

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

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The National School Boards Association's 74th yearly conference in New Orleans featured well-attended general sessions such as this one led by Sir Ken Robinson.

Nearly 400 Illinois school leaders represented at NSBA convention

Nearly 400 Illinois school leaders represented 97 Illinois school districts at the National School Boards Association's 74th Annual Conference in New Orleans April 4-7.

This year's conference featured over 200 panel sessions and workshops, and over 300 vendors showcasing various school related products in the exhibition hall, including several that are members of IASB Service Associates.

Standout general session speakers included *New York Times* columnist and best-selling author Thomas Friedman, innovation and creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson, and former NBA star Earvin "Magic" Johnson. The widely attended general sessions showcased NSBA's "Stand Up 4 Public Schools" campaign and highlighted extraordinary arts and music programs from public schools throughout the country.

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Annual conference registration, housing going online June 9

The 2014 Joint Annual Conference will once again be headquartered at the Hyatt Regency Chicago and Sheraton Chicago hotels. This year's event, with the theme "Make the Connection," will be the 100th annual conference of IASB and the 82nd joint annual conference with IASA and Illinois ASBO.

Conference registration and housing will be available via the IASB website beginning on June 9. The forms may be filled in online, but the appropriate number of copies of each must be printed and mailed to IASB.

The completed forms will need to be mailed to the IASB Meetings Management Department in Springfield (only, not the Lombard office), including a check with the appropriate fees for each form – \$405 per person for each registrant (family members complimentary) and \$200 nonrefundable deposit for each guestroom.

All the necessary forms and

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GPS systems increasingly used to improve busing, safety

A growing number of Illinois school districts are using Global Positioning System (GPS) tags to track children and instantly inform school personnel and parents when and where they have gotten on

and off district school buses.

Participating school districts have been outfitting buses with the necessary card scanners linked to the school transportation office, and giving kids electronic reader cards to enable par-

ents and school officials to track kids and buses. Several companies offer such systems and a great many school districts in the state now use this GPS technology either on district buses or

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Excel nominations sought

ISBE is reminding school leaders that the deadline to submit nominations for the 2014-2015 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year competition is June 9. School board members are traditionally underrepresented among the winners, but they are eligible for the awards. For more information, visit the website at: http://www.isbe.net/those_who_excel.htm.

KIDS Survey: Year three

Adopted by ISBE in 2012, the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) is a comprehensive process designed to assess kindergarten students' growth and development and provide information about students' competencies, with the goal of generating more effective classroom instruction. KIDS records students' progress over time. To date 128 districts have participated in the pilot and received training to implement it in their kindergarten classrooms. FY 15 will be the third implementation year, with statewide implementation in FY16. KIDS trainings will be held regionally beginning in July. To inquire about participating next year, contact the Division of Early Childhood at 217/524-4835. To learn more log onto the ISBE KIDS page at www.isbe.net/KIDS or www.illinoiskids.org.

Guide covers STEM

ISBE reports that the Pathways Resource Center at the U of I has released a free guide to help educators build and improve rigorous study programs in STEM fields. The guide, with an emphasis on assisting secondary school and district administrators and faculty in this work, is available online at <http://pathways.illinois.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/POS-Supplement-Web.pdf>.

Local ability to pay a focus of funding reform bill introduction

The first draft of legislation to make major changes in the way schools are funded in Illinois was introduced in the first week of April by members of the Senate Education Funding Advisory Committee. The legislation, Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 16 (SB 16), was developed to address the state's current funding system. It incorporates many of the ideas discussed as a part of the state's recent Education Funding Advisory Committee (EFAC) deliberations.



Chris Koch

The goal, lawmakers said, is to develop a funding system where the majority of state funding is means tested and distributed based on local ability to pay. In its current form, SB 16 seeks to:

- Create a single funding formula that provides a simple, straight-forward and equitable means to distribute education funds to Illinois school districts.
- Prioritize resources where there is greater student need.
- Provide greater transparency about how funds are spent at the school level.
- Phase in the new funding formula over four years to allow districts to adjust to new funding levels.

"At the center of Senate Bill 16 is a new education funding model that creates a weighted student formula with approximately 95 percent of funds going through one funding stream that is equalized to account for district property wealth," said State Superintendent Christopher Koch. The current funding system, in contrast, balances 44 percent of state education funds against local ability to pay, according to Koch.

The current formula is so complicated that ISBE staff needed weeks to figure out which school districts might

win more money and which might lose under the new proposal to change Illinois' school funding formula.

"I think we all agree that the current formula is complex, convoluted and, quite frankly, broken," Curt Bradshaw, an ISBE member from Naperville told Chicago television station FOX 32 last month.

The state board has tentatively endorsed the legislation to greatly simplify the school funding formula.

While the state's goal is to provide \$8,700 per student per year, it is currently paying just under \$6,000 a year.

"A lot of school districts, in fact two thirds today, are spending in deficit to operate their systems. And that's not a good place to be," said ISBE Chairman Gery Chico, who was also interviewed for the television report.

The Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance has been studying the complex legislation but has not yet taken a position on it.

The full text of the bill is available at: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/98/SB/PDF/09800SB0016sam001.pdf>.

Source: State Superintendent's newsletter, *Weekly Message*, April 8.

