

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

June 2012 / Issue No. 720



Torch is passed

Michael D. Johnson chats with Abe Lincoln Division Director Roger Edgecombe as he holds his grandson Lincoln at a May 19 retirement dinner at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield. See story on page 6.

Joint Annual Conference registration underway, rooms may go quickly

June 11 marked the beginning for registration to the 2012 Joint Annual Conference. That's when all instructions and forms for registration and housing were posted on IASB's website.

Although the forms are fillable online PDFs, the completed forms must be printed and mailed to IASB. Conference planners recommend that school districts mail in registrations, room reservation forms and appropriate fees as soon as possible because demand for housing is always high and the allotted number of rooms at special conference rates goes quickly.

Participating hotels this year are: the Hyatt Regency Chicago (headquarters), Sheraton Chicago (headquarters), Doubletree, Embassy Suites, Fairmont Hotel, Intercontinental Hotel, Marriott Chicago Downtown, Swissotel, and Westin Chicago River North. Housing rates range from \$161 to \$182 per night, plus taxes.

Conference registration fee is \$375 per person (family members are complimentary) until Oct. 20, when it will be raised to \$400.

Links to all current conference information is available at <http://iasb.com/jac12/>.

Common Core explored, described as academic game-changing landmark

A four-part series in *The Illinois School Board Journal* seeks to help school board members understand how the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will change academics in their districts — what is taught as well as how it is assessed.

The Journal series began in the May/June issue and will end in January/February 2013. Authors Donna McCaw, Stuart Yaeger, Carol Webb, and Rene Noppe are providing a basic overview as well as how the academic focus will shift under CCSS, what board members should look for and

how districts will be able to implement requirements.

The implementation process is replacing the 1997 Illinois Learning Standards, often described as “a mile wide and an inch deep,” with the CCSS. These new standards, while fewer in number, go deeper in content. New student assessments are scheduled to be in place by the 2014-15 school year.

Information about CCSS is available from the state board's website at http://www.isbe.net/common_core/default.htm. The site lists the following

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School Code delivery due mid-June

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Tornado preparedness ideas

A new Tornado Preparedness for Illinois Schools training video was recently produced by a school risk insurance carrier in partnership with state agencies. The 15-minute awareness course addresses best practices and lessons learned from recent tornado strikes. Of immediate concern is the common practice of sheltering students in hallways. In Joplin, Mo., and Harristown, Illinois, hallways became wind tunnels funneling debris at high velocity that would have injured or killed anyone sheltering there. As a result, many schools are re-considering shelter areas, particularly any hallway with openings to the outside. The recommendations and lessons learned suggest only using hallways at 90 degree angles to through hallways that have an exit to the outside. Federal and state emergency management agencies are urging schools to re-evaluate shelter areas. Go to <http://www.isbe.net/safety/guide.htm> for a link to the new tornado presentation.

RtI network conference set

Registration is now open for the Illinois RtI Network's first statewide conference entitled "Building a Sustainable RtI System," set for Sept. 24 and 25 at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel and Conference Center. The two-day conference will focus on addressing implementation challenges in building a sustainable system of Response to Intervention (RtI) to meet the needs of all students, particularly in the areas of reading and math. The target audience is district and school administrators and other personnel who are supporting the implementation of RtI at the building and/or district levels. Detailed registration information is available at http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm.

School funding hit with \$208 million in cuts, with \$162 million sliced from GSA

The Illinois General Assembly sent an education budget to Governor Quinn on May 31, 2012, calling for a cut of \$208 million in K-12 spending for Fiscal Year 2013, including \$162 million chopped from General State Aid (GSA).

The House added a bit more to the K-12 education spending plan than had been contained in its original budget. The portion of the FY '13 budget containing ISBE funding was adopted in SB 2413.

The initial House budget called for slicing \$258 million from K-12 education funding, compared to the FY '12 funding level, including \$212 million from the GSA formula. A late amendment, however, restored \$50 million for GSA. Thus the education budget attempts to hold the mandatory categorical grant funds flat.

No General Revenue Fund money was allocated for Regional Office of Education salaries as the necessary provisions were amended in the law to allow lawmakers to again fund these offices out of Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax funds.

Voting in late May on their budget proposals, House committee members were focusing on a cut of between \$260 million and \$300 million.

This was in line with House Resolution 706, which the House passed earlier this spring, but it was contingent upon a number of factors, including cutting Medicaid spending by \$2.7 billion. If these additional savings were not accomplished – as they eventually were – the House's reduction to elementary and secondary education funding could have been in excess of \$700 million.

"Grassroots efforts from education supporters, particularly the Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance, played a key role in preventing a disastrous level of cuts," explained IASB Associate Executive Director of Government Relations Ben Schwarm.

In addition, lawmakers could not agree on a final compromise on pension reform proposals. Pension reform was one of the major priorities lawmakers and the governor had established for this session and one that will impact budgeting for years to come.

Thus the governor has indicated that he will meet with the leaders of the legislative caucuses in the coming days to discuss pensions and that he will likely be calling the General Assembly back into a special session sometime this summer. So, while the session has technically ended, legislative action is by no means over for the year and school supporters are encouraging local school leaders to reach out to legislators as they return to their home districts and let them know the impact their decisions have on their local education agencies.

