

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD *Newsbulletin*

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The 2010 NSBA Conference drew hundreds of Illinois school board members and school administrators.

ISBE panel reviews state mandates, aims to cut unneeded items

Tired of unfunded school mandates? Lawmakers may be getting tired, too, it appears, based on initial action on House Joint Resolution 74, which was approved by the House back in March. The resolution called for establishing the Blue Ribbon Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education Mandates.

Its wording directs “that a Blue Ribbon Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education Mandates be established within the State Board of Education to review state mandates on school districts to determine whether the mandates (1) are necessary for the health and safety of students in compliance with federal laws, (2) are essential to the academic integrity of Illinois public school systems, (3) exceed federal requirements, or (4) [are] superfluous to the core academic programs of Illinois school districts...”

Even though the Illinois Senate never approved the resolution, it was clear that the will of many lawmakers was to begin to look more carefully at unfunded school mandates,

Over 900 Illinois school leaders attend 2010 NSBA conference

Chicago once again hosted the National School Boards Association Annual Conference and Exposition. Approximately 936 Illinois school board members and administrators registered and attended. Many IASB staff also joined in the events, which were held from April 9 to 12 at the new McCormick Place West.

The annual conference, which rotates among four cities, was last held in Chicago four years ago, as a replacement for hurricane-ravaged New Orleans. The other cities in the rotation are San Diego, San Francisco (2011) and Boston, which will replace

Orlando in 2012.

Attendees were inspired by high-profile speakers, including PBS show host Charlie Rose, jazz musician and arts advocate Wynton Marsalis, and Apple Computer co-founder and education advocate Steve Wozniak.

This year’s conference featured scores of board member development sessions and workshops as well as new products and services showcased at the NSBA Exposition during the four-day event. The conference also featured current national topics affecting

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Superintendents' confab will not be held this year

The Annual Superintendents' Conference has been held each fall for over 30 years as a way to gather school leaders together and share ideas as the new school year begins. But times have changed and schedules have become increasingly difficult to manage. This, as well as the state's fiscal crisis and discussions with superintendents, have caused ISBE to reevaluate the need for the conference.

In discussions about the meeting, Brent Clark, executive director of the Illinois Association of School Administrators, offered to collaborate with ISBE and included the agency in their conference held in Springfield on April 13-14, 2010. As a result, there will be no ISBE superintendents' conference this year.

State Board's meeting schedule for 2010 revised

The Illinois State Board of Education has announced several changes to its meetings schedule for 2010.

Staff presentations and detailed board discussion typically take place during committee meetings prior to the state board taking action in the plenary session. Some committee meetings will begin at the conclusion of the previous meeting.

The state board of education plenary session is always held on the morning of the second day of meetings.

State board meetings held in Springfield are always located in the 4th Floor Board Room at 100 N. First Street.

The ISBE website (<http://www.isbe.net/calendar>) contains the final meeting postings. The next meeting is scheduled for June 23-24 in Springfield.

Review of charter schools: More study needed, early results appear disappointing

Of the reliable research available, studies generally show that charter school students did better in elementary school reading and middle school math, but worse in high school. One recent study found that, overall, some charter schools (17%) do a better job than traditional public schools, but the majority do the same (46%) or worse (37%).

So said a March 24 report from the Center for Public Education (CPE), titled "Charter Schools: Finding Out the Facts," which broadly reviewed the fact and fiction behind charter schools.

For almost two decades, charters have evolved as a way to experiment with education innovations and provide public school choice. The charter school concept has attracted significant interest—and scrutiny—from the nation's education leaders. While some hail charters as a model for raising student achievement, others are harshly critical. But the public has mistaken ideas about what charter schools are, according to the study.

"There is currently a lack of research behind charter schools," said Jim Hull, senior policy analyst at CPE. "This means that states may be heading into a reform strategy without a clear understanding of whether this is a promising path to take or not."

The report also finds that reliable charter school research is still in its infancy. One analysis of existing research rejected as irrelevant 70 out of the 210 studies it found. Many studies are descriptive snapshots of a school or district's achievement, rather than examinations of achievement across states or comparisons of charter school achievement versus traditional public schooling, according to CPE.

"While it is imperative that more research and education must be done on charter schools and their impact on the traditional public schools in

their communities, it is clear that charters are poised for more growth with the U.S. Department of Education's 'Race to the Top' competition, which provides a powerful incentive for states to boost their support for charters," said Hull.

Based on the Race to the Top program incentives, Illinois recently expanded the number of charter schools allowed by state law. Gov. Patrick Quinn signed the bill last July, which doubled the number of charter schools allowed in the state.


The Center for Public Education, which supported the new study about charter schools, is a national resource for information about public education and its importance to the well-being of the nation. The Center provides up-to-date research, data, and analysis on current education issues and explores ways to improve student achievement and engage public support for public schools. The Center is an initiative of the National School Boards Association. For more information, visit the Center website at: <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org>.

Illinois
SCHOOL BOARD
Newsbulletin

**Illinois Association
of School Boards**

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**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

education leaders in their local districts, including school district implementation of the federal economic stimulus package.