Illinois
SCHOOL BOARD
Newsbulletin

**Illinois Association
of School Boards**

This newsletter is published monthly by the Illinois Association of School Boards for member boards of education and their superintendents. The Illinois Association of School Boards, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, is a voluntary association of local boards of education and is not affiliated with any branch of government.

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**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

via a bus contract.

Both First Student Inc. and Cook-Illinois, two of the largest transportation providers, are using pre-installed GPS systems and adding track pads and key cards to track students. First Student, which operates over 50,000 school buses in the U.S. and Canada, including many in Illinois, contracts with a company called Zonar to use GPS software to receive real-time data regarding their bus fleets.

"It is a great program, we absolutely love it," said Jan Moser, of First Student Inc. "It helps us locate our drivers. We can easily track where they are and when they start rolling. We can see for ourselves when the buses are rolling and when they arrive at their location. It is also a great safety feature, for example, if our two-way radios go down."

Zonar, headquartered in Seattle, provides electronic inspection and tracking solutions for public and private transportation systems. Zonar units are currently installed in nearly 150,000 school buses nationwide, with more than 10,000 buses equipped in Illinois, making Zonar the largest GPS bus service provider.

"Pupil transportation fleets use telematics systems to improve fleet efficiency, safety and compliance," explained Andrew Johnson, vice president of marketing and sales support. "These fleets receive real-time data relating to vehicle diagnostics, ridership and vehicle safety that allow them to make informed decisions for their fleet." Other benefits include potential savings in fuel, maintenance operation and labor. This year **Rockford SD 205** joined the list of districts that use the firm's system after a total of \$350,000 in GPS technology was installed in 272 school buses last year.

More recently, the school board at **Palatine Township Elementary District 15** approved a \$208,656, three-year contract with another provider, Synovia Solutions, to install GPS technology in the school district's fleet of 162 buses. Parents will also be able to follow their children's buses via a

password-protected "parent portal," according to a published news account. Synovia, which is based in Fort Valley, Georgia, says it has outfitted GPS tracking systems in more than 60,000 school buses nationwide.

The large number of students transported by companies like First Student and Cook-Illinois calls attention to the fact that daily busing service is by far the most common service to be privatized in Illinois schools, with an estimated 43 percent of districts using private busing companies to transport students, according to a recent Illinois Policy.com study.



Students can get their GPS tags (see tag on book bag at left) scanned as they get on and off the school bus.

GPS technology is one of the hottest school bus safety plans to hit Chicago area suburbs, but not the only one. Just last December, the Prospect Heights city council approved a plan to install cameras in buses to allow police to arrest drivers who illegally passed stopped buses.

Like those video camera systems, the GPS technology is not new. Several Illinois school districts have been using it for years and most are pleased with it because it answers a tough question often asked by parents: "Did my kid get on (or off of) the school bus today?"

But after using GPS student tracking on their school buses since 2009 officials in **Freeport SD 145** are seeing other major benefits to their schools. The district received a \$50,000 grant five years ago to cover its upfront costs by serving as a pilot site for Zonar, according to district communications

director Stephanie Helms.

The district was concerned about incomplete vehicle inspections, excess idling and out-of-route miles, according to Dallas Pieper, director of transportation for the Freeport district. Firms claim that GPS trackers can improve school bus operations, and according to Pieper, those claims have proven valid.

The district maintains 10 school buildings with an enrollment of about 4,300 students supporting the town and neighboring communities. The student transportation operation in the Freeport district consists of 44 vehicles covering over 99 square miles. Many of the routes are rural and the district wanted to go further to ensure child safety for the 2,600 students who ride student transportation.

The Freeport district issues students bus rider cards, and as they enter and exit the bus a device logs the time, date and location of the scan. The GPS system requires no additional action on the part of drivers or students. The information available to the district helps track students and provides answers to calls by parents. But the district can also track ridership trends over time to help optimize routes, Pieper said.

"The system has eliminated the anxiety associated with locating a child who didn't get off the bus. What used to take 15 minutes is now 30 seconds," said Pieper. "We can also produce our Medicaid reimbursement paperwork automatically for special needs students riding the bus," she said.

Freeport, like other districts, adds even more value by making the same information that is available to the school system available to parents and guardians instantly over the district website. Parents who sign up for the program can log in to a secure website to view the times, dates and locations of their student's transportation to school. They can also elect to receive instant notifications of this information by e-mail or cell phone text message.

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“Calls to the transportation department are no longer necessary, because parents have that information on their cell phones,” Pieper said.

Big business

According to the National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT), school buses comprise the largest and most efficient form of mass transit in the country. Nationally, school transportation service providers are responsible for the commute of more than 25 million kids per day to and from school. When considered as a “system,” school buses move as many people each day as trains, planes and other forms of “rapid transit” combined. At a total cost of approximately \$22 billion per year, they are also far less expensive than any of these other systems individually. While those financial numbers seem staggering, NAPT says school bus transportation is arguably the most economically efficient transit system in the world.

NAPT has not taken an official position on the use of GPS technology for school buses (they expect to incorporate the concept sometime in the near future), but a portion of their policy agenda states: “school transportation operators should utilize computer-based routing and scheduling systems to attain maximum efficiency in their operations and safety for all the children.”

