

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD *Newsbulletin*

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LeaderShop Symposium

Few empty seats were available (see photo above) during IASB's fifth LeaderShop Symposium June 16 in Lombard. Among the 94 LeaderShop Academy members on hand (bottom left photo) were: Linda Butler, vice president of Peoria District 150; and Brad Faulkner, board member, Durand CUSD 322; and (at right, bottom right photo) symposium keynote speaker Diane Reed, co-director and associate professor of the Graduate Leadership Department at St. John Fisher College, Rochester, New York, works with Michael Kuhn of Hinsdale THSD 86 and Mischelle Yantis of Prairie Grove Cons. SD 46 in a small group discussion. The symposium gave academy members a chance to delve deeply into how to be more resilient leaders, even in the face of adversity.



Twenty-three policy setting resolutions submitted for review

The IASB Delegate Assembly meets at the Joint Annual Conference to consider and vote on resolutions submitted by member districts. If passed, these resolutions are adopted as part of the Association's official Position Statements.

Below is the list of 23 policy-setting resolutions school boards have submitted to date. The deadline to submit resolutions was June 20.

The Delegate Assembly will vote on these resolutions on Saturday, Nov. 17. According to Ben Schwarm, Deputy Executive Director for IASB, some are proposals that have been previously submitted; however, several new proposals relate directly to the state education budget and school funding.

A resolutions committee consisting of one elected member from each of the 21 IASB divisions will meet to review resolution proposals. The panel, chaired by IASB Vice President Karen Fisher, is scheduled to meet Aug. 3 in Oak Brook. The committee will take testimony from the submit-

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Special ed directors to meet

Registration is now open for the annual Special Education Directors' Conference 2012 to be held July 18-20 in Springfield. Each year, the ISBE works toward improving the performance of special education programs throughout the state in relation to its State Performance Plan. The agency said its continuing goal for the conference is to provide districts and cooperatives with the needed information to meet the ongoing compliance issues required by the federal government, along with the best learning environment for students with disabilities. The fee for attendance is \$120 per person. Registration will close on July 11. Directions for registering are available at <http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/conf/default.htm>.

Votes to oust board

The ISBE board set a precedent on June 21 by voting to seek permanent removal of the sitting, elected board in two districts. A statutory provision has for years authorized board members to be removed for a failure to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for several years. The board unanimously approved authorizing the state superintendent to require regional superintendents to remove the **East St. Louis District 189** and **North Chicago District 187** school boards. The state can appoint independent authorities to operate the districts. Both districts fell short of AYP for more than eight years, giving ISBE the authority to remove the boards. Both were under a Financial Oversight Panel (FOP).

Note: A restraining order was issued on July 1 by a St. Clair County judge declaring it unconstitutional to remove the elected board in East St. Louis.

Consolidation commission's final report finds many districts can save by sharing

The state's Classrooms First Commission, which began its work in October 2011, has produced its final report. Known as the School District Realignment and Consolidation Commission, the group headed by Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon issued a draft report in April. It found that many districts can save by sharing their services instead of consolidating.

Districts with declining student populations could consolidate or share services with neighboring districts to save money and enhance learning, according to the panel's initial findings. No school districts would be forced to consolidate under the draft plan, but the state would require counties with small and declining school-age populations to study whether county-wide consolidation or sharing of services would save money and boost learning.

IASB has been represented on the commission by outgoing Executive Director Emeritus Michael D. Johnson, a voting member of the panel. Johnson retired effective June 30.

Johnson has said the commission's final proposal will not conflict with local control of schools, a basic principal that IASB strongly supports.

Gov. Pat Quinn last year floated a plan to merge the state's 868 school districts into 300 districts, saying it could save millions of dollars in administrative costs, and the governor later signed the law creating the consolidation study commission.

Under Public Act 97-0503, the resulting bipartisan commission is comprised of P-12 education stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, legislators, union leaders and parents, and must recommend ways that districts can reduce duplicative administrative spending and improve educational offerings.

The commission held four public hearings after the release of the



The Classrooms First Commission was headed by Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon, who led four public hearings after the draft report was released in April, building to the final report's release June 30.

draft report in April to gather public feedback on its initial recommendations. Public comments on the draft report were used to produce the final report.


Information about the commission and updates to its findings can be found online at: <http://www.illinois.gov/ltgov/>.

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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**

Governor calls for five weeks more to study pension reform ideas, data

Gov. Pat Quinn is pressing for school districts to take on their own pension costs, but he now wants to shift costs gradually and to take five weeks to study and collect data before proceeding.

The state's pension systems covering state employees, public school teachers and others are carrying about \$83 billion in long-term shortfalls, which is seriously constricting the state's annual budget.

Quinn reportedly is teleconferencing with legislative leaders each week and is expected to call lawmakers

back to special session this summer if they can reach an agreement.

"Now is the time, this year, to get the job done," he told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in a June 18 article.

The Quinn pension reform plan would require school districts to contribute to the retirement plans they negotiate with their teachers—plans that are currently funded by the state.

Opponents of the governor's plan say school districts would have to pass that cost on to local taxpayers.