Several Illinois school districts made panel presentations. Panels are listed by district, location, title and participants:

- **Benjamin School District 25**, West Chicago; *Attracting and Retaining the Best Staff Through the PeeWee PALS Program*; Moderator: Philip Ehrhardt, superintendent; Presenters: Jack Buscemi, board member; and Jan Bedard, president
- **Calumet Public SD 132**, Calumet Park; *A Place to Call Home*; Moderator: Elizabeth Reynolds, superintendent; Presenters: Ernestine Stover, president; Barbara Thomas, board member; and Josephine Tate, union vice-president
- **Chicago SD 299**, Chicago; *Mathematics in a Spiky World: Creating Opportunities that Promote Competitiveness*; Presenters: Shawn Smith, chief area officer; Ann Chavez, curriculum director, Area 13; and Nicholas Gaines, resident principal, New Leaders for New Schools
- **Glenview CCSD 34**, *The School Board Fieldbook: Leading with Vision*; Moderator: Perry Soldwedel, associate director for systems change, Consortium for Educational Change; Presenters: Mark Van Clay, educational consultant, Consortium for Educational Change; Beth Primer, board president
- **Lake Villa CCSD 41**, *District Dashboard: A Progress Monitoring and Reporting Tool to Improve Student Achievement and Organizational Performance*; Moderator: John Van Pelt, superintendent; Presenters: Alex Barbour, executive director of teaching and learning; Darla Vanderwall, board president and Joanne Osmond, board member
- **Matteson ESD 162**, *Beating the Odds...and Then Some*; Moderator: Alicia Rodman-McCray, board president; Presenters: Roger Pri-



Illinois school leaders were among the presenters of the NSBA event, including Jack Buscemi, of Benjamin SD 25, a 40-year veteran school board member.



IASB staffed a booth at the NSBA event to share information about Association services, goods and ideas. Administrative Assistant Dana Heckrodt (right) explained IASB offerings to many visitors.

- etz, director of technology; Blondean Davis, superintendent; Ron Bean, board vice president; Brian Ali, associate superintendent
- **Northbrook ESD 27**, *Interest-Based Bargaining at its Best: A Culture of Collaboration that is Efficient and Effective*; Moderator: David Kroeze, superintendent; Presenters: Jennifer Warner, board president, and Sheila Streets, president, Faculty Leadership; Theresa Fournier, assistant superintendent of personnel; and Kimberly Arakelian, assistant superintendent, finance and operations
- **Palos CCSD 118**, Palos Park; *Naturalizing Digital Immigrants: Supporting Technology Initiatives to Transform Teaching and Learning*; Moderator: Margaret Johnson, assistant superintendent for teaching and learning; Presenters: Catherine Maier, board secretary; Kathleen Svanascini, board member; Deborah Balayti, coordinator of teaching and learning technologies
- **Pleasantdale SD 107**, Burr Ridge; *Data Analysis: A Critical Path to Improved Achievement*; Modera-

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- tor: Patti Essig, board member; Presenters: Mark Fredisdorf, superintendent; Leandra Sedlack, president and Rick Rigley, board member; Mia Mologousis, student
- **Schaumburg CCSD 54; *Forming a Collaborative Working Relationship with Your Unions***; Moderator: Karen Strykowski, board president; Presenters: Teresa Huber, board member; Carmel Cottrell, president, Schaumburg Education Association; Kathy Jesuit, president, Schaumburg Educational Employees Organization
 - **Steger SD 194; *Get Them, Grow Them, Keep Them...Retaining High Quality Educators***; Moderator: Lisa Harrod, assistant superintendent; Presenters: John Geraci and John Kaminski, board members
 - **Tinley Park CCSD 146; *A Digital Journey from Computer Labs to Digital Classrooms***; Moderator: Marion Hoyda, superintendent; Presenters: Nancy Schwab, director of curriculum; Dean Casper, board president; George Paulson, systems administrator; Denise Bettenhausen, assistant superintendent
 - **Township HSD 211, Palatine; *Building Bridges with Parents: An Essential Strategy for Improving Both Student Health and Academic Achievement***; Moderator: Linda Sheriff, coordinator, School Health Programs, NSBA; Presenters: Mary Haley, director, Partner Programs, Action for Healthy Kids, Amanda Martinez, project associate, Coordinated School Health, NSBA; Debra Strauss, president, Illinois PTA, and board secretary, Township HSD 211
 - **Wheaton Warrenville CUSD 200; *Going Paperless: How to Implement a Fully Automated Paperless Board Meeting Solution***; Moderator: Frank Resta, CEO and President, ElectronicSchoolBoard by InterCom Network; Presenter: Mary Lou Sender, board secretary
 - **Zion-Benton THSD 126; *Integrating Technology and Teaching to Create Future Leaders***; Presenters:

Chris Clark, superintendent; and Lee Fleming, senior school development coach, New Tech Network

In addition to the above panel sessions, Township High School District 214, hosted an all-day “winning strategies” site visit to showcase technolo-



The reigning National Teacher of the Year Anthony Mullen speaks.