“More schools are integrating their computer systems with GPS because they can achieve even greater savings,” said NAPT Executive Director Michael Martin. “GPS was previously used mainly as a customer service. Now, school districts have recognized

the efficiency savings based on the operational value. By using [GPS] data to make decisions, school districts are able to find more efficiency in what was already an efficient system.”

Martin estimates that GPS use on school buses has reached around 50 percent market penetration nationwide (similar estimates were not avail-

“Not only do these systems foster more efficient route planning, but they also add a new dimension to student safety and security.”

able for Illinois). He says that larger school systems have more easily realized the operation value and cost efficiencies of the new technology. “Most larger districts see a significant if not total return on their initial investment within 12 to 15 months,” he said.

The Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO) also sees the potential upsides regarding the integration of GPS technology for school transportation.

“The Illinois Association of School Business Officials recommends that districts look carefully at adding GPS technology to their school buses,” said Michael Jacoby, Illinois ASBO executive director. “Not only do these systems foster more efficient route planning, but they also add a new dimension to student safety and security.”

“In these times when nearly every individual utilizes some type of GPS technology in their vehicles or on smart phones, school districts should use the

same technology to enhance services and ensure efficient and secure operation of their fleets,” reiterated Jacoby.

IASB also recognizes the potential efficiency and safety improvements available with the new technology, and supports districts who wish to adopt GPS for their transportation fleet. But the Association also cautions that GPS systems should not be added to the already long list of unfunded school mandates.

“We certainly understand the benefits of GPS use in buses and support schools who choose to pursue this technology, but we feel this is a decision that needs to be left up to the local districts who must manage their own transportation budgets,” said Ben Schwarm, IASB deputy executive director and head of governmental relations.

A total of 1,337,680 Illinois students were transported by school bus at a cost of \$319,607,086 during the 2012-13 school year, according to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). If GPS services offer a way to make student travel to and from school more efficient and safe, as well as giving parents the peace of mind that their children are on time and in the right location, perhaps the marketplace will help to sort out the providers and services and lower the costs through competition.

Current state law, however, does not allow for ISBE to reimburse districts for the cost and purchase of GPS technology for school buses. As with many issues in today’s world, new advancements in technology can provide solutions but they also raise new questions about how to pay for the improvements they offer.

Fordham Institute finds boards boosting student outcomes

The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, headquartered in Washington, D.C., released a report on March 26, “Does School Board Leadership Matter?” affirming the fact that local school boards matter and

that their actions can positively impact student achievement.

Districts where board members put a high priority on student learning had stronger academic outcomes, the report concluded.

The new report from the Fordham Institute, which is based on a 2009 survey, is available at: <http://www.edexcellence.net/publications/does-school-board-leadership-matter>.

NEWS HEADLINES

Belleville (April 20, *News-Democrat*) A Belleville program that allows students to mentor classmates is “a great thing for both sides,” school officials say. Belleville District 118 is piloting a peer mentor program for classmates with autism or an autism spectrum disorder. The program is being piloted at an elementary school and a junior high. “We are always looking for ways to try to empower our students,” Superintendent Matt Klosterman said. “It creates friendships and relationships with students in the building that children on the autism spectrum may not have had the opportunity to develop.”

Bement (April 11, *The News-Gazette*) The Bement school district is showing interest in an offer from neighboring Monticello to share facilities and/or other instructional resources in the future. The board decided the idea was worth investigating, and authorized Superintendent Sheila Greenwood to contact Monticello school officials. Monticello Superintendent Vic Zimmerman also sent a letter to other Piatt County schools last month asking if they wish to cooperate in future endeavors.

Champaign (April 4, *The News-Gazette*) For Champaign voters, the choice next Election Day is simple: accept a property tax hike or reject a proposal to fix the city’s two public high schools. But one decision voters won’t have to make, if the district’s superintendent has anything to say about it, is whether to pay for replacing 79-year-old Central High or ren-

ovating 51-year-old Centennial High. They are a package deal. Using a formula determined by the state board of education, both Centennial and Central are at 103 percent capacity. Factor in record kindergarten enrollment numbers the past three years, and those figures will rise to 120 percent by 2022-23, district officials say.

Chicago (April 3, *Chicago Tribune*) Mayor Rahm Emanuel wants to raise Chicago property taxes and cut city retirement benefits in an effort to bail Chicago out of its pension debt crisis. Chicago lawmakers tried to quickly push through a sweeping plan to raise Chicago property taxes and cut city worker retirement benefits, but hit the brakes when they ran into resistance. The rapid rollout strategy apparently was aimed at giving legislators little time to get cold feet and blunting labor union lobbying against the changes. Chief among the concerns from many lawmakers remained the fact that Emanuel’s pension proposal only alleviates the city’s unfunded liabilities for the municipal and laborers’ funds. And the city’s teachers’ pension fund also remains underfunded, along with police and firefighter pension funds.

Decatur (April 9, *Herald & Review*) District 61 has been selected to be a test site for the new assessment to meet Common Core standards, known as PARCC – Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career. Decatur was chosen to be a pilot site due to the district’s emphasis on having the latest technology

available to students—the tests will be taken online instead of with paper and pencil.

