

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD *Newsbulletin*

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Feds OK pilot program to help more schools meet NCLB goals

Illinois was chosen on July 1 as one of six states to participate in a federal pilot program intended to provide additional flexibility and tools to assist schools in meeting federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law requirements. A limited number of schools may begin piloting the initiative during the 2008-09 school year.

While some school district administrators say the new project is a good idea, because it concentrates resources in needy schools sooner, others claim that the changes appear only to create new labels and categories while NCLB standards continue to clamp down with ever greater pressure.

"It is a good move, but it does not go far enough," said Gerald Brookhart, regional superintendent of schools for Peoria County.

Specifically, the state will now allow low-performing schools to offer tutoring to students earlier. In the past, schools that failed to make AYP in the same subject area two consecutive years were required to offer public school choice and tutoring services after two years of AYP failure.

Also see *NCLB flexibility plan*, page 6
AYP data online, page 8

"That never made much sense, that tutoring came after school choice," said Brookhart. "If the intervention (tutoring) does not work, *then* give students a choice to leave."

"This is a step in the right direction," agreed Angela Peifer, IASB's Associate Executive Director of the Association's Board Development and TAG Departments. "Boards and administrators have been very frustrated by the requirement to offer choice first. It never made sense and wasn't a viable option for many Illinois school districts struggling with AYP targets. The flexibility of offering supplemental educational services or tutoring earlier will help these districts focus sooner on children who need extra help and support to achieve," Peifer said.

With school choice, students must be given the option to attend a public school that is not identified for improvement. However, in smaller districts, this option isn't always available to students. By implementing

See **NCLB** on page 10



Mirroring each other's movements was one of the activities at the LeaderShop Symposium.

'Focus' and 'value' are 2008 IASB leaders' symposium messages

Focus was one message; value was the other. Both were explained and demonstrated to more than 90 school board members and administrators at the LeaderShop Academy Symposium, held June 21 in Lombard.

This was the third invitational event hosted by IASB as part of the membership benefit for board members belonging to the School Board LeaderShop Academy. The event is held every other year.

The 2008 event featured two for-

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Registration opens for yearly Superintendents' Conference

The 31st annual Superintendents' Conference will be held Oct. 23 and 24 at the Crowne Plaza, Springfield. Registration for this annual event is now open. The registration brochure is to be posted online at http://www.isbe.net/supts_conf/supts_conference_reg.pdf.

For conference questions contact Leigh Ann Smith at 217/782-6434. If you have suggestions or topics that you would like to see included at the conference, e-mail your comments to lsmith@isbe.net.

New grants aim to 'bridge technology gap' for students

Nearly \$5 million in federal grants were recently awarded to 16 school districts for technology upgrades and training.

The Illinois Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) grants are designed to enable more students to have both the access and ability to use emerging technologies inside the classroom.

The grant comes from federal funding as part of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The goal is to improve student achievement and bridge the technology gap with students from high-poverty districts. The grant also funds ongoing professional development for teachers.

A list of grant winners is available online at: <http://www.isbe.net/news/2008/july9.pdf>.

New fresh fruit, vegetable program targets good choices

Twenty-five Illinois schools will receive a total of \$250,000 to encourage students to eat more fruits and vegetables under a new federal grant announced on July 10. For a list of participating schools visit: <http://www.isbe.net/news/2008/july10.htm>.

Schools get NCLB funds for vital before-and after-school programs

The Illinois State Board of Education recently awarded \$750,000 in new grants for after-school tutoring and mentoring programs at four Illinois school districts and one regional office of education. Each award winner may use these federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) funds to carry out a broad array of before- and after-school activities (including those held during summer recess periods) to advance student achievement, primarily in low-income school districts.

The 21st Century Community Learning Center grants, a key component of NCLB, are designed to provide enrichment opportunities to students in areas where extra help is needed. These grants will primarily serve students who attend schools with a population where at least 40 percent comes from low-income families.

Academic assistance must focus on reading and mathematics, concentrating on the Illinois Learning Standards and locally developed standards in core subject areas that complement the regular academic program.

In addition to tutoring and mentoring, the targeted programs can also provide support for youth development activities, drug and violence prevention programs, technology education programs, art, music and recreation programs, etc., all to enhance the academic component of the program. Other activities supported by the grants may include counseling and character education, as well as parental involvement activities and extended library hours.

This 21st Century grant is made for a five-year period, dependent upon sufficient funding from the federal government for future years, and the program having satisfactory progress in the preceding year. The FY 2008 grants ended June 30, 2008, with the possibility of renewal through FY 2012.