The final adopted budget line items, with totals that are far more favorable for public schools than those debated prior to the session's closing hours, are available online at http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY13_budget_compare0512.pdf.

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

Illinois Association of School Boards

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

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ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

New science standards draft released, state to refocus K-12 studies

Report finds 8th grade science scores subpar

Illinois educators, among the leaders in an ambitious nationwide effort to refocus K-12 science education, entered a new phase in early May when a draft of voluntary, “next generation” science standards was released publicly.

The proposed science standards revisions arrive as the latest results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicated Illinois’ average eighth grade science scores are stagnant and stuck below the national average.

NAEP’s latest report showed only eight states posted a lower average score, while 32 states posted a higher average than Illinois. Just 26 percent of Illinois eighth graders were deemed proficient or better in science compared to 31 percent nationally.

The national report by the federal Department of Education found that while eighth-graders are doing better in science than they were two years ago, seven out of 10 still are not considered proficient. Worse, a mere 2 percent have the advanced skills that could lead to careers in the field.

That is one reason why Illinois is teaming with 25 states to develop the new common standards in science, known as the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Illinois is one of the lead states, providing guidance on the writing of the standards as well as activities related to adoption and implementation of NGSS.

National organizers say the NGSS aims not simply to provide a foundation of essential knowledge, but to ensure that students apply that learning through scientific inquiry and the engineering-design process.

The NGSS is following a different developmental pathway than did the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and mathematics. The process for the science standards development takes into account the importance of having the scientific and educational research communities identify core ideas in science and articulate them across grade bands. The standards are based on the Framework for K-12 Science Education, released by the National Research Council in July, 2011.

A final draft of the standards is expected by the end of 2012 and state officials anticipate the Illinois State Board of Education will consider its final version of these new science standards in 2013.

The initial draft of the NGSS is available now for review at <http://www.nextgenscience.org>.

COMMON CORE *from page 1*

reasons for updating Illinois’ standards:

- Expectations for what students must know and be able to demonstrate were different in 1997 when Illinois adopted the current standards.
- The standards aim to provide clear, consistent academic benchmarks with “fewer, clearer and higher” academic standards for essential learning and skills. They were developed while considering standards of top performing countries and strengths of current state standards.
- The 2010 state standards provide benchmarks for academic progress (skills and knowledge) that students should have at the conclusion of each grade level. This will allow teachers to establish the best approach to help their students meet those standards.
- Students and parents will clearly understand the knowledge students are expected to attain each year.

ISBE says the goal is to better prepare Illinois students for success in



college and the workforce in a global economy. According to ISBE, the process to fully implement new standards touches numerous systems including assessment, curriculum, professional development, instruction and various support components such as Response to Intervention (RtI). As the details for implementation are determined, the many reform efforts and initiatives underway will be considered to ensure the work is aligned and coordinated. It is anticipated the development and implementation will encompass varying phases of work:

- PHASE I: Adoption, Communication, and Coordination (June End of 2011

school year)

- PHASE II: Communication, Resource Design, and Design of Implementation System (ongoing)
- PHASE III: Transition, Implementation, and Technical Assistance (ongoing)

While not the first, Illinois was one of the early states to adopt the CCSS that aim to provide better benchmarks for student academic progress.

By early May 2012, just four states — Alaska, Nebraska, Texas, and Virginia — had not adopted any portion of the CCSS. Minnesota has adopted the standards for English language arts but not math. In contrast, Illinois has adopted new math and English language arts standards through action by ISBE, and has led in the development of core national science standards (see accompanying story).

For more information on the Common Core State Standards, log onto <http://www.corestandards.org>.

Answers provided to common questions on Open Meetings Act (OMA)

Training at division events yields queries

During the spring, IASB provided training on the Open Meetings Act (OMA) at all 21 IASB divisions. The benefits of in-person training included easy access to an attorney at IASB for on the spot information and strategies about real-life OMA challenges. Here, the Office of General Counsel wraps up this training with some common questions that were fielded at the division meetings, along with one unique question.

Note: the following questions are answered with information about the law and suggested best practices, and should not be used as a substitute for legal advice from the board attorney:

A board committee comprises three board and four community members. May it enter closed session?

A board committee is a *public body*, and it may go into closed session if it follows all the requirements in OMA, including: (1) a valid exception to the open meeting requirement, (2) a valid motion identifying the valid exception, and (3) a roll call vote in open session to enter closed session. Once in closed session, the committee must follow all other requirements, i.e., making a verbatim recording, discussing only the exception for which the meeting is closed, not taking action, and adopting minutes.

I serve as my district's board representative to our special ed co-op. Because of how the meeting dates for the board and the co-op fall, I'm often asked to vote on issues at the co-op board meeting without input from my district board. How can I poll the members of the district board before the co-op meeting without violating OMA?

You should receive input from your school district board at a properly noticed board meeting. While it is possible to telephone or email each member of your district board separately to get the thoughts from individual members, this practice is highly inadvisable and fraught with peril.

First, doing this deviates from good governance practices. We have seen boards divide when members individually discuss questions. Some will feel left out unless they are told what other members are saying.

Second, and most important, if you attempt to alleviate the concern above by explaining what other members are saying, you risk violating OMA by having "contemporaneous interactive communication" to discuss public business. This type of gathering is defined as a *meeting* under OMA.