Peoria (April 15, *The Associated Press*) District 150 school board voted on April 14 to lay off nearly 200 employees — mostly full- and part-time teachers. The district’s interim comptroller, Dave Kinney, says the district is already facing a \$6 million budget deficit on top of falling revenue from property taxes. More budget cuts could follow depending on state funding. The district has about 14,000 students in two dozen schools. It employs about 1,000 teachers. The layoffs also include about three dozen support staff.

Statewide (April 3, U.S. Education Department press release) The Obama Administration approved a long-standing NCLB flexibility request for Illinois schools on April 18. The action came in exchange for state-developed plans to prepare all students for college and careers, focus aid on the neediest students and support effective teaching and leadership. Since fall 2011, the U.S. Department of Education has approved requests from 43 states, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., with other applications still pending. Federal education law, including NCLB, has been due for Congressional reauthorization since 2007. In the absence of reauthorization, President Obama announced in September 2011 that the administration would grant waivers from NCLB to qualified states.

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instructions will be available on the IASB website, <http://www.iasb.com>, and accessed by clicking on the Annual Conference link and then on the conference housing/registration link.

Conference block hotels for 2014, and room rates, are as follows:

Hyatt Regency Chicago \$183

Sheraton Chicago Hotel
and Towers \$183
Embassy Suites \$193
Fairmont Chicago
Millenium Park \$175
InterContinental Chicago
Magnificent Mile \$174
Marriott Chicago

Downtown \$174
Swissotel \$176
Westin Chicago
River North \$175

For questions regarding any phase of this process, call 217/528-9688, ext. 1115, or 1140, and speak directly with a Meetings Management staff person.

IASB staff members were featured panelists throughout the three-day event. Deputy Executive Director Ben Schwarm participated in a two-part panel focused on preserving local control that included a morning session titled “Change is Good... You go First,” and an afternoon program bearing the name “Saving the Great American School Board.”

Other staff members making presentations at the conference included: Sandra Kwasa, director of board development. She offered a pre-conference, half-day workshop on “The Data Made Me Do It! Using Data to Make Difficult Decisions in Difficult Times” on Friday, April 4.

Kwasa also joined as a panel member for the “Using Data and Community Partnerships to End the School Pushout Crisis,” which focused on strategies to prevent student dropouts. Steve Clark, IASB TAG consultant, presented a session, “Data-Driven Decision Making,” that spoke to the importance of using educational data to meet district goals.

Association staff members were involved with two superintendent-related panels. Thomas Leahy, executive searches consultant, was a panelist for “Superintendent Selection? Why You Need to Do It Right,” and Field Service Director Patrick Rice presented a session, “How the Superintendent Can Promote Professional Development with its Boards to Ensure Good Governance.”

Former IASB Field Services Director Jeffery Cohn, who now works for an energy services firm in Illinois, joined with **Forest Park School District 91** to host the pre-conference workshop “Being a Q2 High Performing District Leadership Team: Using the Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards to Improve Student Learning and Achievement.” They explained how micromanagement leads to unclear expectations and superintendent turnover, which negatively impacts student achievement.

Twelve presentations were offered by public school leaders from nine dif-



Several IASB staff members presented panel sessions at the NSBA event, including Field Services Director Patrick Rice, who spoke on the topic of professional development for boards at this April 8 panel.



IASB President Karen Fisher, at extreme left, joined NSBA leaders on stage at the conference’s general session, April 7. At right is NSBA Executive Director Thomas J. Gentzel.

ferent Illinois school districts. Presenting districts from Illinois and their panel topics were:

Forest Park SD 91, Learning and Achievement: This session allowed participants to examine the governance practices used by District 91 to achieve high student achievement. The presenters provided a hands-on experience to show how the leadership team used the NSBA’s Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards to improve student learning. Presenters were Louis Cavallo, superintendent; Mary Win Connor, vice president; and Frank Mott, school board president, all from District 91.

Community Unit School District 300, Carpentersville: Student Discipline

Review Committee and Peer Jury: Providing Alternatives to Punitive Consequences through Collaboration and Restorative Justice: Participants were given a glimpse into how school administrators and school board members from District 300 work collaboratively through a Discipline Review Committee [DRC] and a Peer Jury system to determine consequences for student misbehavior. Participants learned how to use such a process, and other intervention programs to promote integrity in student discipline decision-making, to increase consistency in consequences, and improve communication. Presenters included Anne Miller, board president; and Sarah Kedroski, asso-

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ciate superintendent.

Glenbard THSD 87, Glen Ellyn, *Actioning the Research on Leadership and Student Achievement: A Practical “Work Plan” Model*: Participants were able to see the impact a practical “work plan” model has had on District 87, and learn how to implement the model in their own system. District leaders shared the model’s key components, facts on its potential to increase alignment, and a timeline for implementation. Presenters included David Larson, superintendent; Josh Chambers, principal (Glenbard East High School); Jeff Feucht, assistant superintendent for educational services; and Robert Friend, board member.

Township High School District 214, Arlington Heights, *In The Cloud: Demystifying The Journey To The Cloud*: Participants were shown how a well-planned virtualized infrastructure can provide disaster recovery, save money, and furnish highly available systems in school districts. Presenting was Keith Bockwoltd, director of technology systems and services for District 214.