Mia Mologousis, a student from Pleasantdale District 107, also was a presenter.

gy approaches. Visitors got a first-hand look at how a well-planned infrastructure can help support learning. Besides three school visits, the session featured roundtable discussions that incorporated administrative considerations, planning, professional development and the costs required to execute the strategies on display.

Delegate Assembly

Several Illinois board members also participated in the NSBA Delegate Assembly held on April 9. Voting on 20 new resolutions and 19 amendments were IASB President Joe Alessandrini, a delegate to the national

assembly, and immediate past president Mark C. Metzger, who co-chairs the policies and resolutions committee for NSBA. In addition to Alessandrini, other NSBA delegates from Illinois were IASB Vice President Carolyn Brooks, and IASB directors Tariq Butt and Joanne Osmond.

After a sometimes impassioned discussion, the assembly defeated amendments that would have added either one or three state executive directors as voting members to NSBA's board of directors.

Because they would have been constitutional changes, each proposal needed a two-thirds majority to pass. The committee proposal, which would have added one voting member, received 51 percent of votes and was defeated. Earlier, a proposal to add three voting members was defeated, with 65 percent voting no.

The delegates also narrowly defeated (with 63 percent “yes” votes) a proposal to increase the number of directors elected by region, rather than at-large, from 10 to 15. Currently, five of the 15 regional directors are elected at-large, and 10 are elected from their NSBA regions.

“Although the two proposals fell short of the required votes for a constitutional change, I would hope that the discussion would bring further attention to the fact that the federation members, the state associations, have a need for better communication and a more cooperative organizational structure within NSBA,” said Alessandrini.

He explained that the need for better communication is especially prominent as NSBA embarks on its new mission and vision. “With the current issues facing public education in Illinois and across the United States, IASB and NSBA must work together to provide the resources for our local boards of education for excellence in local school governance,” Alessandrini said. “For IASB to be effective on federal educational policy, we must

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NSBA Delegate Assembly blasts NCLB as 'unworkable'

Delegates vote to push for revisions to ESEA

The federal government means well, but Congress and the administration still have a lot to learn when it comes to supporting public schools and helping local school boards raise student achievement. So said members of NSBA's Delegate Assembly in passing a comprehensive resolution on reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

"NSBA believes the intent and stated objectives of the current law are laudable," the resolution states. Nevertheless, it "generally fails to acknowledge or build upon the work in many states to implement effective accountability systems that are often as good as or better than the current system."

"Further," the document adds, "many key provisions of the current law are unworkable, too costly, and inconsistent with effective state efforts to raise student achievement."

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has said he wants to make big changes in ESEA, which was commonly known as No Child Left Behind under the Bush Administration. But in discussions at NSBA's assembly, delegates expressed concern about several of the proposals.



The 2010 NSBA Delegate Assembly made strong recommendations on NCLB.

One includes changing the governance structure of low-performing schools as one of four options for addressing the needs of the lowest performing 5 percent of schools in a state. But the administration has not clarified what that change would entail or whether school boards would still be in control, said Michael A. Resnick, NSBA's associate executive director for advocacy.

This approach would also be a problem for small states, especially those that have high performing schools and minimal differences between them, said some advocates. They said that to identify the lowest 5 percent in some of the top-performing states in the country is absurd.

The delegates also were concerned by a proposal to combine many targeted federal grant programs and convert them into larger competitive grants, saying such a change would

favor large district that could afford grant writers.

Another administration proposal — rewarding teachers based on student achievement — could run into problems in places where more than half of children enter kindergarten not knowing either their letters, colors, or numbers.

The delegates approved a comprehensive, two-page resolution that addresses these and many other concerns.

NSBA policy is determined by a 150-member Delegate Assembly and reflected in its constitution and bylaws, beliefs and policies, and resolutions. It's then up to the organization's 25-member board of directors to translate this policy into action.

At this year's Delegate Assembly session, representatives approved 20 resolutions and 19 revisions/additions to NSBA's beliefs and policies. The topics covered the scope of public education, from the achievement gap to federal impact aid to standards and testing.

The next annual NSBA conference is scheduled for April 9-11, 2011, in San Francisco. To learn more about this year's event, visit NSBA's conference website at: <http://www.nsba.org/conference/>.

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advocate collectively as a national association for support of public education, and that will require more open and consistent dialogue between the associations," Alesandrini added.

Other Illinois delegates agreed with some of the proposals to change NSBA governance. Metzger said he was in favor of a proposal to add three state executive directors as voting members, "but I was opposed to a proposal to add five. I feel the latter was a proposal in search of a problem."

For more information about the 2010 NSBA delegate assembly issues and actions taken, visit: <http://www.nsba.org/FunctionNav/AboutNSBA/NSBAGovernance.aspx>.

Flossmoor District 161 was one of 15 Magna Award honorable mention winners in an annual competition recognizing innovative solutions to the challenges faced in public education today. School board and district best practices are honored each year at the NSBA conference during a special luncheon.

School design awards

Illinois had five districts of the 59 awards given to recognize outstanding projects in the Exhibition of School Architecture. **Niles THSD 219's** STEM labs at Niles North and Niles West received one of just four Citations awarded in the competition. Legat

Architects Inc. of Chicago was praised.