But Quinn now argues that property taxpayers need not pick up the

added cost if lawmakers "phase it in over 10, 12, 15 years." He suggests districts could and would use that time to limit pension costs, since they would ultimately be asked to pay for those costs.

State legislators left Springfield May 31 after failing to agree on a way to reform funding for state pensions.

"School supporters should not relax, however, as there is a strong possibility lawmakers may return later this year if negotiations in the meantime prove fruitful," according to Ben Schwarm, Deputy Executive Director for IASB.

RESOLUTIONS *from page 1*

ting districts, deliberate on each proposal, and then make recommendations to adopt or not adopt each measure.

A Report to the Membership will be prepared from that committee and distributed to all member districts. This report is intended to help districts to decide how they will vote on each resolution that will be presented at the Delegate Assembly.

The submitted resolutions below are listed by subject, and sponsoring district:

- Criminal History Records, **Orland SD 135**
- Show Choir Program for Credit, **Ball-Chatham CUSD 5**
- Cost Shift Responsibilities, **Sherrard Unit SD 200**
- Pension Reform, **Sherrard Unit SD 200**
- Charter School Funding, **Woodland CCSD 50**
- State Attorney General Website, **Woodland CCSD 50**
- Consolidate School Districts into Unit Districts, **Barrington CUSD 220**
- Contracting Out Non-Instructional Services, **Quincy SD 172**
- Bullying Policy to Include Cyber Bullying, **Dunlap CUSD 323**
- Funding for Educational Entitlements, **Oak Park ESD 97**
- School Funding Commitments, **Oak Park ESD 97**
- Budget-School Funding Commitments,

Oak Park ESD 97

- Bullying-Cyber-Bullying, **Indian Prairie SD 204**
- Vacation Leave for School Board Members, **Jasper County CUSD 1**
- General State Aid, **Orangeville CUSD 203**
- PTELL, **Homer CCSD 33C**
- Reaffirmation of Position Statements 2.38, 2.53, 3.03, 3.04, 3.05, 5.02, 5.03, 5.04, 5.07, 5.08, 5.12 and 6.01, **Woodland CUSD 5**
- Reaffirmation of Position Statement 5.05 Prevailing Wage Act, **Cary SD 26**
- Reaffirmation of Position Statement 5.11 Tenure Repeal, **Cary SD 26**
- Reaffirmation of Position Statement 5.12 School District Strikes, **Cary SD 26**
- Transportation of Homeless Students, **Aurora West USD 129**
- Use of School Bus for Transporting Students, **Aurora West USD 129**
- Funding State-Authorized Charter Schools, Rich THSD 227, **Olympia Fields**

"The resolutions we received cover a wide array of important topics of vital interest to school board members," Schwarm said. "Several trace back to funding concerns and to the financial difficulties schools are facing in these tough times."

The Association's Position Statements can be found at: <http://www.iasb.com/govrel/positions.cfm>.

Student suicide kit offers help for schools and community groups

Youth suicide is a major issue in Illinois, where suicide is the third leading cause of death for young people from ages 15 to 24. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention – a leader in the field of research and education about prevention, warning signs, and mental illness – has educational resources that may be beneficial to school districts. The AFSP has a comprehensive website (afsp.org) with free information and tools on suicide and suicide prevention.

Two of the organization's projects specifically address suicide by students. The *More Than Sad* DVD set helps high school educators understand suicidal behaviors in adolescents. For more about this program visit online at: www.morethansad.org. The second project is a comprehensive manual for schools to use in the event one of their students dies by suicide, called *After a Suicide: A Tool Kit for Schools*. It is available for download on the AFSP web site: www.afsp.org. The AFSP is urging school leaders to take the time to review the tool kit, and to make sure their district has a crisis response team and is ready.

Illinois proposes to increase testing, rank schools on 5-star scale

Plan a part of NCLB overhaul proposition

Illinois is moving to overhaul how students are tested and schools judged, with a proposed “star” rating system as a key element in a dramatic new state plan. The state proposal would rank schools on a scale of one to five stars.

The plan was developed when Illinois joined 37 other states this spring in applying for a waiver from some of the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. Such waivers come with the condition that each applicant state must create its own alternative assessment system that is acceptable to federal officials.

In addition to the star ratings system, major NCLB waiver plan components in Illinois include mandatory testing for every grade from 3 through 11 and raising the score required to pass grade-school exams.

Under the federal NCLB law, schools can fall short of federal standards and face sanctions if too many students flunk state tests. The new star rating system would include more assessment categories, such as whether students are making yearly progress and how prepared they are for college. Each major category would be worth 100 points — points that would be the basis of the proposed star ratings.

The waiver proposal submitted by Illinois officials still awaits approval by the U.S. Department of Education, which could come at any time now. On May 29, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced that eight additional states were being granted NCLB “waivers” that allow them to employ alternative school rating systems replacing the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) approach and to group NCLB’s accountability subgroups into so-called “super subgroups.” But Illinois was not among the states approved for waivers in May.

To date, 19 states have been granted waivers.