School grant recipients are: Rock Island Regional Office of Education, \$125,000; Dolton East SD 149, \$125,000; St. Anne Community High School District 302, \$125,000; CCSD 65, Evanston, \$125,000; and West Harvey Dixmoor District 147, \$250,000. Seven community groups also won grants.

IASB member district count inches up on year

Although there have not been any new member districts joining the Association so far this year, changes in membership status have brought the number of IASB members to 855, as of July 1, 2008. That is two more member districts than on July 1, 2007.

There are currently 13 non-member districts, three fewer than last year.

More than 98 percent of all school districts in Illinois belong to IASB. That represents the highest proportion of membership the Association has ever had.

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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Bill inked to continue 'preschool for all' plan

Includes \$380 million for two-year extension

Gov. Rod Blagojevich on June 30 signed into law H.B. 4705 that continues the state's early childhood program, "Preschool for All," for two more years by providing \$380 million in funding for the upcoming school year.

"The benefits children receive from early learning in preschool are limitless. 'Preschool for All' provides those benefits," he said.

Sponsored by Rep. Barbara Flynn Currie (D-Chicago) and Senator Kimberly Lightford (D-Westchester), the bill extends the preschool program through June 30, 2010. In 2006, the program became law, making Illinois the first state to make preschool available for all three- and four-year-olds.

Funding is available to public and private schools, child care centers, and licensed family child care homes, private preschools, park districts, faith-based organizations, and other community-based agencies. The program requires preschools to be staffed by experienced teachers who hold bachelor's degrees and specialized training in early education, and provide at least two and a half hours per day of high-quality programming designed to foster all of the skills – social, emotional, physical, and cognitive – that all young children need to achieve success in school and later in life.

"I am a longtime supporter and advocate of early childhood education here in Illinois," said Rep. Currie. "I am excited to see that our preschool program has benefited so many children, many of whom are at-risk."

In Fiscal Year 2007, the state program served 85,186 children ages 3 to 5 years. During Fiscal Year 2008, more than 90,000 children will have been served statewide, according to the state board of education, which



"Preschool for All" will continue for another two years under terms of one bill signing. The bill, H.B. 4705, contains \$380 million in funding for the nationally recognized initiative. Experts say attending preschool helps narrow the achievement gaps.

administers the program. All three and four-year-olds in Illinois are eligible, totaling nearly 350,000 children.

Earlier this year, Illinois was singled out as a national leader for being the first state committed to serving all three-year olds with quality preschool, according to a report published by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) of Rutgers University.

Special ed bill signed

In another key bill signing, more than 200 Illinois school districts could be in line for a total of \$21 million for special education programs. Although the state's lingering budget impasse makes it unclear when the money will be released, S.B. 1874 is aimed at helping school districts that receive money from the Special Education Extraordinary Services program.

The legislation addresses a change in the way the state allocates money for special education. Some districts gain money through a new formula, but 225 would lose. The proposal makes sure no districts lose money. The Marion school district, for example, would see an estimated \$519,000, and the Rock Island school district would receive \$512,000. Pontiac schools would see \$97,000, while schools in Decatur and Neoga would receive \$58,800 and \$51,000 more, respectively.

Health examinations bill

On July 16 the governor also signed HB 5717 into law. This law states that a student who received a health exam within one year before starting the fifth grade in the 2007-2008 school year is not required to get another health exam when attending school for the 2008-2009 school year, unless he or she is starting school for the first time. While the need for this law has been mooted by emergency rules, the Illinois State Board of Education had supported this legislation.

As a reminder, Public Act 95-0422, effective August 24, 2007, revised the School Code to clarify that a health examination was required before entering the sixth grade of any public, private or parochial school, instead of before entering the fifth grade of any school (the Public Act did not change any of the other instances when a health examination is required).

State officials have been asked whether students who had received a health examination prior to entering the fifth grade in the 2007-08 school year will, because of the new law, again have to receive a health examination before entering the sixth grade in the 2008-09 school year. The answer is "no." In fact, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) earlier this summer filed emergency rules that make clear such students *would not* have to receive another health examination.

The full legislation for HB 5717 can be found on the Illinois General Assembly's web site at: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=5717&GAID=9&GA=95&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=37337&SessionID=51>.

For answers to any questions about this new law, please contact **Mr. Shafiqul Azam**, Illinois State Board of Education, Data Analysis and Progress Reporting, at 217/782-3950 or by e-mail at mazam@isbe.net.