IASB staff also participated in panels, workshops and other conference events.

The IASB staff and Association officers also hosted the Illinois reception on Friday at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. Hundreds of guests from Illinois and other state associations were invited. Assistant to the Executive Director Pat Culler said, "This was really a terrific event because it brought together so many board members from around the state for informal discussions over common concerns." The reception was co-sponsored by PMA Financial Network, RBC Global Asset Management, and FGM Architects.

LeaderShop Academy Symposium to feature Nowlan in keynote

The fourth biennial School Board LeaderShop Academy Invitational Symposium, “Building Trust through Transparency,” is set for June 12 in Lombard from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. 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 biennial symposium. The event program this year features Jim Nowlan, Senior Fellow, University of Illinois, Institute of Government and Public Affairs. A former Illinois lawmaker and college professor, Nowlan has long been an advocate of transparency in government. He will present the keynote address for the symposium entitled Building Trust Through

Transparency.

The morning session concludes with a panel entitled Perceptions on Transparency, moderated by Melinda Selbee, General Counsel, IASB, and presented by Merry Rhoades, Attorney, Tueth, Cooper, Mohan and Jackstadt, P.C. and Cara Smith, Public Access Counselor, Office of the Illinois Attorney General. The afternoon session will include a small group activity and a Transparency wrap-up.

Tuition for the one-day Symposium is \$195 per person and includes materials, continental breakfast and lunch. The event will be held at the Westin Lombard Yorktown Center, a hotel located at an outdoor shopping and recreation center in 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 now available online on IASB’s Members-Only website.

To learn more about School Board LeaderShop, curriculum offerings or the Academy, visit the IASB website at http://www.iasb.com/training/leadershop_info.cfm.

To register for the Symposium, contact: Judy Williams, phone 217/528-9688, ext. 1103.

Promoting student success is focus of upcoming High School Challenge

High school leaders are being reminded to make reservations now to attend the fourth annual High School Challenge, “Promoting Student Success: A Variety of Approaches,” June 14 and 15 at the Doubletree Hotel in Bloomington.

The conference is sponsored by the Coalition for Illinois High Schools, made up of several organizations including IASB, along with the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Federation of Teachers, the Illinois Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois High School Association. The event is designed for all those involved with and interested in the work of Illinois high schools. The purpose is to provide educators with tools they need to prepare students for the world in which they will live and work.



High School leaders encountered an array of fun and thought providing speakers at the 2009 High School Challenge.

Conference breakout session strands will include: national, state and local initiatives, curriculum and instruction, and tools and technology. Conference participants will leave the conference with:

- Practical strategies that have improved student performance in Illinois high schools;
- Tools that can be used for data analy-

sis and decision making;

- Research-based strategies that support student learning;
- Information about practical follow-up support for Illinois high schools.

Those encouraged to attend include superintendents, school administrators, teachers, school board members, curriculum directors, special education and ELL directors, ROE/ISC/RESPRO staff, business leaders and university personnel. Participants are especially encouraged to bring a district team.

The workshop fee is \$180 per participant for two days or \$100 for a single day. This fee includes two continental breakfasts, two buffet lunches, sponsored social hour and all materials. Overnight accommodations are available from the Doubletree Hotel at 1-309/664-6446.

For questions, call 309/663-6377.

Staff changes logged in May include Blair, Love retirements

A number of staff changes recently have been announced by IASB.

Douglas P. Blair, Senior Director of Field Services, retired on April 30, 2010, after 34 years with the Association. He began his career with IASB on Aug. 23, 1976. Blair, a former school superintendent, was a field services director until two years ago when he transferred full time to the search department.

"Doug has been the face of IASB to board members, superintendents, the ISBE state superintendent advisory council, and the IHSA," said Michael D. Johnson, IASB executive director emeritus, adding that Blair was one of the first people that he had met when he was contemplating becoming a superintendent. "I was told, 'You needed to meet Doug if you wanted to be a superintendent,' and it was true.

"He has been part of the IASB cul-



Doug Blair



Dave Love

ture that has allowed us to grow, expand and always serve Illinois education. He will truly be missed," Johnson said.

Dave Love, director of field services to the Egyptian, Illini, Shawnee and Wabash Valley divisions, also has announced his retirement, effective June 30. Love has been with the Association for 10 years.

Also retiring recently was Kora Searcy, conference registration assistant, Meetings Management. She stepped down in May, after a 10-year career.

T+L Conference in Phoenix this fall to focus on critical issues facing public schools today

Plans are well underway for the 2010 T+L Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, Oct. 19-21, which NSBA calls THE technology and learning conference for school leaders.

Organizers say the T+L experience includes hands-on sessions, district workshops, site visits, exhibits, and networking opportunities for every member of a school district team.

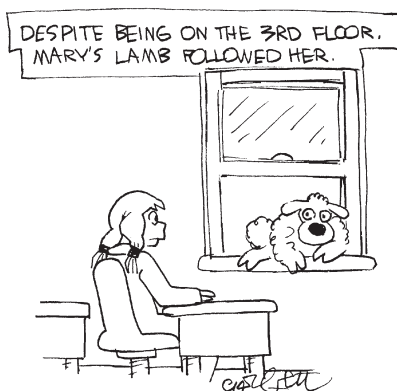
This year's conference will focus on the critical issues facing schools today including strategies designed for tough economic times, technology and the law, and various methods of preparing tomorrow's workforce.