Best practice is to have a standing agenda item to report about co-op meetings to your district board. That way you can receive input going forward.

May board members merely listen to community members at a community forum, without triggering OMA?

OMA defines a meeting as a gathering of a majority of a quorum (three people on a seven member board) "for the purpose of *discussing* public business." (*Emphasis added.*) Public business has been defined as an "exchange of views and ideas that pertain to the business of the public body." The key question is the purpose of the forum. If it is to hear the community's thoughts on the public business of the school district, the board should conduct the community forum during an open meeting held in accordance with OMA.

My board wants to observe a vendor's place of business. It is located outside of the district's boundaries. If the requirements for notice and posting under OMA are met, may the board have a meeting that includes traveling to the place of business, observing the vendor's operations there, and travelling back to the district?

The site of this meeting may likely be ill-suited for a public meeting.

OMA requires all meetings to be held at specified times and places which are convenient and open to the public (5 ILCS120/2.01). Case law instructs that the location of a meeting must be convenient "not merely to members of the public who show up for the meeting but to the 'pub-

lic' as a whole." See *Gerwin v. Livingston Co. Board*, 345 Ill. App. 3d, 352 (4th Dist. 2003). Further, "a meeting can be open in the sense that no one is prohibited from attending it, but it can be held in such an ill-suited, unaccommodating, unadvantageous (sic), place that members of the public, as a practical matter, would be deterred from attending it."

On April 4, 2012, the Illinois Attorney General Public Access Counselor (PAC) issued a binding opinion on this issue. The opinion found the school board improperly met at a private residence (the school superintendent's home) that was located outside of the district. See, Public Access Opinion 12-008. While the PAC declined to determine whether holding a meeting outside of the district's boundaries violated OMA, the opinion provided instructions about holding a meeting at a non-public location:

A meeting held at a private residence, instead of a public location, could reasonably be expected to deter citizens from attending the gathering. Citizens may have felt uncomfortable going to the school superintendent's home to attend the meeting. In this sense, the superintendent's private residence was clearly ill-suited for a public meeting.

The PAC's opinion indicated that the board should have held the meeting at a school building during hours that its school buildings were open or at another public location in the community, e.g., a community center or a library, or rescheduled the meeting for another date and time.

The best practice for a board that wants to observe a vendor's business, whether inside or outside district boundaries, would be for individual board members to agree that each will make a trip to the vendor on his or her own time, and then discuss their individual observations during the next properly noticed open meeting.

May individual board members blog about their board experiences?

See OMA on page 5

OMA does not allow a public body to discuss public business by blog. This question, however, asks if an *individual* member may blog about his or her board experiences. A board member's blog would not be governed by OMA if it really is his or her individual blog – a blog that the school board does not control.

A board member should carefully consider the purpose of a blog and the dangers involved in blogging before embarking on one. First, if other board members' thoughts or deliberations are shared, OMA's notice and posting requirements may be triggered. Second, it is very unlikely that an individual board member will be covered by the district's liability insurance for activity involving his or her blog. Third, a blog may be misconceived by community members who might think that the board member has authority to get their problems solved. Finally, a blogging board member must resist restating another individual's statements to avoid the inevitable *misstatement* resulting in hostility and possibly dividing the board.

This was the unique question mentioned in the first paragraph.

When the board conducts its semi-annual review of closed session minutes, does it have to review closed meeting minutes from prior months (say, a year ago), or just the minutes from the past six months?

The review requirement applies to all closed meeting minutes from all prior closed meetings still labeled confidential, i.e., those not released for public inspection. Of course, some closed session minutes will never be released for public inspection, e.g., meetings involving student discipline. For those, the board can declare that the minutes will forever be confidential. At the semi-annual review meeting, the board can simply reaffirm this declaration.

OMA training will be available online this fall and at the Annual Conference. Questions on OMA should be directed to Melinda Selbee at ext. 1231 or Kimberly Small at ext. 1226.

Service subscribers can gain insight via PRESS editors' taped discussions

IASB is now offering Policy Reference Education Subscription Service (PRESS) subscribers a new feature – videos featuring PRESS editors highlighting the latest PRESS issue.

The videos contain informal conversations between the PRESS editors, Melinda Selbee and Kimberly Small. The intent is to provide an immediate source of information about recently published PRESS issues and to identify the issue's most significant topics.

The May PRESS issue has two highlight videos. In the first, the editors share their thoughts on protocols for record destruction. They discuss the dual intent behind a PRESS exhibit that lists the records that each district must web-post and those the district FOIA officer indicates are "immediately available." The video also highlights the new requirements for food services, electronic networks, and soccer goal safety.

The second video highlights the seven pieces of PRESS material that are updated in response to ISBE's revised rules on school student records.



Melinda Selbee



Kimberly Small

In both videos, as well as the January highlight videos, the editors share their insights concerning the legal developments covered in the PRESS issue.

Subscribers can find the videos by logging in as usual, clicking on the red circle to go to either the January or May issue, and then following the link (underlined and highlighted in red) to "Watch Video Highlights." Each section of the PRESS issue is featured in a separate, ten-minute to 12-minute video, which may be viewed by clicking on the photo for the given section. When viewing the videos it will be helpful to have either the committee worksheets for the material discussed therein or a PRESS update memo at hand to follow along.