Publications cover key school law topics

School laws, student interviews, special ed are covered online

Three committees of the Illinois Council of School Attorneys (ICSA), a group of more than 200 attorneys practicing throughout the state who represent school districts, recently released three new publications that are available at IASB's web site. These are the *Guide to Illinois Statutes Affecting Schools*, *Guidelines for Interviews of Students*, and *Special Education Procedures and Sample Policies*.

The latter is perhaps the most urgent or compelling for attorneys and boards. But the *Guide to Illinois Statutes* is a handy reference to those Illinois statutes that are not contained in the School Code but are occasionally involved in the resolution of issues faced by school districts. It references statutes in force as of June 1, 2008.

Here is a brief description of these publications:

Special Education Procedures and Sample Policies

This is a series of three documents to provide a framework into which local school districts and cooperatives may insert their own specific procedures. These documents include:

- Special Education Procedures Assuring the Implementation of Comprehensive Programming for Children with Disabilities
- IASB's sample policy 6:120, Education of Children with Disabilities
- IASB's sample policy 7:230, Misconduct by Students with Disabilities

The procedures may be downloaded free of charge and IASB is also making its updated special education policies available to all districts.

Note to PRESS Plus clients: The updated special education policies will be included in the fall PRESS Plus issue. If your board chooses to act on

the policies prior to receiving that issue, notify Anna Lovern by fax at 217.528-2831 or email her at alovern@iasb.com. Please include any edits made by the board and the adoption date.

The *Special Education Procedures* document is available in Rich Text Format to suit the requirements of most word processing programs. But because the document is in outline form, please be alert for any changes that your particular word processing program might create in opening the file.

Guidelines for Interviews of Students

Cooperation between school districts and the various law enforcement agencies in a community is vital to school safety and the administration of justice. This publication, *Guidelines for Interviews of Students at School by Law Enforcement Authorities*, is designed to assist law enforcement authorities and school officials in determining when it is appropriate for law enforcement authorities to interview students while the students are at school or participating in school-related activities.

It is recommended that these guidelines be supplemented with continued training to ensure that both students' rights and law enforcement's need for effective investigation are protected. School officials are also encouraged to consult board legal counsel as may be needed.

Contents include:

- School Officials' Authority Over Matters Relating To School Discipline
- School Police Liaison Officers or School Resource Officers (SROs)
- Interviews of Students by School Officials
- Interviews of Students by School Resource Officers (SRO)
- Law Enforcement Interviews About School-Related Incidents
- Law Enforcement Interviews About

Non-School Related Matters

- Arrest and Removal of Students from School
- Sharing Of Information
- Interviews and Examinations of Students at School by DCFS

To download *Guidelines for Interviews of Students at School by Law Enforcement Authorities* as a PDF document go online to: <http://www.iasb.com/law/ICSAGuidelinesInterviews.pdf>.

To customize the guidelines for your district, you can download the document in Rich Text Format. Visit: <http://www.iasb.com/law/ICSA GUIDELINESFORINTERVIEWS.rtf>.

Guide to Illinois Statutes Affecting Schools

The *Guide to Illinois Statutes Affecting Schools* references statutes in force as of June 1, 2008. Statutes are arranged by subject categories: boards of education; elections; employees; financial affairs; litigation; property and contracts; students and parents.

This PDF document is available for free downloading online at: <https://www.iasb.com/law/ICSAGuide0608.pdf>.



NEWS HEADLINES

Cahokia (June 25, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*) The Cahokia school district is launching a new K-12 “school of choice,” expected to compete with the region’s first charter school — and has already attracted more than a third of its students. Both schools feature small class sizes, open to all students district-wide. At the helm of the new public school is a principal who resigned rather unexpectedly as assistant principal of the charter school last year, citing administrative disagreements. Experts say it is becoming more common for public schools to create new education models such as this school or the same-sex schools debuting in Chicago.

Carpentersville (June 21, *The Daily Herald*) Carpentersville District 300 is considering the formation of peer juries to help discipline students. Nearby districts are already doing this, including Chicago District 299 and Northwest Suburban High School District 214. Although the details are still being worked out, district officials have discussed forming a single jury next year to judge high school offenses that do not merit expulsion. The program could be expanded to the middle schools in 2009-10 — with an eye toward changing behavior and keeping kids in the classroom.