"At T+L you'll learn in interactive district-led sessions and small group roundtables where you can share ideas and concerns, and you will hear from education experts with an eye on the future," said NSBA Exec-

utive Director Anne Bryant.

Bryant says the confab can help change the way school leaders think about education as they share successes, uncover new strategies, and gain new perspectives on the challenges facing their districts.

For more information, visit the T+L Conference website at: <http://www.nsba.org/tl/>.



NEWS FROM IASB

Nominations sought for Association officers

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

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

- leadership experience and general participation in IASB activities
- leadership experience on the local school board
- involvement with other education-related associations or organizations
- other leadership experiences
- special talent or interests of benefit to the Association as currently 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 2010 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.

Governance meetings list available on events calendar

IASB division governing meetings scheduled for this spring and summer, and other IASB meetings and events, are listed on the calendar page on the Association's website at <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/>. The string of division governing meetings this year began in late April, and the final such meeting will be held on July 29.

Winners for 'best school board coverage' receive Cole Awards

Winners of the Illinois Press Association contest for "Best School Board Coverage" were announced April 30 at the IPA editorial-advertising convention in Springfield.

IASB co-sponsors the competition and presents the "Robert M. Cole Awards" to the first-place winners in six circulation categories. The award is named for IASB's first full-time executive director. This year's top winners, including the award winner, the newspaper, the headline of the winning article, and a brief judge's comment:

- **Jana Michaels** - *The Doings*, Hinsdale (weeklies division A) "Terrific reporting on schools' response to a suicide."
- **Erin Sauder** - *Lemont Reporter/Met*, Suburban Life Publications (weeklies division B) "Delineates the road to a school finance referendum."
- **Terry Dean** - *Wednesday Jour-*

nal, Oak Park (weeklies division C) "Describes why a district superintendent chose to retire."

- **Mark Malone** - *Morris Daily Herald* (dailies division D) "Examines one school district's journey to become a beacon of student achievement."
- **Holly Wagner** - *Quincy Herald-Whig* (dailies division E) "On spending cuts: There is no joy in what we're doing."
- **Jodi Heckel** - *The News-Gazette*, Champaign (dailies division F) "Great coverage regarding the end of a consent decree, and other major board issues."

The competition recognizes "outstanding coverage of education issues that emphasize the community's connection with its local public school district." Entries were judged on:

- their contribution to public understanding of local school governance



Reporter Erin Sauder of the *Lemont Reporter* (left) receives a Cole Awards plaque from IASB Associate Executive Director of Communications James Russell on April 30.

- their support for effective dialogue that helps the community and school board define major public policy issues

Members of the IASB communications staff judged the entries and considered enterprise, depth of reporting and clarity of writing.

Only two strikes seen among 11 contract dispute settlements this fiscal year

School districts that have had a notice of intent to strike filed with the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board in the current fiscal year are listed below. Settlements have been reached in all 11 school districts that have received such notices, according to data provided by the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board.

In short, there are no active strikes and no school district is on notice at this time. In fact, all but two of the 11 districts listed below settled their contract disputes during 2009; two of the listed districts settled in January 2010.

Settled

Kankakee SD 111 - IASB Region - Three Rivers; Bargaining Unit Size: 360 IFT/AFT Teachers; Notice Filed: Dec. 12, 2009, Strike Date: Jan. 19, 2010; Settled: Jan. 22, 2010.

Peoria SD 150 - IASB Region - Central Illinois Valley; Bargaining Unit

Size: 1150 IFT/AFT Certified Personnel; Notice Filed: July 2, 2009; Settled: Jan. 5, 2010.

Prairie-Hills ESD 144, Markham - IASB Region - South Cook; Bargaining Unit Size: 200 IFT/AFT Certificated Teachers; Notice Filed: Nov. 17, 2009; Settled Dec. 14, 2009.

Sandridge SD 172, Chicago Heights - IASB Region - South Cook; 29 IEA/NEA Certified Personnel; Notice Filed: Nov. 18, 2009; Settled Dec. 12, 2009.

Leyden CHSD 212, Franklin Park - IASB Region - West Cook; Bargaining Unit Size: 269 IFT/AFT Certificated Teachers; Notice Filed: Oct. 29, 2009; Settled Nov. 16, 2009.

Schiller Park SD 81 - IASB Region - West Cook; Bargaining Unit Size: 109 IEA/NEA Certified Teaching Personnel; Notice Filed: Oct. 28, 2009; Settled Nov. 11, 2009.

North Shore SD 112, Highland

Park - IASB Region - Lake; Bargaining Unit Size: 450 IEA/NEA Certified Teachers; Notice Filed: Oct. 9, 2009; Settled Nov. 9, 2009.