Law student Boyer begins externship duty with Association's Office of General Counsel

A summer assistant has joined the staff via an extern placement relationship IASB established in 2010 with Valparaiso University School of Law in Valparaiso, Indiana. Through the program, a law student is able to work with Association attorneys and earn course credit. This summer, Jared Boyer has been selected to work with the Office of General Counsel in the Lombard office.



Jared Boyer

Boyer completed his second year at Valparaiso in May. During the school

year, he worked as an intern for the law office of Dworkin & Maciariello in Chicago. He previously interned in the Newark, NJ office of U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg, assisting constituents with a wide array of federal issues.

He earned a B.A. from Valparaiso University in Political Science and completed a second major in Constituent Services. While attending Valparaiso, he served as Executive Chair of the University Honor Council, which investigates and tries alleged cases of academic dishonesty.

Boyer will work with the Association until mid-August and will attend the Illinois Council of School Attorneys seminar at the Joint Annual Conference in November.

Michael D. Johnson honored at IASB retirement events

IASB Executive Director Emeritus Michael D. Johnson was honored May 19 by more than 200 colleagues, family and friends at a retirement party held at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield.

Johnson is retiring June 30 after nearly 12 years as CEO of the 99-year-old Association. Roger Eddy, superintendent of Hutsonville CUSD 1 and former state representative from the 109th district, will assume his responsibilities on July 1.

Both men were on hand for the May 19 event, which also featured comments by State Rep. Rich Brauer, a letter from NSBA, IASB President Carolyne Brooks, and James L. Sandner, CEO of the Sandner Group.

Johnson has been working with Eddy for the past two months to ensure a smooth transition. Eddy will be the Association's sixth full-time executive in its history.

"I have spent the past two months helping [Roger] to become better acquainted with IASB board of directors, staff, members, partners, and other associations. It's been an opportunity for Roger to develop new relationships and to re-affirm those that I could pass on to him," Johnson told the crowd.

Eddy said thanks in return for "the opportunity to have Mike Johnson share with me the history of the Association ... Mike, thank you for all you've done for public education, and leading this Association and the vision you displayed, and thank you for what you've done for me these past several weeks," Eddy added.

During Johnson's tenure, the Association has seen its staff more than double, its membership increase to all-time highs and the completion of three separate capital construction programs.

The staff size has increased in response to an ever-growing demand for the Association's services. That growth, in turn, led to the need for



Past presidents of IASB were among the guests, including from left to right; Marie Slater, Dennis McConville, Joseph Alesandrini, Christy Coleman, Ray Zimmerman, retiring Executive Director Emeritus Michael D. Johnson, Jonathan Howe, Jerry Eiffert, Robert Reich, current President Carolyne Brooks, Barbara Wheeler, and Mark C. Metzger.



Roger Eddy



Rep. Rich Brauer



Outgoing Executive Director Emeritus Michael D. Johnson (center) smiles as his wife Kim Johnson is presented with a token of appreciation and a warm thanks from IASB President Carolyne Brooks.

See **RETIREMENT** on page 7

RETIREMENT *from page 6*

additional space, which in turn created more capacity for services.

Johnson said he turbo charged the Association and drove it faster, so he cautioned Eddy to drive it carefully.

Always passionate about giving back, Johnson requested that guests at the party make donations to charities, in lieu of retirement gifts, to two groups closest to his heart. Many donations were subsequently received by the two charities: Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland and Morton Community Foundation (care of Wayne Sampson Memorial Scholarship Fund), in honor of Johnson's retirement.

A resolution (House Resolution 1061) passed unanimously by the Illinois House of Representatives was presented jointly by Eddy and Rep. Rich Brauer, [100th District, Petersburg], to congratulate him on the occasion of his retirement, thank him for his service to the people of Illinois, and to "wish him many happy and healthy retirement years."

Johnson's wife, Kim, three children and two grandchildren were on hand, along with his parents and brothers.



An informal retirement party honoring Johnson was held for staff, friends and family at Lake Springfield.

Also attending were IASB past presidents, including Joseph Alesandrini, Mark C. Metzger, Marie Slater, Ray Zimmerman, Christy Coleman, Dennis McConville, Jerald Eiffert, and Robert Reich, Jonathan Howe, and Barbara Wheeler.

Johnson thanked "all of the IASB partner organizations who work with us daily, especially the Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance." Johnson particularly thanked his fellow Alliance directors: Jason Leahy, executive director of the Illinois Association of School Principals, Michael Jacoby, executive director of the Illinois Association of School Business Officials, and Brent Clark, executive director of the Illinois Association of School Administrators. "I will miss the history lessons," he told them.

Johnson also thanked other individuals who attended, including IASB Deputy Executive Director Mike Bartlett, Pat Mannix, whose late husband John Mannix served as IASB associate executive director/field services and worked with Johnson in Evergreen Park CHSD 231, and Jan Sampson, whose late husband Wayne Sampson immediately preceded him and advised him when he first took charge at IASB. He also credited Sampson, the fourth full-time executive director, and Hal Seamon, IASB's third full-time executive director, for paving the way to Association growth and success.

"I would especially like to thank the old goats club, and Hal and Wayne for building such a great association," Johnson added, explaining that the "old goats" is what IASB past presidents and former executive directors collectively call themselves.