Chicago (June 25, *Education Week*) Teacher quality in Chicago has improved over this decade, largely because District 299 has focused on hiring inexperienced teachers with stronger academic backgrounds, a report released on June 25 finds. The authors of the study, “Leveling Up,” from the Illinois Education Research Council say their findings challenge some conventional wisdom on how best to bolster teacher quality. For instance, they conclude that inexperienced teachers are not inherently bad for schools.

Chicago (June 27, *Chicago Sun-Times*) Family vacations are among the rewards that have been offered to keep student attendance up in Chicago District 299. The schools also are rewarding some parents and their children with grocery store gift certificates, payment of a month’s rent and even a car. No additional taxpayer money is being spent, however, because the prizes come from private companies.

Grayslake (June 26, *The Daily Herald*) Grayslake CCSD 46 accidentally overpaid 13 teachers and classroom assistants a combined \$92,106 over the past two academic years, but officials say new controls should prevent a repeat of such errors. Taxpayers will not be out the money because of givebacks and reductions in future salaries. Complex recalculations of salaries under a new employee contract led to the errors, which were discovered by district business personnel.

Gurnee (June 19, *The Daily Herald*) Bruce Bohren, board president at Gurnee-based Woodland Elementary District 50, recently penned a letter to other Lake County school boards to support getting a county-wide sales tax issue on the ballot. Bohren and other school officials want to raise Lake County’s sales tax to help pay construction-related costs at all schools.

Hanover and New Berlin (June 25, *The Journal-Standard*, and *The State Journal-Register*) River Ridge CUSD 210 and New Berlin CUSD 15 are independently in the early stages of investigating the use of wind-generated power as a source of electricity for the districts’ new school buildings. However, the school boards are taking a serious look at the issue in both school districts.

Naperville and Schaumburg (June 25, *Naperville Sun*) Learning centers in both Naperville and Schaum-

burg are planning to introduce children to China’s Mandarin language this fall. Beginning Sep. 8, the centers will offer an immersion program in Mandarin for 3- to 5-year-olds. Knowledge Learning Corp., has selected five locations across the nation to host this program. By learning Mandarin through hearing and repeating it in songs and games, some believe children actually find it easier than English because it’s more visual and complicated by fewer exceptions to rules.

Naperville (June 18, *The Daily Herald*) Indian Prairie CUSD 204 has asked a judge to dismiss a plea for more than \$5.2 million in attorneys fees being sought by property owners. The district is asking for hearings to come up with a reasonable amount of fees the district should be responsible for as a result of a recent failed condemnation suit brought by the district.

Streator (June 20, *The Times*, Ottawa) Streator Township High School District 40’s attendance rate increased by 0.4 percent in the 2007-2008 academic year, largely due to this year’s switch to closed-campus lunch periods. David Holmes, dean of students, said a study showed far fewer single-period absences immediately after lunch. A big reason given for closing campus this year was the number of students who did not attend or were late to classes immediately after lunch because they left campus during that period.

Streator (July 15, *The Times*, Ottawa) Streator’s consolidation plan appeared dead after board members from both the high school and elementary districts repudiated the proposal on July 14. “My sense is that if we don’t all agree, it’s not worth pursuing,” said Tony Kestner, a board member in Streator Elementary District 44. A recent study found basic flaws in the consolidation proposal.

ISBE's final proposal for NCLB flexibility 'pilot' project is published online: Here's an overview

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) welcomes the opportunity to submit this proposal to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) for participation in the NCLB Differentiated Accountability Pilot. ED has confirmed to the State Superintendent that Illinois meets ED's eligibility criteria for the pilot. At the beginning of the 2008-09 school year, ISBE will begin utilizing the proposed differentiated classifications. ISBE will also provide the new flexibilities relating to SES and public school choice during the 2008-09 school year. In addition, ISBE will commence with intensive planning and needs analysis as well as beginning discussions with potentially eligible schools with the expectation that a limited number of schools will begin piloting the Priority Schools initiative during the 2008-09 school year. The remainder of the proposal will be implemented in the 2009-10 school year. Illinois' proposed changes will infuse corrective action strategies earlier in the improvement process, and includes an innovative, yet simple, model of differentiation. ISBE's proposed intervention model in the state's lowest-performing schools builds on promising national best practices and seeks to establish a new state approach for dramatically improving student achievement in these schools.

In developing this proposal, ISBE began by establishing certain guiding principles for its approach to the differentiated accountability pilot:

1. Illinois should seek to develop an accountability system that targets supports and interventions to best improve student achievement and close achievement gaps. The state should therefore take advantage of this opportunity from the U.S. Department of Education to improve

See **NCLB FLEXIBILITY** on page 8

Differentiated accountability plan

Note: The following excerpts from a letter sent by State Superintendent of Education Christopher Koch, released by the U.S. Department of Education, contain further details about Illinois' Differentiated Accountability Plan.