FIVE STARS ★★★★★
At least 90 points on progress and at least 75 points on outcomes and achievement or at least 90 points on achievement and outcomes and 75 points on progress .
FOUR STARS ★★★★
At least 75 points on progress and at least 60 points on outcomes and achievement , and vice versa.
THREE STARS ★★★
Less than 75 points on progress and less than 50 points on outcomes or achievement , or vice versa.
TWO STARS ★★
This category will use several methods, including 25 points or less on achievement or outcomes , with less than 25 points on progress .
ONE STAR ★
Five points or less on achievement or outcomes , and 25 points or less on progress , or another method.
BONUS
For schools 3 points above or below a cutoff, bonuses from the context category can be used to assign the school to a different level.

State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch announced in mid June the state still is working with the federal department to get approval. “While much of our application seems favorable to the department, we are still not in agreement regarding the timeline for when districts must use student growth in their new local evaluation systems,” Koch stated.

Illinois law calls for a progressive phase in, with some districts beginning to use the proposed new evaluation system as early as next year and all districts using them by 2016-17. The U.S. Department of Education wants all districts implementing the new evaluations in 2014-15, Koch said.

Meanwhile Illinois’ 685-page waiver application includes some controversial proposals. They include:

- Expanding the use of standardized

tests. Starting in the spring, the state would impose mandatory exams for ninth and 10th graders; require eighth-grade students to take two tests instead of one; and add a section to the existing two-day state exam for 11th graders. The state also would mandate testing in each grade from 3 to 11.

- Increasing the minimum score necessary to pass grade-school exams, which likely would mean that tens of thousands more students will fail, according to state projections. Many say it has been too easy to pass the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) — last year about 85 percent passed— and a large drop in performance is seen when students take the 11th-grade exam. Should the ISAT minimum score be raised, the passing rate is expected to plummet to about 50 percent after the spring 2013 testing.
- Judging districts and schools on several key factors rather than simply a one-time performance on an annual state exam.

Some commentators, like Julie Woestehoff, executive director of the nonprofit Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE), located in Chicago, are concerned about the proposed new system: “It’s almost a joke. We’ll just add one more standardized test,” Woestehoff was quoted as telling the *Chicago Tribune* in an April 3 story.

Woestehoff earlier stated the reason for her concern in a letter to state officials about the state’s waiver plan, as posted on the PURE website:

... We don’t trust the promise of “better tests” aligned with the Common Core standards. We have learned that merit pay and other high-stakes test-based evaluation systems don’t improve learning. Experts at the National Academy of Sciences and the Economic Policy Institute have cited the unreliability of value-added or “growth”

See **RATING** on page 5

Aug. 17 state law waiver applications deadline approaching fast

In order for School Code waiver requests to be decided this fall, applications must be postmarked and mailed to the state by Aug. 17. Specifically, applications must be sent to the Illinois State Board of Education to be included in the Fall 2012 Waiver Report, which will be submitted to the legislature by Oct. 1.

Waivers can be sought as well as for school mandates and regulations. Applications for modifications of the School Code, or for waivers or *modifications* of the State Board's administrative rules, are not subject to the postmark deadlines for waivers of the School Code. In other words, the deadline applies only for waivers of state law under the School Code. But approvals for any of these requests must be granted before the request can be implemented.

A school district may request a waiver or modification of the mandates of state laws or regulations when the district demonstrates it can meet

the intent in a "more effective, efficient, or economical manner or when necessary to stimulate or improve student performance."

If the state board fails to disapprove a request, that request is deemed granted. But even requests that are turned down may be appealed to the legislature, which often reverses the state's administrative rulings. Since the state waiver law went into effect, in fact, lawmakers have approved 2,011 waiver requests, and have turned down just 150.

Requests approved by state legislators in the past year have included: 35 waivers regarding driver education, 29 on physical education, 25 on tuition limits, 16 on administrative expenditure limits, 12 on in-service training, and 17 on various other topics. Notably, two waivers were granted in the past year regarding General State Aid Calculations.

Under the law, waivers cannot be allowed from laws, rules and regula-

tions regarding special education, eligibility of voters in school elections or teacher tenure, certification or seniority. And the state waivers cannot be allowed regarding requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind law.

The Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance played a key role in pushing for passage of the state waiver law, which took effect in 1995.

Before commencing the waiver process, experts suggest that applicants review requirements outlined in the "Overview for Waiver Process" found online at <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/isbewaivers/html/overviewwqa.htm#2>. Also see <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/isbewaivers/default.htm>

Application forms and instructions for waivers and modifications are provided by the state board, and can be downloaded at <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/isbewaivers/html/application.htm>.

Interactive report card guide published online to help boards use data effectively

The Illinois Interactive Report Card (IIRC), located at Northern Illinois University and funded by the Illinois State Board of Education, has just published a new IIRC Guide for School Board Members.

The guide is an illustrated, step-by-step approach to help school board members understand the layout and format of the IIRC and to use data presented in the report card to assist board decision-making.

The IIRC provides features to help board members understand and use their unique district and school data, including colorful, interactive graphics; longitudinal trends from 1999 to the present; and advanced school and district comparison capabilities.

The guide is designed as a "do-

it-yourself" manual that board members can walk through to familiarize themselves with the features of the interactive report card. It includes "Questions Board Members Should Ask," developed with IASB, to help boards use report card data to guide policy decisions in their districts.