Ottawa THSD 140 - IASB Region - Starved Rock; Bargaining Unit Size: 110 IEA/NEA Certified Teachers; Notice Filed: Sep. 1, 2009; Strike Date: Sep. 30, 2009; Settled Oct. 29, 2009.

Flossmoor SD 161, Chicago Heights - IASB Region - South Cook; Bargaining Unit Size: 187 IEA/NEA Certified Staff; Notice Filed: Sep. 23, 2009; Settled Oct. 1, 2009.

Hononegah CHSD 207, Rockton - IASB Region - Kishwaukee; Bargaining Unit Size: 132 IEA/NEA Teachers; Notice Filed: Aug. 17, 2009; Settled: Aug. 19, 2009.

O'Fallon THSD 203 - IASB Region - Southwestern; Bargaining Unit Size: 147 IFT/AFT Certified Personnel; Notice Filed: July 31, 2009; Settled: Aug. 11, 2009.

NEWS HEADLINES

Maple Park (April 13, *The Daily Herald*) Kaneland CUSD 302 teachers have postponed their own raises for the 2010-11 school year – a move expected to save the district \$1.1 million, as well as the jobs of the equivalent of 110 full-time workers. School leaders say it restores middle and high school clubs, sports and other activities cut in March when the board was trimming the 2010-11 budget to try to avoid running a deficit. The move was announced at the beginning of a board meeting during which the board was due to discuss a second round of budget cuts, based on potential loss of state aid.

Moline, Rock Island (April 20, *Quad-Cities Times*) Hundreds of Rock Island and Moline parents are using the social networking site Facebook as a key tool in their fight to save music programs from the budget ax. The “Save the RIHS music department!” page on Facebook, launched on April 16 after stories about cuts to jazz band, chamber choir and orchestra began circulating, had more than 800 members by April 19. School officials noted, however, that nothing had been decided about making cuts to the music programs in either district. But the Facebook page opposes middle school curriculum changes that would eliminate general music for all sixth-grade students, limit general music for seventh-graders to one term and limit eighth-graders to a single term combined art and general music course.

Peoria (April 19, *Journal-Star*) With state aid for early childhood programs in doubt, District 150 board members are questioning previous plans for the renovation of Lincoln Middle School. Between \$14 and 17 million has been set aside for the renovation of Lincoln middle school

to accommodate more pre-k and other students. On April 19, board members revisited the construction plans and discussed the possibility of holding off on building four early childhood classrooms. A million dollars would be freed up by holding off on the full-scale Lincoln school addition.

Pingree Grove (April 20, *The Courier-News*, Elgin) A local charter school plans to expand its spending on technology in the coming school year, even as Carpentersville CUSD 300 considers cuts to such expenditures. The school, Cambridge Lakes Charter School, is located within District 300. But while the district has made all its required payments to the school, the state has not paid the district the “transitional” funding it owes. That is 90 percent of what the district would pay the charter school in year one, 66 percent in year two and 33 percent in year three. Illinois has made only about half those payments, shorting the district by more than \$4.6 million. That is in addition to the \$12 million the state already owes the district. Those financial gaps reportedly are the reason the school board has voted to lay off 180 teachers.

Statewide (May 1, *The Daily Herald*) State Superintendent Chris Koch warned local schools in Naperville on April 30 that they should expect continued delays of state payments and he urged them to contact lawmakers and explain the consequences of the state budget not being balanced. Ongoing school layoffs will quickly impact the quality of education, Koch said. Gov. Pat Quinn and lawmakers used \$1 billion in federal stimulus money to prop up education spending for this past year. But that money is gone and the state doesn't have the mon-

ey to fill the budget hole. Overall, the state's fiscal plan is nearly \$13 billion in the red, and billions of dollars in past-due payments to schools, businesses and social service providers are stacking up in state offices. Many schools have responded by trying to shame the state into paying, posting the amounts due on their electronic message boards.

Statewide (April 22, *The State Journal-Register*, Springfield) As many as 15,000 people turned out at the Statehouse for a rally organized by a collection of education, social service and state worker groups calling itself the Responsible Budget Coalition. The coalition's rally aimed to pressure lawmakers to approve a tax increase and avert major budget cuts this spring. Gov. Pat Quinn said he hoped the rally would push lawmakers to vote on his proposed tax increase, which would go towards funding education. Lawmakers in both parties, however, think meaningful movement on a budget solution probably won't take place until after the general election in November.

Taylor Ridge (April 8, *The Times Record*, Aledo) The Rockridge CUSD 300 Board of Education agreed to nearly \$629,000 in cuts for fiscal year 2011 after coming out of closed session on April 5. Cuts approved included: eliminating pre-kindergarten to save \$212,326, eliminating drug testing to save \$38,000, holding off on a bus purchase to save \$66,290, and saving around \$70,000 by eliminating years three and four of a teacher mentoring program. The board also approved another \$174,143 in savings to be obtained by reducing four certified staff positions. Another major cost reduction was a 20 percent across-the-board cut in all supply line items, saving \$160,000.

Administrators urged to 'change conversation' about education

IASA conference hears Draper, other presenters

School administrators need to be realistic, but they need to be realistically positive. That was the message from John Draper, CEO of the Educational Research Service in Alexandria, Virginia. Draper was the distinguished lecturer and one of four featured speakers during the 45th Annual Conference of the Illinois Association of School Administrators held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield.