Township High School District 214, *Questions Board Members Should Ask to Avoid Being the Next “Hacked” Headline*: Attendees heard one district’s story and learned the kinds of questions school leaders should be asking to ensure that their districts aren’t vulnerable to having their private data invaded by hackers. Presenters were William Dussling, school board president, and Keith Bockwoltd, director of technology systems and services.

Township High School District 214, *Before One-to-One: Developing Capacity to Transform Teaching and Learning Prior to Implementing a One-to-One Mobile Device Initiative*: Audience members took away a detailed plan of District 214’s experience with transforming teaching and learning via a 1 to 1 mobile device initiative. The pilot proposal and evaluation forms were included, along with all materials in District 214’s Internal University Class called “Teaching Using the iPad.” The session was presented by David Schuler,

superintendent; William Dussling, school board president; and Steven Kellner, director of professional learning and instructional technology.

Dolton SD 148, Riverdale, *Building Bridges to Success: How One School District’s Collaborative Framework Placed It on a Trajectory for Significant Student Growth*: The audience was informed about how steady, sig-



IASB Executive Director Roger Eddy (in the middle) met with fellow state school board association top executives at the NSBA event. At left is Rick Lewis, Ohio, and at right is Frank Bush, Indiana.



IASB Treasurer Dale Hansen of Kankakee, and other officers of the association, participated in NSBA’s Delegate Assembly on April 4.

nificant growth in student achievement became the mainstay of District 148 schools for more than 10 years. District leaders shared how their system puts key data in the hands of students and teachers daily via an integrated system of academic innovations, dis-

tributed leadership, a collaborative culture, and data management. The presenters were Jayne Purcell, superintendent; and Joyce Jackson, board president.

Woodridge SD 68, *Positive Behavior Intervention System-Improving Teaching and Learning through Creativity and Celebration*: The audience learned how a PBIS System has been successful in improving Jef-

erson Junior High School in the Woodridge District. The highs and lows of implementation, creative celebrations, and interventions were described, and evidence was provided of how the program has assisted in reducing student discipline and increasing student

achievement. Justin Warnke, associate principal at Jefferson, was the presenter.

Woodridge SD 68, *Academic Transformation: One District, One F.O.C.U.S.*: The audience learned how Woodridge SD 68 has harnessed the power of staff expertise to develop a multi-year improvement plan in order to transform the educational experiences of its students and prepare them for college and career. The session also showed how to enhance individual student growth through thoughtful planning. Participants left with tools and strategies to develop a district-wide collaborative effort to prepare each and every student for success in the 21st century. Greg Wolcott, assistant superintendent for teaching and learning, presented.

Adlai E. Stevenson HSD 125, Lincolnshire: *Board Members with Disabilities Can Impact Student Achievement and District Improvement*: Attendees heard how a school board member from District 125 (a for-

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mer IASB Director), and one from a school district in Ottawa, Canada, met at NSBA in San Diego and discovered they had serious, but different, eyesight problems. They discovered they both got support from their leadership teams, and in turn, were able to create a greater awareness for support of students with special needs. In effect, the vision problems were actually an advantage for both, leading to policy and program changes that improved access and student achievement. The presenters also explained how this advantage could work for other school districts. Presenters were Merv Roberts, board member; and Kimberly Chambers, director of human resources, along with Bronwyn Funiello, board vice chair, Ottawa Carleton School District, Canada.

Skokie SD 69, *The State of Digital Content: What It Is, Where Do You Find It, What Does It Cost?*: The shift from print to digital is a complex process with many moving parts, and this panel addressed the successes, challenges, and future innovations in regard to this change. Presenting was Steve Dembo, Board Member, Skokie SD 69.

Moline USD 40, *It Costs HOW Much?! Legal, Practical, and Creative Cost-Savings Solutions to the High Cost of Special Education*: This session equipped school leaders with tools and ideas to take back to their school districts to help control costs related to serving students with disabilities. Cost calculators and rubrics were provided for topics such as when to outsource/when to provide services in house; blended programs; staffing solutions; and when it is OK to say no to 1:1 aides, private school placement, and similar high-priced requests. The presenter for this panel was Christina Denman, assistant superintendent of pupil/personnel services.

The NSBA Delegate Assembly discussed school governance issues at the day-long business meeting on April 4. The official policy making body of NSBA is made up of 150 school board members representing states across the country and is charged with adopting



Former NBA star Magic Johnson, now a successful entrepreneur, was among the featured speakers. He chatted afterwards with IASB Director Val Densmore of **Country Club Hills SD 160**.

resolutions, and policy amendments, and electing NSBA officers and directors. New this year was an online forum that allowed delegates to review and debate issues before their arrival in New Orleans. Also new at the 2014 Delegate Assembly was the inclusion of small-group sessions that allowed delegates to debate and fully understand proposals before votes were cast by the full Assembly.

“I was really impressed with the format. The new model made me feel that we had much more input on the final outcome,” said Karen Fisher, IASB President and Illinois delegate. “It was a very inclusive process and gave us an opportunity to discuss the changes in detail. I don’t think anyone came out of that meeting feeling like they did not have a voice in the discussion.”

Illinois delegates included Fisher, Vice President Phil Pritzker, Immediate Past President Carolyn Brooks, and Treasurer Dale Hansen. Alternate delegates were directors Rosemary Swanson, DuPage Division, and Jackie Mickley, Blackhawk Division.