The guide may be accessed online at: <http://iirc.niu.edu/PDF/IASB.pdf?d=05062012>.

In addition to these online resources, IASB has developed a three-hour training course that can be presented as an overview of the IIRC and training guide with the entire board. Interested districts should contact Sandra Kwasa at skwasa@iasb.com, or ext. 1213, or Steve Clark at sclark@iasb.com, or ext. 1210, for more information.

RATING *from page 4*

measures in warnings about the potentially damaging consequences of implementing test-based evaluation systems We support the expansion of proven reforms, such as small classes, parent involvement, experienced teachers, a well-rounded curriculum that connects learning to children's own lives, and evaluation systems with high-quality, multiple assessments Your waiver proposal offers none of that.

One other concern revolves around funding. With state funding for schools already flagging, the state suggests it would cost at least \$3.8 million for all eighth, ninth and 10th graders to take the new tests.

The Illinois Federation of Teachers has charged that the state wants to require additional ACT-related tests "without confirmation of available state funding to cover costs of the implementation."

Forms can help members keep track of 'Master Board' points

Board members can get honors for efforts

IASB recently mailed out forms to each district for board members to track their "Master Board Member" activities. Directions on the form include a list of programs and activities of the past year that qualify for credits toward Master Board Member status.

IASB recognizes and honors board members for the time and effort they devote to self-improvement and leadership activities. Master Board Member activities are a means to achieving the Association's mission of excellence in local school governance.

Points are assigned to professional development programs, including conference attendance, IASB workshop attendance, and NSBA 2012 attendance. Points are also assigned for participation in IASB division programs and activities, board development activities, legislative work, and IASB/NSBA leadership activities. Points range from 5 to 30. Credits are award-

ed through June 30 of each year and awards are presented at the IASB fall division dinner meetings.

Awards were handed out last fall to 293 members who had earned or maintained Master Board Member status.

There are three levels available: 60 to 129 points earns Level I status; 130 to 199 earns Level II status; and 200-plus points earns Master Board Member distinction. Once so designated, Master Board Members can maintain that status by acquiring 50 credits each year. The point total for the year must be reported to IASB each year by the individual board member.

Board members are urged to make a copy for their own records prior to completing and returning the activities summary document to the IASB offices. Deadline for receiving the updated forms is July 27.

To help with the record-keeping process, board members can access Master Board Member application forms and find their personal service

and participation records in their own online database at IASB's Members-Only website. This password-protected site is available at: <http://members.iasb.com>.

The Members-Only site is free, but registration is required. This requires the member's seven-digit Member ID number and last name. This ID number appears on the mailing label of all materials sent to IASB members, and begins with "2." After completing this step, members need to set up an account with an email address and a password of their choosing.

The Master Board Member materials and records are available under the "Your IASB Involvement" tab at the top of the home page.

Forms are available for each school year going back to 1999-2000 and are provided in portable document format (PDF). Questions about the program or forms should be directed to Judy Williams at 217/528-9688, ext. 1103, or e-mail at jwilliams@iasb.com.

School support staff offered assistance in 'Illinois Law in the School Office'

Making life a little more manageable for school secretaries, nurses, aides, receptionists, custodians, bus drivers, and other school office employees is the goal of a new book, *Illinois Law in the School Office, The Essential Desk Reference*.

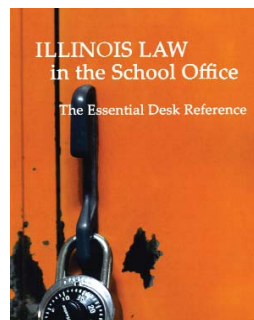
The authors are affiliated with the book's publisher, the Illinois Principals Association, and each has had ample experience working with school support staff and school leaders.

Brian D. Schwartz has practiced school law for 15 years and is associate director of and general counsel to the Illinois Principals Association. Scott L. Day is a former middle school and junior high administrator and is chair of the department of educational

leadership at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Both have consulted with a number of school support professionals about the areas of law and policy that they deal with on a routine basis. Their aim is to help all school office employees follow the law.

This helpful reference work is organized into ten chapters: Understanding the Law; The School Office: First Line of Contact; Residency, Enrollment and Withdrawal; Safeguarding



and Maintaining Student Records; Managing Student Medical Needs and Medications; Immunizations, Health, Dental and Vision Requirements; Special Student Populations; Handling Money and School Account Management; Transportation and Related Issues; Employment Issues and Rights of Non-Certified Staff.

Each chapter contains detailed narratives on relevant issues, and frequently asked questions. Commonly used forms and resources needed to carry out proper record-keeping are available through a companion website. The book also includes a useful index of covered topics.

The new book is available through the IASB bookstore, <http://iasb.com/shop/>. The cost is \$24.95.

Schwarm appointed deputy executive director for Association, effective July 1

Incoming IASB Executive Director Roger Eddy has named his choice for deputy executive director. Ben Schwarm will become Deputy Executive Director, replacing Mike Bartlett, effective July 1.