Johnson also lavished high praise on the IASB staff: "While at IASB the staff have made IASB what it is, while I received the credit," he said.

"I would like to thank all of you for attending, each and every one of you contributed to my being here tonight," Johnson said.

Four formal luncheons planned for new superintendents in August

The Illinois Association of School Boards is inviting first-time school district superintendents and those new to Illinois (or those who missed last year's event) to attend one of four luncheons being held around the state in August.

The events are a great opportunity for new superintendents to learn about IASB and the services it provides, to meet IASB staff members available to assist them in their new responsibilities, and to network with other new superintendents. Invitations will be sent in early July and those interested in attending are asked to choose which date and location is most suitable to them.

Here are the dates and locations:

- August 9 – IASB Lombard Office
- August 28 – Mt. Vernon – Elks Lodge #819
- August 29 – IASB Springfield Office
- August 30 – East Peoria – Jonah's Seafood

The luncheons will run from 11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There is no cost to attend.

Field Services Director Dean Langdon emphasized that "both new and 'newer' superintendents are cordially invited to attend a luncheon," which is designed to introduce them to the Association.

Langdon added: "A copy of *Com-*

ing to Order, our popular publication on effective school board meetings, and a coupon to be redeemed for an IASB Division Dinner Meeting reservation will be available to attendees."

Online registration is available at <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/calendar.cfm>. For further information on this free event, call Judy Niezgodą at 630/629-3776 ext. 1220 or email jniezgod@iasb.com (Lombard Office) or Brenda Watkins at 217/528-9688 ext. 1116 or email bwatkins@iasb.com (Springfield Office). IASB's mission is excellence in local school governance in support of quality public education.

Budget details among top agenda items at May board meeting

Membership report shows rising numbers for FY12

Budget assumptions for the 2012-13 fiscal year were reviewed and accepted at the quarterly meeting of the board of directors for the Illinois Association of School Boards. The meeting was held over two days, May 18 and 19, in Springfield.

Executive Director Emeritus Michael D. Johnson highlighted some budget details for the coming year, including staffing, salaries, capital improvements, revenues, and expenses. Johnson said one of the biggest budget variables is income or royalties from IASB's energy consortium. Budget projections show revenue of \$10.9 million and expenses of \$11.1 million. He called the projected deficit of \$146,000 a "worst-case scenario."

The board also spent parts of two days reviewing its governance poli-

cies, specifically the executive director's interpretations of operational expectations.

This work has been ongoing for more than a year, and will continue through November 2013, according to President Carolyne Brooks. Facilitated by Angie Peifer, IASB associate executive director of board development and TAG, the board conducted small group discussions about policy terms and what they meant.

A draft revision will be prepared for the board to review again at its August meeting, when it will also begin to discuss compliance indicators, regarding what data or reports the board needs from the executive director that is observable and measurable.

Brooks appointed four members to an ad hoc committee to draft and present the revisions. The committee includes Jesse Ruiz, Ben Andersen, Karen Fisher, and Joanne Osmond.

The board approved a new firm for membership in IASB Service Associates. Interiors for Business, Inc., of Aurora, was invited to become a member of this arm of the Association. When it does, there will be 75 active Service Associate members.

The board also heard reports on legislative issues, IHSA, NSBA delegates, treasurer, executive director, and president.

Membership for the 2011-12 fiscal year has increased by number and percentage. There are now 853 of the state's 864 school districts as active members of IASB. In the past year, the Association added four districts; while two others did not renew and one net loss was reported from a consolidation.

The May board meeting was the final time Johnson will officially meet with the board. He is retiring June 30 after nearly 12 years as Association CEO. The board gave him a standing ovation at the close of the meeting.

NSBA decides against holding planned conference with AASA in 2013

Eiting financial concerns, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) recently reversed its plan to hold a combined conference with the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) in 2013.

AASA and NSBA had planned to hold a single, combined conference in San Diego next April. The plan, announced last year during AASA's National Conference on Education, was designed to save money for both organizations. However, on March 23 NSBA notified AASA that it was withdrawing from the joint conference because numbers indicated that NSBA would not make the profit margin it had expected from the merger.

Joe Villani, deputy executive director for the NSBA, said NSBA still plans to hold its 2013 conference in April in San Diego, without AASA's involvement.

NSBA "tried to figure out a way

to join the two conferences and let it be of benefit to both organizations, but what we found, when we got down to the nitty-gritty of the details, was that there were just too many additional expenses that had to be factored into the budget planning," Villani said. "That made it such that NSBA would not have as much revenue from a joint conference as we would have from a conference by ourselves."

NSBA for years rotated its annual conference among four cities: San Diego, San Francisco, Orlando, and New Orleans. In recent years, however, it removed Orlando, moved from New Orleans to Chicago after Hurricane Katrina, and added Boston this year.

Future NSBA conference sites and dates have been announced for the next two years only. They are:

- 2013 (April 13-15) San Diego
- 2014 (April 5-7) New Orleans

Meanwhile, AASA's Director of Corporate and Strategic Alliances Kay M. Dillon said the notice from NSBA of their withdrawal from a joint conference came as a surprise "after over a year of planning promoting."

Dillon added: "As you can imagine, we were stunned and disappointed, not only that the meeting was not going to occur, but that their decision came at such a late date."