June 30, 2008

Assistant Secretary Kerri L. Briggs
Department of Education

Dear Assistant Secretary Briggs:

On behalf of the Illinois Board of Education, I am pleased to submit a revised proposal for Illinois' participation in the NCLB Differentiated Accountability Pilot. We appreciate the guidance and suggestions provided by the U.S. Department of Education (the Department) in further developing this proposal. ISBE has addressed each item of concern identified by the Peer Reviewers and the Department. Some of the highlights of those revisions are detailed below; however, additional clarifying statements and details regarding the timing of implementation are included throughout the revised proposal.

Conditions on overall proposal:

- 1) *Identify parts of the proposal that can be feasibly implemented in 2008-09*

ISBE will begin utilizing the proposed differentiated classifications at the beginning of the 2008-09 school year. In addition, ISBE will commence with intensive planning and needs analysis as well as beginning discussions with potentially eligible schools with the expectation that a limited number of schools will begin piloting the Priority Schools initiative during 2008-09 school year. (pg. 1)

- 2) *Clarify that interventions for schools in the "focused" category must still provide support for the whole school*

ISBE has added clarification that "schools in the focused category will get the necessary school-wide support but interventions will emphasize programs and processes that target the specific academic deficiencies within the school." (pg. 3)

- 3) *Remove flexibility for LEAs identified for improvement to serve as SES providers*

ISBE has deleted all references to this proposed flexibility.

Conditions on Priority School initiative:

- 1) *Clarification on the use of "protected space" flexibility*

ISBE has added clarification that "...districts and schools must not use federal dollars to supplant state/local funds. Attorneys for ISBE and the Department will work collaboratively to ensure flexibilities, transferability, and waivers are administered consistent with federal law." (pg. 25)

- 2) *Clarification that schools granted "school-wide" status must also comply with the other school-wide provisions of the law (except for the 40% poverty threshold)*

ISBE has added clarification that "schools, regardless of priority school status, must comply with the school-wide provisions of NCLB (except that the 40% poverty threshold may be waived for schools participating in the Priority Schools initiative, if necessary)" (pg. 25)....

Participation in the Differentiated Accountability pilot will build upon the existing efforts to support Illinois's schools and districts to improve the achievement of all our students. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Melina Wright at 217-782-0354 or mewright@isb.net. We look forward to working with the Department to ensure this pilot is administering in a thoughtful and meaningful way to improve the achievement of students in Illinois.

Sincerely,
Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent
of Education

Figure A: Comparison of the Current and Proposed Accountability Model for Schools

	CURRENT		PROPOSED			
YEARS MISSED AYP	NCLB ACCOUNTABILITY DESIGNATION	NCLB REQUIREMENTS/SUPPORTS	FOCUSED: <i>Not missing in "ALL students" subgroup</i>		COMPREHENSIVE: <i>Missing in "ALL students" subgroup</i>	
			FOCUSED DESIGNATION	FOCUSED REQUIREMENTS/SUPPORTS	COMPREHENSIVE DESIGNATION	COMPREHENSIVE REQUIREMENTS/SUPPORTS
1	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	School Improvement, Year 1	- Improvement Planning* - Choice	Focused Improvement, Year 1	- Focused Planning* - Choice or SES	Comprehensive Improvement, Year 1	Comprehensive Planning* - Choice or SES
3	School Improvement, Year 2	- Choice and SES*	Focused Improvement, Year 2	- Focused Intensive Intervention - Choice and SES*	Comprehensive Improvement, Year 2	- Comprehensive Intensive Intervention - Choice and SES*
4	Corrective Action	- Implement Corrective Action - State System of Support Priority	Focused Improvement, Year 3	- Focused Intensive Intervention continues - Focused State Support Priority School	Comprehensive Improvement, Year 3	- Comprehensive Intensive Intervention - Comprehensive State Support Priority
5	Restructuring Planning	- Restructuring Planning - State System of Support Priority	Focused Restructuring Planning	- Focused Intensive Intervention continues, with planning for fundamental organizational changes to address the area of focus - Focused State Support and Oversight - May volunteer for Priority School Initiative	Comprehensive Restructuring Planning	- Comprehensive Intensive Intervention continues, with planning for fundamental organizational changes to address comprehensive needs - Comprehensive State Support and Oversight - Priority School designation for lowest performers; may volunteer for Priority School Initiative
6	Restructuring Implementation	- Restructuring Implementation - State System of Support Priority	Focused Restructuring Implementation	- Implement fundamental organizational change to address area of focus - Focused State Support and Oversight - May volunteer for Priority School Initiative	Comprehensive Restructuring Implementation	- Implement fundamental organizational change to address comprehensive needs - Comprehensive State Support and Oversight - Priority School designation for lowest performers; may volunteer for Priority School Initiative
7 (and beyond)	Continued Restructuring Implementation	- Restructuring Implementation - State System of Support Priority	Continued Focused Restructuring Implementation	- Implement fundamental organizational change to address area of focus - Focused State Support and Oversight - May volunteer for Priority School Initiative	Comprehensive Restructuring Implementation	- Implement fundamental organizational change to address comprehensive needs - Comprehensive State Support and Oversight - Priority School designation for lowest performers; may volunteer for Priority School Initiative