Schwarm has been with the Association since 1990, serving in various capacities in the governmental relations department. He began as assistant director for governmental relations, was promoted to director of the department, and has been serving as associate executive director and heading up the legislative efforts for the past 12 years under outgoing Executive Director Emeritus Michael D. Johnson. Under Johnson, Schwarm took on additional responsibilities for policy formation for the association and as the point person in responding to media requests.

In his new role, Schwarm will consult with the executive director on policy issues, work closely with the communications department on media requests and public relations, cover events and meetings for the executive director when scheduling conflicts arise, and assist the executive director with oversight of the IASB staff and office management duties. Schwarm will remain head of the IASB governmental relations department, directing IASB legislative specialists in the overall advocacy effort and coordinating with the Alliance partners on legislation.

Bartlett will remain on staff through July, according to Executive Director Eddy, to assist with the transition in the deputy executive director position. He has served in his position with distinction, aiding Dr. Johnson in a variety of functions over the years. Bartlett's expertise and experience will be missed upon his retirement on July 31.

Meanwhile, in addition to Johnson's retirement, IASB announced several other staff changes.

Debra (Larson) Walden, announced her retirement after nearly eight years



Ben Schwarm



Mike Bartlett

as a consultant with the Targeting Achievement through Governance program.

Walden said that the Association "has been a wonderful place to work over the last seven-plus years and I will miss everyone. It's been great working with you but I look forward to this new chapter and have plenty on the 'to do' list."

In other changes, IASB welcomed Carrie Cloyd, who is serving as the administrative assistant to Eddy. Cloyd previously worked with Eddy in his Springfield office when he was a state representative.

Other promotions included: Loretta Cotten to secretary III, in field services; Mary Torgler to administrative assistant, executive searches; and Carla Bolt to director-designee, meetings management.



"I think those words are going to be very helpful when we learn how to read."

NEWS FROM IASB

New superintendents lunch

Invitations are going out soon for the new superintendent luncheons scheduled at four different locations and dates in August. The aim is not only to welcome these new top administrators of Illinois school districts, but to explain about IASB's resources, services, and training assistance.

Luncheons are set for: Aug. 9, at IASB offices in Lombard; Aug. 28, at Elks Lodge 819 in Mt. Vernon; Aug. 29, at IASB offices in Springfield; and Aug. 30, at Jonah's Seafood in East Peoria. School leaders should choose the date and location most convenient.

New superintendents and superintendents new to the state of Illinois, as well as those who are relatively new to the job, can register by contacting Judy Niezgodka, ext. 1220 or at jniezgodka@iasb.com, Brenda Watkins, ext. 1116 or at bwatkins@iasb.com. Online registration is also available at: <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/calendar.cfm>.

Leaders share in symposium

Very few empty seats were in evidence during IASB's fifth LeaderShop Symposium June 16 in Lombard as 94 LeaderShop Academy members gathered to delve deeper into how to be more resilient leaders, even in adversity.

Diane Reed, author of *Resilient Leadership for Turbulent Times* keynoted the symposium, and helped facilitate small group discussions during the biennial LeaderShop event. Board members from districts of all sizes attended the day-long symposium.

The LeaderShop Academy event is held every other year to provide special attention to school board members who have reached Academy membership.

2012 Carousel of Panels to offer wide array of Conference presentations

Board members and superintendents can benefit from a wide assortment of panel discussions at this year's Carousel of Panels on Nov. 17, featuring presentations from many local districts.

In large adjoining rooms, 35 different presentations will be offered at one time. Over a one hour and 45 minute time block, visitors can participate in three different panels of 30 minutes each. The event will be held from 1:30 to 3:15 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 17 at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel.

Chosen topics (not the panel titles), and the primary applicant to present on each subject chosen, are:

- From Beginning to Effective: Secondary Rtl...It's a Different Bird, **Deer Creek-Mackinaw CUSD 701**
- Professional Collaboration 2.0: Online Tools to Support Teaming, **Wheeling CCSD 21**
- The Interim Superintendent, **Aurora University**
- Current Issues with Suspension & Expulsions, **Eastern Illinois University**
- Collective Bargaining Is More Than a Simple YES or NO, **U of I-Springfield**
- Practical Implementation Procedures for PERA, **Governors State University**
- Achieve School Improvement Utilizing "Highly Qualified" Instructors, **Eldorado CUSD 4**
- Targeting Assessment Project, **Beecher CUSD 200U**
- From School Improvement Plan to Rising Star, **Crystal Lake CCSD 47**
- Excellence and Equity: Restructuring Freshman Year, **Evanston THSD 202**
- Using Mobile Services to Enhance Student Achievement, **Steger SD 194**
- State Chartered Schools: Facts, Finances and You, **Woodland CCSD 50**
- Multiple Uses of Locally Normed EPAS Data — **Niles THSD 219**
- Boardroom to Classroom...High Expectations = Positive Results, **Calumet Public SD 132**
- Exploring Reorganization Options, **U of I-Springfield**
- Reinventing a School: A Magnet Success Story, **BLDD Architects & Champaign CUSD 4**
- Project-Based Learning: Driving Student/Community Involvement, **Danville CCSD 118**
- United We Stand: Communicate We Did! Winning an Impasse, **Butler SD 53**
- Pennies from Heaven: County School Sales Tax, **Unicom**



The Carousel this year will feature 35 distinct panel presentations in adjoining rooms. Visitors can take part in three different panels of 30 minutes each during a one hour and 45 minute time period.