The 2013 AASA National Conference on Education will be held Feb. 21-23 in Los Angeles. One keynote speaker will be Linda Darling-Hammond, professor of education at Stanford University, where she has launched the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute and the School Redesign Network. More details will be available soon.

Registration will open July 11 to members and July 23 to other administrators. Information about the conference is available at: <http://nce.aasa.org/home>.

Deadline draws near to participate in Board Governance Recognition program

The deadline is fast approaching for school boards to complete requirements and file their application for consideration in IASB's School Board Governance Recognition program.

School Board Governance Recognition is designed to acknowledge those school boards that have engaged in activities and modeled behaviors that lead to excellence in local school governance in support of quality public education, the hallmarks of IASB's mission statement.

All IASB member school boards are invited to apply for this recognition, which covers a two-year period. Once this recognition is received, boards may apply for renewal every two years.

Recipients of this recognition will be acknowledged at their individual Fall Division Dinner Meeting and at the Joint Annual Conference in November.

The application form requires documentation and/or description of the

board's governance activities, including:

- Mission, vision and goals
- Superintendent evaluation
- Policy review
- Community engagement
- Board member orientation
- Code of conduct
- Board development plan
- Division governing board representative
- Delegate assembly representative
- Division meeting and annual conference attendance
- Board self-evaluation

In order to be considered for this recognition, the application form must be completed, signed by the board president and received by IASB no later than Aug. 1.

More information about the School Board Governance Program and an application form can be found online at: <https://www.iasb.com/training/recognition.cfm>.

Training event for school board secretaries to cover vital duties for April 2013 election

IASB is offering an educational opportunity for school board and district secretaries at seven locations around the state to help districts prepare for the April 9, 2013 school board elections.

Information will cover the duties of the board secretary as the Local Election Official. Presentations will be made by Anna Lovern, IASB director of policy services, and Alan M. Mullins, an attorney with Sciarano, Himes & Petrarca.

Here are the locations and dates for the workshops:

- Heineman Middle School, **CSD 158**, Algonquin – July 17

- Richland Elementary School, **Richland SD 88A**, Crest Hill – July 18
- Glenn Westlake Middle School, **Lombard SD 44**, Lombard – July 26
- Rock Falls High School, **Rock Falls THSD 301**, Rock Falls – July 27
- Mt. Vernon Primary Center, **Mt. Vernon SD 80**, Mt. Vernon – July 30
- Southeast High School, **Springfield SD 186**, Springfield – July 31
- Normal Community High School, **McLean Co. Unit District 5**, Normal – Aug. 3.

The fee to attend is \$55. To register, visit online at: <https://www.iasb.com/calendar/>.



LeaderShop Academy

There are now 888 members qualified for IASB's School Board LeaderShop Academy. This voluntary program, which promotes and recognizes board members' efforts toward continuous learning and professional development, is open to all school board members who complete core and elective courses chosen for Academy credit. As board members work their way through the LeaderShop curriculum, they earn and maintain membership in the Academy. In addition to other recognition, all Academy members have the opportunity to attend an Academy Symposium designed for them, held in odd-numbered years, and featuring special presentations on current education governance issues.

Summer office closings

IASB offices in Springfield and Lombard will be closed seven days in July in observance of the Association's summer schedule and the national holiday. Offices will be closed Friday, June 29, Wednesday to Friday, July 4-6, and Fridays, July 13, 20 and 27.

Exhibitor registration

Exhibitor registration recently opened for the 2012 Joint Annual Conference, to be held Nov. 16-18 in Chicago. This year, IASB is *not* mailing packets to exhibitor firms. Instead, all information and forms for registration and housing is available on the IASB website at <http://www.iasb.com/jac12>. The completed forms must be printed and mailed, along with payment, to IASB: Sandy Boston, Exhibit Manager, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703-5929. Questions regarding any phase of this process should be directed to IASB Meetings Management staff at ext. 1115.

State to oust school boards in East St. Louis, North Chicago

Dissolution of boards an unprecedented approach

State Superintendent of Education Chris Koch recently recommended the dissolution of the school boards governing both East St. Louis SD 189 and North Chicago CUSD 187. Koch said he will recommend that the state board vote at its June 21



Chris Koch

meeting to remove both the North Chicago and the East St. Louis school boards, effective July 1.

The Illinois State Board of Education named six people May 17 to serve on a financial oversight panel for East St. Louis to help that district remain financially solvent. The oversight panel would allow the school district to apply for a loan with the Illinois Finance Authority, according to state officials. The amount of that loan has not been determined.

According to a May 2 story in the *Belleville News-Democrat* entitled “State superintendent: Why he wants ESL school board booted,” Koch said he wants the board removed because some members of the board have interfered in personnel decisions and spent school funds recklessly. Koch also wants to remove the North Chicago board for similar reasons, and because of “the board’s failure to make decisions that are in the best interests of the students of the district.”

East St. Louis Board President Lonzo Greenwood, according to the same May 2 *News-Democrat* story, said his board has acted in good faith in performing its obligations under the agreement with the state and approved all Koch’s recommended actions.

“The board looks forward to addressing the state board in order to refute any allegation and contest this recommendation,” Greenwood said.

North Chicago board members also are expected to argue their case during the ISBE meeting on June 21.