In addition to electing a new NSBA president, Anne Byrne of New York, the delegates approved a three-piece advocacy agenda that focuses on opposition to unlawful expansion of executive authority; opposition to privatization in the form of vouchers, tuition tax credits and charter schools not authorized by local school boards; and support for high academic standards so long as the requirements are free from federal directions, mandates, funding conditions and coercion. Support for higher academic standards was also made contingent upon a stipulation that local schools boards are responsible for the implementation of those new academic standards.

Next year’s NSBA conference is scheduled for March 21-23 in Nashville, Tennessee.



School leaders from **Leyden CHSD 212** received First-Place honors at the convention in the 20th annual Magna Awards program. The awards recognize innovation in public education.



School leaders from **Indian Creek SD 425**, Shabbona, received a First-Place award in NSBA’s Magna Awards program.

Tax hike success well above average, benefits schools

The March 18 primary election found voters approving six of 16 countywide sales tax increase proposals (37.5 percent) to benefit school facilities. That approval rate for such tax proposals was well above the average approval rate of 30.5 percent since the first such county sales tax voting began in 2008.

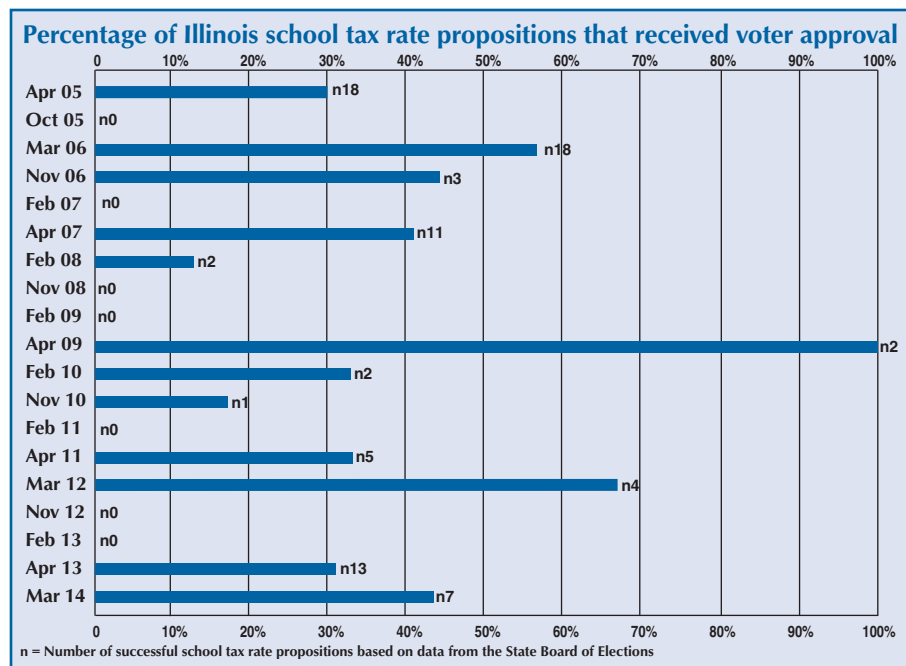
That means 24 counties have adopted a sales tax to benefit school facilities, of the 102 counties in the state. The list of counties that have passed such a sales tax over the years now includes: Boone, Cass, Champaign, Christian, Douglas, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Henry, Jo Daviess, Knox, Lawrence, Livingston, Logan, Macon, Mason, Mercer, Pike, Randolph, Saline, Schuyler, Shelby, Warren and Williamson counties.

At top right is the vote margin on the sales tax questions, based on unofficial results, from March 18.

County sales tax voting aside, school district referendum results from March found voters approving seven of 16 local school tax questions (bottom chart), and four of nine school bond propositions.

The next chance for boards to place a finance referendum on the ballot is the Nov. 4 general election.

County	Vote %	Vote totals	Pass/Fail
Carroll	49%-51%	1,360-1,460	Failed
Coles	45%-55%	4,075-5,085	Failed
DeWitt	45%-55%	1,563-1,927	Failed
Effingham	27%-73%	2,195-5,876	Failed
Fulton	54%-46%	3,451-2,888	Passed
Gallatin	46%-54%	470-557	Failed
Hamilton	53%-47%	1,333-1,188	Passed
Mason	56%-44%	1,631-1,275	Passed
McLean	33%-67%	9,011-19,044	Failed
Peoria	34%-66%	3,679-5,854	Failed
Pike	67%-33%	2,180-1,082	Passed
Randolph	51%-49%	3,269-3,147	Passed
Rock Island	44%-56%	8,342-10,523	Failed
Shelby	60%-40%	3,491-2,356	Passed
Stephenson	27%-73%	2,019-5,479	Failed
Whiteside	42%-58%	2,347-3,183	Failed



Publication of new book commemorates and details 100 years of IASB

IASB is pleased to announce the publication of a new book, "1913-2013: Lighting the Way for 100 Years," to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the Association.

This book represents a comprehensive history of the Association, its origins and progress. It is also intended to put into perspective IASB's role in public education throughout the past century. IASB's



story cannot be told without also telling the story of local school districts and boards.

Research was compiled from internal documents, records and publications, and from a variety of external sources. A significant portion is also based on the verbal accounts of dozens of people interviewed or surveyed for this book.