- Looking In to Lead Out, **Olympia CUSD 16**
- CBO: Fulfilling College Dreams — **THSD 113, Highland Park**
- Against All Odds: Successful School Tax Referendum, **North Pekin-Marquette Heights SD 102**
- Schedules That Make PLCs Possible in Middle School, **Glen Ellyn SD 41**
- Communication Strategies to Advocate for Your District, **National Louis University**
- School Board Service in an Era of Increased Accountability: Is the Mandated Training Enough? **Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville**
- Arts & Education Exchange: Bringing the Arts to Every Illinois' Student, **Arts Alliance Illinois**
- Developing Reading and Comprehension Skills in a CTE Program, **FCAE**
- Facilities Comprehensive Planning Makes Sense & Cents, **Benjamin SD 25**
- Bus Safety Patrol: Bully Prevention Program on Wheels!, **Fremont SD 79**
- Collaboration at its BEST in Southwestern Illinois, **BEST**
- Beyond Green: Delivering Wholesome, Sustainable & Affordable Food to Students, **Niles THSD 219**
- Place to Call Home: New Teacher Mentoring, **Calumet Public SD 132**
- Blueprint for Success: Bus Safety, Service & Student Leadership, **Fremont District 79**
- Implementing Comprehensive High School Reading & Mathematics Interventions, **Waukegan CUSD 60**
- Promoting Successful Outcomes Using Creative Alternative Programming, **Waukegan CUSD 60**

Journal for July/August to feature several problem-solving school budget strategies

The July/August issue of *The Illinois School Board Journal* is full of problem-solving strategies as boards enter their new fiscal year.

The cover story, for example, discusses the importance for boards to “communicate, communicate, communicate” with the public, sharing important issues and messages repeatedly and in many ways. The article makes its point by interpreting the wisdom of well-known adages such as “trust but verify” and “focus on the big picture” when it comes to dealing

with school district finances.

The Journal also has entered a new digital phase with the magazine now posted to a digital hosting site. Clicking on the “digital version” link on the IASB homepage will find a page-turning version of the magazine that is fully searchable and accessible by computer, tablet or smart phone.



Holly Jack board secretary award deadline drawing near

The Illinois Association of School Boards is seeking nominations for the “Holly Jack Outstanding Service Award.”



Holly Jack

The award was created in 2009 to honor the memory of Holly Jack, a long-time employee of the Association who served as an IASB field services administrative assistant and was instrumental in promoting and developing the secretaries’ program that is offered at the Joint Annual Conference.

The purpose of the award is to both honor Jack’s contribution and memory and to recognize the extraordinary work and service provided by secretaries who serve and assist their local boards of education. The award will be presented at the IASB/IASA/ASBO annual conference in Chicago on Friday, Nov. 16.

IASB invites school board presidents and superintendents to nominate their local district employee (superintendent’s secretary, super-

intendent’s administrative assistant, school board recording secretary, etc.) who does the work required of the school board secretary by *The School Code* of Illinois.

To be eligible for the award an individual must be a district employee, and have been employed in that position, either by their school district or another, for a minimum of five years.

While it is not necessary to address each of the criteria identified below, the nominee should demonstrate the characteristics similar to those shown by Holly Jack in her work with school districts.

- Performance – Performs “above and beyond” expectations, always going the extra mile to serve the district’s educational staff, school board, community members, and students.
- Initiative – Demonstrates independent problem-solving ability.
- Innovation – Demonstrates imagination in the work environment.
- Staff Development – Strives to empower, embrace, and equip colleagues with the knowledge and resources to achieve their person-

al goals and reach their professional and personal potential.

- Self-Improvement – Demonstrates a desire to enhance self-value and excellence.
- Passion – Demonstrates a passion for the work and for public education.
- Dedication – Devotes time and energy to improve the quality of life for others in the educational community and the quality of education in the district.

The nomination form must be signed by the superintendent and the board president. Additional pages may be added. Letters of support from individuals, either inside or outside the district, may be submitted with the form, but these must be limited to a total of five. The deadline for submitting all documents is Sep. 28.

The winner will be selected by a panel of impartial judges. The selected nominee and the nominating district will be notified immediately of the judges’ decision.

More information is available from Judy Williams, ext. 1103, or at jwilliams@iasb.com, or Anna Lovern, ext. 1125, or at alovern@iasb.com.

Electric rates decrease for schools in Illinois Energy Consortium (IEC)

Beginning with late June or early July invoices, school districts that are members of the Illinois Energy Consortium will see an additional savings on the electric portion of their utility bills, possibly as much as 15 to 20 percent.

June is the traditional adjustment month for IEC rates, and this year that adjustment is going down due to a decrease in electricity costs, according to Tonya Powell, IEC electric program administrator with Ameren in Collinsville. In addition, because of changes by the Regional Transmission Organization, rates for transmission and other services they provide are also going down.

And to add to the good news, she said, ComEd customers will see a sig-



nificant decrease in the “capacity” portion of their IEC power invoices. “Capacity” equates to generation costs that are now a more visible part of electrical bills.