Draper urged administrators to "change the conversation" about education in their communities and to dispel myths about schools, such as they're not safe anymore, that districts aren't closing the achievement gap, charter schools do a better job and that kids suffer because poor teachers make the same pay as good teachers.

He suggested that the conversation focus on four topics:

1. All children can learn;
2. Ability is equally distributed among children regardless of race or ethnicity;
3. Standardized testing gives an inadequate, incomplete picture of student performance; and
4. Schools have a difficult task trying to negate the ill effects of poverty, dysfunctional families and unsafe communities.

The achievement gap, he said, is a secondary result of problems associated with the fourth item.

"The public doesn't hear the music of public schools," Draper said. School administrators need to search for simple but profound statements in order for communities to hear and understand their messages. "You need to make your message unexpected. Be concrete ... and always use stories."

Other conference highlights included:

- Ingrid Carney, founder and CEO of Carney for Kids Educational Con-



Discussion panels at the IASA event drew a thoughtful responsive audience.

sulting and a 30-year veteran of Chicago Public School, told administrators that the most important thing they could do to turn their district's student achievement is to invest in people.

- Al Bertani, an independent educational consultant, challenged school leaders to address the times during the day when students aren't using technology. Research shows the "valleys" of usage are during school; the peaks are before school, at lunch and after school/evenings. "Why aren't we implementing what we know is best practice?" Bertani asked, urging administrators to believe that change can happen and to stay focused on learning.
- Rich Miller, author of "The Capitol Fax" blog, said things are "bleak but it's going to get bleaker" as far as Illinois finances are concerned. "We don't have any money, man," he said. "This state is broke."
- Senator Deanna Demuzio (D-49, Carlinville), Representative Roger Eddy (R-109, Hutsonville) and Darren Reisberg, deputy superintendent/chief legal counsel, Illinois State Board of Education, participated in the closing state education update session. Reisberg said ISBE is trying to provide "more flexibility and relief" for districts in terms of special education requirements that have been tighter since 2000 because of the Corey H. court decision. Demuzio and Eddy both referenced possible supplemental appropriations that would allow districts to receive their fourth-quarter state payments on time, but offered no assurance that second and third-quarter payments would

be made.

- Brent Clark, IASA executive director, advised superintendents, "It's time to bring your 'A' game ... as individuals and as a group" because districts and superintendents are being scrutinized more than ever before. Getting schools out of this current fiscal crisis will depend on "those who can lead and make the difference." He also announced that IASA's first cohort in its School for Advanced Leadership will begin in the fall.

In other business, IASA honored Ed Rafferty, superintendent at **Schaumburg CCSD 54**, as the 2010 Illinois Superintendent of the Year. "There is no greater honor than to be recognized by your colleagues and peers for the work we love to be doing," Rafferty said.

James Burgett, who currently heads Burgett Group Consulting, was honored as the 2010 recipient of the Van Miller Distinguished Practitioner Scholar Award. The award is presented by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for leadership in school administration. Burgett's educational career included serving as superintendent in Elizabeth before it consolidated into **River Ridge CUSD 210** in 1985 and then at **Highland CUSD 5**.

The recipients of \$3,000 James V. and Dorothy B. Moon scholarships for continuing education were Adam Bussard, Jr./Sr. High School principal, **Brownstown CUSD 201**; Paul Herel, associate superintendent, **Des Plaines CCSD 62**; Aaron Hoper, principal, **Panhandle CUSD 2**; Patrick Martin, superintendent, **Illini Central CUSD 189**; and Brent Raby, director of grants and learning, **McHenry CHSD 156**.

The 2010 IASA Exemplary Service to Education Award was presented to IASB field services and executive searches director Doug Blair. It is presented annually to individuals in recognition of exemplary leadership contributions to Illinois public schools.

Districts named to share success at conference

A total of 32 winning proposals have been chosen from among more than 100 panel topic suggestions submitted by school districts for presentations at the 2010 Joint Annual Conference. (See list at right of panels chosen to be presented at the 2010 conference.)

The school district winners are being invited by mail to present 90-minute “Share the Success” panel sessions at the IASB/IASA/IASBO conference, to be held Nov. 19-21 in Chicago.

Panel proposals were evaluated on key points, including: 1) interest or relevance for today’s leaders; 2) clarity and conciseness of proposed presentation; 3) clarity of objectives and whether they are realistic in a 90-minute session; 4) evidence regarding whether the presentation will address the appropriate school board role on the chosen topic; and 5) evidence of creativity and an innovative approach to the issue or topic.

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according to State Superintendent of Education Chris Koch. As a result, Koch appointed the blue ribbon committee in April.

The committee, which included an IASB representative, met for the first time on April 13, at the state board of education’s Springfield office.

“Members agreed that the need to address the problem of unfunded school mandates is particularly strong now that state funding is essentially declining,” explained IASB’s representative, Michael D. Johnson, the Association’s executive director emeritus.

The committee was assigned to make recommendations to the General Assembly on the elimination of unnecessary and costly mandates in the School Code and the Administrative Code.