The contents include greetings from the IASB executive director and president, and a history of public education and IASB. A special fold-out

feature tells the IASB story in a timeline format. Other features include profiles of the Association's founding president, IASB executive directors, living past presidents, a tribute to IASB's current longest-serving board members, and interviews with long-serving staff members.

"We cannot thank enough the people who participated in and contributed to this important book," said Roger Eddy, IASB executive director. "We now have a definitive history of this

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Voting on the resolutions submitted by member boards is an annual duty for school board representatives from throughout the state at IASB's Delegate Assembly.

Resolutions from member district boards to set policy course for the Association

Local school boards are invited to submit resolutions for the 2014 Delegate Assembly. Information and resolution forms were mailed to districts on April 1.

IASB's Delegate Assembly at the Joint Annual Conference serves as the major policy-setting mechanism of the Association. Each year's assembly consists of delegates chosen by IASB member boards, with each board entitled to send one delegate.

Active member boards may submit proposals for: new resolutions, amendments to position statements, reaffirmations of position statements, or belief statements. The deadline to submit resolutions is June 25.

After IASB has received all the resolutions, a committee consisting of one elected member from each of the 21 IASB divisions will meet on

Aug. 1 to review the resolution proposals. The committee is empowered to recommend the approval or disapproval of proposed resolutions, and to determine which ones are presented.

Appeals to Resolutions Committee decisions are allowed when submitted in writing at least eight days before the Nov. 22 Delegate Assembly.

For more on this process, contact division representatives to the Resolutions Committee listed in the April 1 mailing, or phone IASB at ext. 1132. This year's committee is chaired by IASB Vice President Phil Pritzker.

Resolution forms and information about the resolutions process are also available by calling the Association's Connie Crowder at ext. 1132. A resolution form may also be downloaded online at: <http://www.iasb.com/govrel/resolutionform.pdf>.

Field services staff additions announced

Perry Hill, IV has joined IASB as Field Services Director for South Cook, Three Rivers and West Cook Divisions, effective May 5. Hill is a former public school principal and lobbyist. Another new Field Services Director is Laura Martinez, serving the Kishwaukee, Northwest and Starved Rock Divisions beginning May 12. She has seven years'



Perry Hill, IV

experience as a teacher and had been education coordinator for the Pritzker Military Library, Chicago, for six years, developing and providing adult education workshops and programs. Joining the staff, as well, is Katherine Strayer. Strayer, who joined IASB as a Field Services Secretary II on April 28, has 14 years' experience as an executive assistant.



Laura Martinez

NEWS FROM IASB

Nominations sought

The nominating committee of the Illinois Association of School Boards is currently seeking candidates for the offices of president and vice president of IASB. Nominating forms are due to be submitted by early August and candidates will be interviewed that same month. 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.

Journal looks at wellness

Be prepared for a school nutrition and wellness update when the May/June issue of *The Illinois School Board Journal* looks at those issues. Much has happened since an in-depth *Journal* series looked at that topic a decade ago. Included is an update provided by two organizations providing a look at where these issues are headed. The magazine also examines how one suburban district is embracing the state's new Common Core standards in mathematics.

Vision 20/20 focusing

IASB officers and staff have continued participation in the Vision 20/20 Initiative, led by the Illinois Association of School Administrators to create a vision for the future of public education in Illinois. Objectives for this initiative include: uniting the state's education community around a vision to improve education in Illinois; documenting the consensus among Illinois educators for creating a desired future vision of Illinois education; and providing a common voice from the Illinois education community to guide state policy. The draft document includes a vision statement with three priorities: a 21st century learning environment, highly effective educators, and adequate funding. The next meeting is scheduled for mid-June, with a target date of July 1, 2014 for a final document.

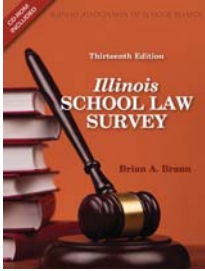
New edition of 'Law Survey' answers key questions for schools

The newest edition of *Illinois School Law Survey*, updated for 2014-2015, has been published by the Illinois Association of School Boards. Published every other year since 1990, the *Law Survey* is now in its 13th edition.

Authored by school attorney Brian Braun, *Illinois School Law Survey* is a convenient guide for answering the school legal questions of educators and laymen. The *Law Survey* presents answers to more than 1,600 questions in 27 chapters, along with a list of the statutes, rules and court cases on which the answer is based.

The book's popularity stems in part from the guidance it provides in searching for state or federal laws. In addition to an extensive table of contents, a "quick reference index" offers a detailed listing of subjects arranged alphabetically with links to specific questions and answers in the 27 chapters.

With the new edition, questions



and answers in all 27 chapters have been updated to reflect legislation and court decisions from the past 24 months (to January 1, 2014) . . . and many questions have been added to cover new statutes and court decisions. The book also comes with an "All-in-One" legal reference — a CD version that features the full text of the book plus quick links to the statutes, regulations and court decisions cited in the book. The CD can be run with any standard web browser and is ready for loading on any PC or Mac.

The CD contains all of the cited court cases and federal laws, along with Internet links to state statutes, the Illinois State Board of Education rules, decisions of the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board and policies of the Illinois High School Association. A table of court cases arranged in alphabetical order by name of plaintiff makes it easy to find questions pertaining to each case, and the CD provides the full text of the court-decision itself.