Ameren customers have already experienced some of these decreases in a more phased-in approach.

While the net effects of the decreases will vary, the result should be a savings of from 5 to 15 percent for an IEC member district.

The Illinois Energy Consortium is a joint energy purchasing pool sponsored by Illinois Association of School Boards, Illinois Association of School Administrators and Illinois Association of School Business Officials. It is designed to lower utility costs for Illinois school districts or community colleges and make funds available for technology, staff development and educational goals.

Any school district that is interested in or has questions about IEC’s Electric or Natural Gas Programs should contact Ron Steigerwald at 847.567.3051 or at rsteigerwald@hotmail.com.

2012 Cole Awards given for good news coverage of school boards

Twenty newspapers received awards in the annual Robert M. Cole Awards competition for 2012, including the *Peoria Journal Star*, which earned first place in the large daily newspaper category.

The Cole Awards are sponsored by the Illinois Association of School Boards and conducted by the Illinois Press Association to recognize newspapers doing an outstanding job of covering local school boards and emphasizing the community's connection with public school districts.

Other first-place Cole Award winners were: *Coal City Courant*, small weekly division; *The Bugle Newspapers*, Plainfield, mid-size weekly division; *Pioneer Press*, *Glenview*, large weekly division; *Daily Chronicle*, DeKalb, small daily division; and *Quincy Herald-Whig*, mid-size daily division.

Multiple award winning newspapers included Pioneer Press, which also garnered third place in its division. The *Northwest Herald*, Crystal Lake, had three stories that tied for second place in the mid-size daily division. And the *Morris Daily Herald* earned a third place and honorable mention in the small daily division.

Winning individuals and judges' comments are listed below:

- **Dave Haney**, *Peoria Journal Star*, "Excellent leads, tight writing and



Dave Haney



David Adam



Andrew Mitchell



Karen Berkowitz

good use of graphics give this entry first place."

- **David Adam**, *Quincy Herald-Whig*, "Excellent continued coverage of board distress in Quincy."
- **Andrew Mitchell**, *Daily Chronicle*, DeKalb, "Excellent tie-ins for all stories to board actions and an example of how to make a board meeting story more than a rehash of approving an agenda item."
- **Karen Berkowitz**, *Pioneer Press*, Glenview, "Excellent lead article on whether its grads are prepared when they leave area schools propelled this to the top."
- **Laura Katauskas**, *The Bugle Newspapers*, Plainfield, "Strong story on school board's new grading policy and good board member quotes."
- **Ann Gill**, *Coal City Courant*, "This entry stood out from the others for its excellent leads, well-written copy and information that was more than



Laura Katauskas



Ann Gill

what comes out of a school board meeting."

Named for the first full-time executive director of IASB, the Robert M. Cole Award recognizes outstanding coverage of education issues that emphasizes the community's connection with its local public school district.

Winners were announced Friday, June 15, at the annual convention of the Illinois Press Association in Springfield. Linda Dawson, IASB director/editorial services handed out the awards.

Just three strikes called in Illinois public schools this past school year

At least 13 intent-to-strike notices against public schools were filed this school year, but only three strikes were called in Illinois school districts. Most of the threatened work stoppages ended without a strike in amicable settlements.

However, on June 11, nearly 90 percent of the 23,780 members of the Chicago Federation of Teachers voted to support a strike if one is called.

Observers say there is an increasingly strained relationship between teachers and Mayor Rahm Emanuel,

and his top administrators.

Since taking office a little more than a year ago, Mayor Emanuel has stripped the teachers of a 4 percent raise, successfully pushed for a longer day and advocated for more privately run charter and turnaround schools.

The state's three school strikes lasted a total of 21 days.

One strike started March 29 and ended April 2 in **Rockford District 205**. It involved 1,870 teachers, nurses and other professional staff.

A strike that lasted six days began

Jan. 5 in **Zion-Benton THSD 126**. The work action there involved 280 certified teachers and ESP employees.

The first strike of the 2011-12 school year began Aug. 17, 2011, in **Illini Bluffs CUSD 327**, Glasford, and was settled after 11 days. The work action there involved 60 full-time and part-time faculty.

Seven other school districts also received a notice of intent to strike but settled in the past school year.

Source: Illinois Association of School Administrators.

NEWS HEADLINES

Arlington Heights (May 29, *The Daily Herald*) As THSD 214 works on a plan for each of its 12,000 students to eventually have an iPad, Vanguard Alternative School will test the idea over the next two years. Through money set aside in the district's technology budget, the 14 staff members at Vanguard will receive iPads next school year to create a paperless curriculum and each of the schools' roughly 100 students will receive the tablets the following year. The staff will research the best ways to use the iPads starting this summer and through next school year. Even after discounts and buying in bulk, the iPads will cost about \$480 per device. But the district expects some savings from replacing some of the thousands of desktop computers across the district with iPads. Reductions also are anticipated in other technology costs.

Champaign (May 29, *Champaign News-Gazette*) Champaign high schools will now require summer reading of every student for the first time. The thought of getting an assignment in May for a class that starts in August may seem like a drag for some students, but it has a purpose. Teachers are hoping it will help students maintain knowledge during the summer, identify what they like to read and give instructors a peek into reading and writing levels at the beginning of the year.