Panel chart

Title	District/Organization
Save Energy and Money within a Tight Budget	SEDAC/University of Illinois
Strategic Planning: Balcony & Dance Floor	Lincolnwood SD 74
Just the Facts	Woodland CCSD 50, Gurnee
Maintaining Educational Quality in Times of Financial Need	Summit Hill SD 161, Frankfort
Rtl “It Doesn’t Happen Overnight”	Taylorville CUSD 3
Alternative Education: “LeRoy Preparatory Academy”	LeRoy CUSD 2
Rtl: Creating a Cultural Shift at the High School Level	Pekin CHSD 303
Excellence is Our Standard	Wood Dale SD 7
Realizing the Vision—21st Century Skills for All Students and Staff	Wheaton Warrenville CUSD 200
First to Cooperate for High School Success	Paris CUSD 4
Creating a “School Within a School” Magnet Program	Aurora East USD 131
Improving Student Achievement by Integrating Exercise and Academics	Sycamore CUSD 427
Establishing Policy and Practices that Make Achievement Soar	DeKalb CUSD 428
Getting Greener, Saving Money Through LEED-EB Certification	Adlai E. Stevenson HSD 125, Lincolnshire
How to Pass a Referendum During Severe Economic Times	Avoca SD 37, Wilmette
Professional Appraisal System	Evanston-Skokie CCSD 65
Interest-Based Bargaining at Its Best	Northbrook ESD 27
Forming Collaborative Working Relationships with Your Unions	Schaumburg CCSD 54
WIRED for a Global Mindset	Arlington Heights SD 25
LEED for Existing Buildings Made Easy	Niles THSD 219, Skokie
PBIS + PLC = A FORMULA FOR STUDENT SUCCESS	Byron CUSD 226
Supporting Technology Initiatives to Transform Teaching & Learning	Palos CCSD 118, Palos Park
How to Build Better, More Targeted Relationships with your Community and Alumni	Argo CHSD 217, Summit
A Primer on Safe Routes to School	Cook County SD 130, Blue Island
A Road Map for Rtl Compliance	Massac CUSD 1, Metropolis
Natural disaster to new school with a detour through Wal-Mart	Ottawa ESD 141
No Recess? No Problem! An Innovative Instructional Program	Berwyn North SD 98
10 Steps for Creating an Effective District Strategic Plan	Oak Park ESD 97
Creating a District Culture that Embraces Data	LaGrange SD 105
Grow Community Members and Community Leaders for Tomorrow	Macomb CUSD 185
High Tech Dreams, Low Budget Reality	Red Hill CUSD 10, Bridgeport
Building an Entrepreneurship Program	Effingham CUSD 40

Quinn signs state pension reform law reducing benefits for future teachers

Gov. Pat Quinn signed a law on April 14 that will require new teachers and many state employees to work until age 67 before collecting a full pension, saving the state fully \$220 billion over 35 years. SB 1946 (Cullerton, D-Chicago) changes provisions of the state pension systems for new hires only. The change will not affect anyone now participating in a state pension system, including the Teachers' Retirement System, only those who enter into a pension system after the effective date of the act, Jan. 1, 2011.

For the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), the bill:

- Calculates the final average salary for pension purposes using the highest average of eight consecutive years during the last 10 years (currently uses four years of the last 10 years)
- Increases the age to realize full pension benefits to 67 years old with at least 10 years of service credit in the system
- Allows for retirement at age 62 with lower retirement annuity
- Limits the annual average salary for pensionable purposes at \$106,800 (indexed to a calculation using the

consumer price index)

- Reduces the survivor annuity under certain circumstances
- Reduces the cost of living adjustment

The full bill text can be found at:
<http://www.ilga.gov/>

By the end of the current fiscal year, taxpayers will owe state pension funds \$78 billion, including \$44 billion to pensions covering public school teachers and administrators.

That's about \$6,000 for each of the 13 million people living in the state.

To pay it, the state keeps borrowing money — \$3.5 billion so far this fiscal year.

"Borrowing is just a tax on the future," said R. Eden Martin, president of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, one of several groups proposing change.

A recent survey by the Pew Center on the States found Illinois' pension debt is the largest in the nation. Partly as a consequence, the state has the second-lowest credit rating in the country, behind only California, according to the bond evaluators Fitch Ratings. That makes it more difficult to get loans and increases the cost of borrowing.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 14-15 – Illinois High School Challenge Conference, Illinois High School Challenge Conference, Doubletree Hotel, Bloomington

June 23 – South Cook Executive/Governing Board Meeting, Rich Central High School, Olympia Fields

June 24 – West Cook Executive Committee and Governing Board Meeting, Leyden High School, Franklin Park

June 29 – Three Rivers Division Executive Committee & Governing Board Meeting, Prairie Bluff Golf Club, Lockport

August 12 – New Superintendents Luncheon, IASB, Springfield

August 27-28 – IASB Board of Directors' Retreat/Meeting, Marriott Oak Brook Hills Resort, Oak Brook

For additional information about coming events, see the IASB website at www.iasb.com/calendar/.