In a letter to the East St. Louis board, Koch listed these transgressions:

- The local board refused to guarantee it would not reinstate 10 administrators demoted March 22. He gave details about one principal: “The district has documentation that the principal verbally abused parents and students, cursed a parent who challenged her, failed to follow her supervisor’s directives, failed to provide a safe environment and failed to follow state and federal special education requirements.” The 10 were removed for performance and financial reasons, and their salaries will be reduced to teachers’ pay in the upcoming school year.
- Board President Greenwood was pushing for contracts to non-certified administrators, including his daughter, another member’s daughter and a brother of a board member.
- The board ignored the state’s advice and renewed a \$260,000 annual lease for the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center, despite only three district employees being housed there and the center needing expensive roof repairs. The lease calls for the district to pay for repairs, maintenance and utilities.
- The board allows attorney Pearson Bush to collect \$6,000 a month without doing any legal work. Koch ordered the board not to renew Bush’s contract, saying Bush attends meetings but never contacted the

district to discuss his role or to ask why he was not assigned any work. Board members blamed the state’s appointee, Superintendent Arthur Culver, for not assigning any work.

- The board refused to hire a director of risk management from an independent school district in Texas that serves more than 60,000 students. Koch said the board refused to hire an outsider as long as district residents were being laid off and as long as the district was having financial problems. Koch said even after administrators explained how the risk management position would improve the district’s finances, the board still wouldn’t cooperate.

Koch sent a similar letter to the North Chicago district’s school board president and superintendent, according to a May 2 story in the *Lake County News Sun*, titled “State moves forward to remove School Board.”

Koch said he no longer feels the state can work with the boards because of their failure to make changes that can make a difference for students.

When a school district does not make adequate yearly progress on state tests for seven consecutive years, the state can remove the board. East St. Louis has not made adequate yearly progress in nine years, state officials said. The North Chicago district has not made AYP in eight years.

ISBE said its immediate goal is to stabilize the district and start improving student achievement.

Two August deadlines govern placing public policy questions on the Nov. 6, 2012 ballot

Two deadlines pertaining to the 2012 Consolidated Election may affect local school districts planning referendums.

- **August 17** – Last day for the board of education to adopt a resolution placing public policy questions on the ballot at the Nov. 6, 2012 General Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2)

- **August 30** – Last day for board secretary to certify public policy questions to the election authority for referendum at the Nov. 6, 2012 General Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-5)

For more information about 2012 deadlines, download the complete list, including legal citations, at: http://www.iasb.com/pdf/cal_12.pdf.

NEWS HEADLINES

Arlington Heights (May 4, *The Daily Herald*) Following months of meetings between the district and teachers' union, North Suburban High School District 214 passed a staff professional development and evaluation plan May 3 that includes student performance in teacher evaluations. The new plan comes in advance of state legislation that goes into effect in June requiring all districts to make certain changes to the teacher evaluation, said Superintendent Dave Schuler. Under the agreement, teachers will be evaluated every year for the first four years of employment before receiving tenure and tenured teachers will be evaluated every two years, with criteria including goal setting, student feedback, classroom observations, portfolios, and self-evaluation. Student performance data will be a factor in staff evaluations.

Belleville (April 16, *Belleville News-Democrat*) The recession has dramatically increased the percentage of students whose families live at or below the poverty level. Of 45 school districts in St. Louis Metro East area of St. Clair, Madison, Clinton, and Monroe counties, only six had more than half their student population rank below the poverty level a decade ago, with very little change five years later. But since the recession began in late 2007, 19 Metro East districts have seen more than half of their student population slip below the poverty line. More students in these schools are eating free lunches or reduced-price lunches because their families are below poverty level. Poverty creates a lot of distraction for students, said Belleville Township High School District 201 Superintendent Jeff Dosier.

Chicago (May 3, *Chicago Tribune*) Chicago District 299 is proposing a scaled-down capital budget for the coming fiscal year of \$110 million, a steep decline from this year's

\$660 million. The district aims to focus on essential repairs to buildings and school playgrounds to accommodate the longer school day that kicks in citywide next September, and technology for the new specialized Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) curriculum.

Chicago (May 16, *Chicago Tribune*) Chicago District 299 will offer 60 additional charter schools over the next five years, boosting the total of privately operated charters to about one-fourth of all district schools. That plan, part of a proposal for adding 100 schools overall, is detailed in an application that seeks \$20 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for construction and renovation of buildings for charter schools. Currently the district has 110 charter schools. Private organizations operate an additional 27 schools.

Dupo (April 17, *Belleville News-Democrat*) More than 4,000 taxpayers in Dupo CUSD 196 have already received or will soon get a refund check. Because of a glitch in the property tax rate that was discovered in February, approximately 4,400 refund checks were mailed to property owners. A total of about \$280,000 was refunded. "The checks started arriving on Friday [April 13]," said Superintendent Terry Milt. A school board member noticed the mistake in the proposed tax rate for 2010 tax year, for which taxes were paid in 2011.

Lombard (May 8, *The Daily Herald*) Administrators are working to improve communication after meeting with a group of parents unhappy with curriculum changes in store next year in Lombard Elementary District 44. Several administrators met with 10 parents to exchange thoughts about curriculum changes that double the foreign language class slots and provide two years of algebra instead of one, but scuttle general music classes and eliminate the full-time instructor

who taught music and chorus. Chorus will continue as an after-school activity with a part-time instructor. As the district prepares to implement the curriculum changes, the search is under way for a new part-time chorus teacher to begin work next school year.

