Superintendency, IASB Springfield Office, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

September 18 – Professional Advancement Seminar: Seeking the Superintendency, IASB Lombard Office, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

September 25 – Southwestern Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Millstadt CCSD 160, 6 p.m.

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



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