Chicago (May 31, *Chicago Tribune*) Most Chicago District 299 schools already require uniforms or have dress codes, but that did not stop city aldermen from pressing district officials May 30 to make sure rules bar saggy pants. One alderman pushed a resolution asserting that "gangster-style clothing" — including saggy pants, sideways baseball caps, designer shoes and excessive jewelry — disrupts learning, increases violence, and puts an emotional and financial strain on parents. A committee unan-

imously approved the resolution.

Decatur (June 1, *Herald & Review*) Half of the students held back in kindergarten in Decatur's public schools last year did not attend preschool or day care, according to Aissa Norris, principal of Pershing Early Learning Center. But one goal of the Decatur Area Education Coalition is to raise kindergarten readiness, and the group seeks to test every child in the spring before kindergarten. The idea is to find the kids who need extra help before they get to school, so they can attend Kindergarten Camp to brush up and so their kindergarten teacher will be able to prepare for them before the school year starts.

Northern Illinois (June 6, *The Daily Herald*) When classrooms close for the summer, so do school cafeterias and their free and reduced lunch and breakfast programs. For thousands of area children, that means a harsh summer lesson about hunger and improper nutrition. A study by Feeding America, a hunger relief charity, shows there are more than 400,000 children in Cook and the collar counties who spend at least some time hungry or not receiving proper nutrition. One in five children in the 13 northern Illinois counties face hunger on a regular basis. Northern Illinois Food Bank officials say that problem becomes more acute in the summer.

Oak Park (May 30, *Chicago Tribune*) The Illinois State Board of Education recently ruled the results of 22 ISAT tests from Horace Mann Elementary School students in Oak Park will not be counted after testing irregularities were reported there. Oak Park District 97 said ISBE issued a disqualification ruling on the ISAT testing irregularities reported by the district in March. Disqualified tests included violations such as staff members reviewing test booklets and answer documents for stray marks and miss-

ing answers after they had been turned in by students; staff members erasing stray marks on the test booklets and answer documents; students being given extra time to transcribe answers from the test booklets, and the like. The district appointed a new principal for Mann Elementary in May, replacing the old one, who resigned in March and stepped down June 30. Staff involved were disciplined by the district. Superintendent Al Roberts said District 97 "will take additional steps to ensure that all future tests, assessments and standards ... are carried out with fidelity."

Rockford (June 5, *Rockford Register Star*) The school board has approved a new salary structure to reward talented administrators and attract new ones, resulting in pay hikes this fall for about 12 principals, assistant principals and other administrators. Most administrators haven't received the annual salary increases that most teachers and other union employees have enjoyed for at least four years because of binding contract language.

Statewide (June 1, *The Washington Post*) Linguistic diversity can be a gift. But without an effective strategy for exposing immigrant children to English and building their literacy skills, experts say, the kids are at risk of falling behind. The question is, where to start. Some lessons are emerging from Illinois, where there is a focus on the needs of English-language learners at a young age. This strategy is in touch with the state's demographics: An estimated 21 percent of Illinois residents speak a language other than English at home. As in other states, the achievement gap between English-language learners and their peers looms large: 67 percent of English-language learners in Illinois graduated from high school on time last year, compared with a national average of 84 percent.



Crowds of eager board secretaries showed up for guidance at election workshops offered by IASB prior to the last round of school board elections. This year a total of seven such workshops are planned around the state.

Election workshops planned at seven different dates, locations this summer

Starting in late September, a series of deadlines will mark the progress toward the April 9, 2013, school board elections.

The first day that prospective school board candidates may circulate nominating petitions for signatures will be Tuesday, Sep. 25. Signed petitions must be turned in to board offices between Dec. 17 and Dec. 24, according to the Illinois Department of Elections.

In conjunction with this, IASB has announced a series of workshops to assist local election officials with their duties.

More than 275 people are already registered for the workshops, to be held at the following locations and dates:

- 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 Dist. 5**, Normal, Aug. 3

As the designated Local Election

Official, the board secretary (either employed or elected) has the responsibility of assisting the district and candidates for office to comply with the Illinois Election Code and Illinois School Code.

Presenting the workshops will be Anna Lovern, IASB director of policy services, and Alan M. Mullins, an attorney with Scariano, Himes & Petrarca. Both will walk participants through the process and deadlines.

The workshop also will examine nominating forms, filing procedures, accepting petitions, ballot resolutions, certification of ballot, petition challenges, districts in multiple jurisdictions, name positions on ballots, procedures for candidate withdrawal, certification of election results, oath of office, and board reorganization.

A variety of questions will be answered at each workshop, which may include releasing candidate information, who may give the oath of office, who runs the reorganization meeting, and when board meeting dates and times should be established.

The workshops will provide an opportunity, as well, for board secretaries, board members and superintendents to socialize and network. Information about these training events can be found at: <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/Dstsecelectionworkshop.pdf>.

The fee to attend the workshop is \$55. Registration is available online at: <https://www.iasb.com/calendar/>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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 24 – 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, Mt. Vernon

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

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