St. Charles (May 10, *The Daily Herald*) St. Charles Unit District 303 is bringing special needs students back to traditional classes. District administrators announced special education program changes May 9 designed to both improve the school lives of special needs students while also reining in some of the growing education costs of those students. About 13 percent of all students in the district use some level of special education services and a good portion spend their school days outside the district's classrooms. That represented a cost of about \$3.3 million for the district's taxpayers during the 2010-11 fiscal year. The trend in recent years has been for more and more special education students to spend their days out of the district. To reverse that, administrators plan to hire more certified special education teachers.

Springfield (May 11, *The State Journal-Register*) A recent vote by the Springfield District 186 school board would eliminate seven literacy teacher positions in the district in order to help reduce a \$9 million budget deficit. The position is designed to help classroom teachers handle multiple levels of reading abilities within their classrooms. Three literacy teachers will be reassigned as classroom teachers, one position will not be filled, and three other positions will be eliminated through attrition. The school board could reconsider, vice president Bill Loo-by said. At the May 7 meeting, member Judith Johnson said she would be interested in finding the savings elsewhere.

2012-13 Illinois School Code Service available with print and CD versions

The 2012-2013 *Illinois School Code Service* is now available from IASB. The Association offers the newest edition in a package that includes both the 2012 *Illinois School Code* and the 2013 *School Code Supplement*.

Both the School Code and the Supplement consist of print and CD versions of the entire publication. The Association obtains the School Code from LexisNexis, publishers of state statutes.

Current through all of the 2011 legislative session, the 2012 *Illinois School Code* also carries a large number of additional statutes pertinent to the public schools, including selected election laws and pension laws, Educational Labor Relations Act, Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act, Economic Disclosure Section of the Governmental Ethics Act, Truth in Taxation Act, Local Records Act, Personnel Record Review Act, Prevailing Wage Act, Emancipation of Mature Minors Act, Local Government and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, Gift Ban Act, pertinent sections from the Juvenile Court Act, School Visitation Rights Act, and a complete index.

Each copy of the new School Code and the 2013 Supplement comes with a CD that carries the full text of the Code, plus annotations with case law and other references, all state board of education rules and the text of court cases cited in the annotations. The CD is equipped with the Folio Views search engine for easy searching, saving and printing on any PC equipped with Microsoft Windows. The CD; however, will not run on Apple or other operating systems.

The 2012 *Illinois School Code* and CD will be shipped upon receipt



of order, while the 2013 *School Code Supplement* and CD will be automatically shipped in May 2013. The two publications have been combined to eliminate the need for ordering the Supplement, thus saving districts time in receiving the Supplement and saving the Association the extra cost of handling a separate order.

The 2012-2013 *School Code Service* may be obtained from IASB for \$70 (IASB members pay \$60) plus \$7 per order for shipping. Carton discounts of \$25 are also available (each carton contains five books). To place orders, call IASB at 217/528-9688, extension 1108; mail or fax a printed order form; or visit the IASB bookstore and order online at: <http://www.iasb.com/shop/>.

A free copy of the 2012 *Illinois School Code* is also being mailed to superintendents of every IASB member district.

Illinois School Law Survey

The arrival of the School Code coincides with the publication of the 12th edition of IASB's top-selling book, *Illinois School Law Survey*.

This book, written by school attorney Brian A. Braun, is published in a Q&A format that allows readers to find answers to the most commonly-asked questions facing or posed by school superintendents, school boards and the general public. More than 1,600 answers are based on state and federal statutes and case law in force and reported as of Jan. 1, 2012, and administrative rules and regulations current as of Dec. 15, 2011.

The Law Survey is priced at \$45 (IASB members pay \$35) plus \$7 per order for shipping.

2012 IASB • IASA • IASBO
JOINT ANNUAL CONFERENCE
November 16-18, 2012
Chicago

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 12 – BoardBook Webinar, Online

June 19 – Three Rivers Governing Board Meeting, Syl's Fine Dining, Rockdale

June 20 – South Cook Governing Board Planning Meeting, Park Forest-Chicago Heights SD 163

July 12 – BoardBook Webinar, Online

July 17 – A District Secretary Workshop for the 2013 School Board Election, Consolidated School District 158-Heineman Middle School, Algonquin

July 18 – A District Secretary Workshop for the 2013 School Board Election, Richland SD 88 - Richland Elementary School, Crest Hill

July 12 – BoardBook Webinar, Online

July 26 – A District Secretary Workshop for the 2013 School Board Election, Lombard SD 44 - Glen Westlake Middle School, Lombard

July 27 – A District Secretary Workshop for the 2013 School Board Election, Rock Falls THSD 301 - Rock Falls High School, Rock Falls

July 30 – A District Secretary Workshop for the 2013 School Board Election, Mt. Vernon SD 80 - Primary Center

July 31 – A District Secretary Workshop for the 2013 School Board Election, Southeast High School, Springfield

August 3 – A District Secretary Workshop for the 2013 School Board Election, McLean Co Unit District 5 - Normal Community High School, Normal

August 8 – BoardBook Webinar, Online

August 24-25 – IASB Board of Directors' Annual Retreat, Oak Brook Hills Marriott Resort, Oak Brook

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