The cover price of the *Law Survey* is \$60; however, member districts can purchase the book for just \$45.

Note: each *Law Survey* CD comes with a license for use on one computer work station. For use on a local network server, the cost for each additional license is \$7, which can be purchased separately.

The *Illinois School Law Survey* is now available at the IASB online bookstore at: <http://www.iasb.com/shop/>.

Coming soon: School Code

The 2014-2015 *Illinois School Code Service* is expected to be available to order by early June. IASB will offer the newest edition of the *School Code Service* in a package that includes both the 2014 *Code* and the 2015 *Code Supplement*.

The regular price for the 2014-2015 *Illinois School Code Service* is \$65 each, while the price for IASB member school districts will be \$55, plus \$7 per order for shipping. Additional discounts will be available on carton orders.

IASB will announce on its website when the *School Code* arrives.

Deadline quickly approaching for school architecture award entries

Is your district particularly proud of a new building or renovation? Then why not help the architect or other design professional responsible for it earn recognition and awards in the 2014 Exhibition of Educational Environments program?

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

Entries are being sought from firms engaged in any aspect of designing public school facilities. The facilities may be intended for instructional, recreational, administrative or other use. Construction must be complet-

ed in time for occupancy with the start of school in the fall of 2014.

Entries are due in IASB offices by July 21, and must be made by — or with the written permission of — the author/owner of the project design documents. Each entrant is limited to no more than two project entries per year, and no project may be entered more than once. There is a \$300 fee for each entry (maximum of two entries).

Eighteen projects were chosen for the competition last year and were placed on display during the Joint Annual Conference. A description of the 2013 winners can be viewed at: <http://www.iasb.com/jac13/eee.cfm>.

Plans call for preliminary materials to be submitted by Sep. 8 and

evaluated on Sep. 11. The judging will be done in Springfield on a blind basis by a jury of three school board members or administrators and three architects, all appointed by IASB and experienced in school facilities or design.

Since the first Exhibition of Educational Environments was held in 1994, more than 450 school design projects have been displayed at the Joint Annual Conference. And nearly all of the projects have been captured in a database in the IASB Resource Center for use by member school districts.

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

IASB's LeaderShop Academy Symposium to feature crucial exchanges on the future

The sixth biennial School Board LeaderShop Academy Invitational Symposium, is set for June 21 at the Westin in Itasca. The title of this event is "The Talk, the Truth, the Crucial Conversations about America's Schools."

Organizers say the day-long session is designed to show school leaders how they can shift public perceptions about schools in general by providing a better understanding of what public education does for the nation and its children.

School leaders will be asked to internalize this thought: The greatest power you have as a leader is to establish the conversation.

"Conversations make a difference and are the first, and potentially most powerful, step toward increasing understanding about and support for our schools," said John Draper, facilitator for the event. He will share with board members his TLCs of effective conversations. Draper currently serves as a national consultant for NSPRA, the National School Public Relations Association, working to expand support for the nation's public schools. NSPRA is a membership organization dedicated to helping educational leaders build community support for schools and school districts. He is also co-author of the book, *Crucial Conversations about America's Schools*, published in 2010.

The interactive symposium is



NSPRA leader John Draper will speak at the June 21 event.

designed exclusively for School Board LeaderShop Academy members and their superintendents. Admission into the Academy requires the completion of three workshops: The Basics of Governance, one additional core workshop and either a third core workshop or an elective workshop.

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

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

Tuition for the one-day Symposium is \$200 per person. That total includes materials, continental breakfast and lunch. To register for the Symposium, eligible Academy members should phone 217/528-9688, ext. 1103.

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organization and we hope it will be useful to those who continue to carry on its legacy in years to come."

Eddy also acknowledged the two firms who sponsored the publication of the book, Chapman and Cutler LLP and NextEra Energy Services, Inc. "These firms recognize the value of public education and locally elected school boards," Eddy said. "Their support means that we were able to publish this book and distribute it without

Association or member cost to all of our current members."

Copies are being mailed this month directly to each member school district, for distribution to the superintendent and each board member.

IASB has also posted online many of the features contained in the book, along with activities that were held throughout the centennial celebration. They can be found at: <http://www.iasb.com/centennial/>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 14 – Western Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Macomb

May 14 – BoardBook Webinar, online

May 28 – Southwestern Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Belleville

May 29 – Two Rivers Division Summer Governing Committee Meeting, Jacksonville

June 4 – South Cook Governing Board Meeting, Sauk Village

June 17 – Three Rivers Governing Board Meeting, Rockdale

June 23 – West Cook Governing Board Meeting, Oak Park

August 22-23 – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting, Bloomington-Normal

September 16 – IASB/IASA Professional Advancement Seminar, Downers Grove

September 23 – Shawnee Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Vienna

September 23 – IASB/IASA Professional Advancement Seminar, Springfield

September 25 – Wabash Valley Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Robinson

September 25 – Illini Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Mahomet

October 1 – Southwestern Division Fall Dinner Meeting, tba

October 2 – Abe Lincoln Division Fall Dinner Meeting, tba

October 2 – Egyptian Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Fairfield

October 21 – Kaskaskia Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Ramsey

October 23 – Two Rivers Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Virginia

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