*Requirement continues in subsequent years
 Source: Illinois Differentiated Accountability Plan, Published by U.S. Department of Education online at: <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/differentiatedaccountability/ilplan.pdf>

Figure B: Comparison of the Current and Proposed Accountability Model for Districts

	CURRENT		PROPOSED			
YEARS MISSED AYP	NCLB ACCOUNTABILITY DESIGNATION	NCLB REQUIREMENTS/SUPPORTS	FOCUSED: <i>Not missing in "ALL students" subgroup</i>		COMPREHENSIVE: <i>Missing in "ALL students" subgroup</i>	
			FOCUSED DESIGNATION	FOCUSED REQUIREMENTS/SUPPORTS	COMPREHENSIVE DESIGNATION	COMPREHENSIVE REQUIREMENTS/SUPPORTS
1	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	District Improvement, Year 1	Improvement Planning	Focused Improvement, Year 1	Focused Planning	Comprehensive Improvement, Year 1	Comprehensive Planning
3	District Improvement, Year 2	Improvement Planning	Focused Improvement, Year 2	Focused Planning	Comprehensive Improvement, Year 2	Comprehensive Planning
4 (and beyond)	Corrective Action	Implement Corrective Action	Focused Corrective Action	Focused Intensive Action	Comprehensive Corrective Action	Comprehensive Intensive Action

Source: Illinois Differentiated Accountability Plan, Published by U.S. Department of Education online at: <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/differentiatedaccountability/ilplan.pdf>

AYP status reports on NCLB now available

Reports generated daily as schools complete data

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status reports for elementary and middle schools under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) are now available online for district superintendents.

Specifically, those elementary and middle schools that have completed their E-Report Card data at the state's IWAS web site will have access to the preliminary 2008 School AYP Status Report. School districts may still request rescoring or make further corrections related to AYP data elements. The reports will be generated on a daily basis as schools complete their E-Report Card data.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires all states to measure each public school's and district's

achievement and establish annual achievement targets for the state. The larger goal is for all students to meet or exceed standards in reading and mathematics by 2014.

Illinois' AYP accountability plan

In July 2003, the U.S. Department of Education approved Illinois' plan for aligning state accountability processes with the new federal law. The plan was developed through consultation with a broad-based task force of education, business, parent and civic representatives.

In August 2003, Governor Rod Blagojevich signed into law two statutes modifying the School Code to conform with NCLB. One modifies the state testing system (PA 93-0426); the other modifies the state's Academic Early Warning and Watch List process-

es (PA 93-0470).

State law (PA 93-0470) now defines consequences for all schools that fail to meet AYP criteria for consecutive years. Title I schools and districts are subject to additional consequences including school choice, Supplemental Educational Services, corrective action and restructuring.

For example, Title I schools that do not make AYP for two consecutive years are identified as a School In Need of Improvement.

In year one of School Improvement, the school must develop an improvement plan and offer school choice.

In year two, the school must offer Supplemental Educational Services (SES) in addition to school choice.

In year three, the school district

See AYP on page 9

NCLB FLEXIBILITY *from page 6*

upon its current system and leverage federal flexibility and resources. To do so, Illinois must adhere to the bright line requirements set out by the U.S. Department of Education for the differentiated accountability pilot. These requirements include maintaining the current measurements of adequate yearly progress under NCLB, continuing to hold school districts and schools accountable for ensuring all students are proficient by 2013-14, and not differentiating among schools based on the criteria of whether the schools missed targets in the students with disabilities or limited English proficient student group.

2. As part of this pilot, Illinois should not seek to entirely remake its current accountability system. Doing so would create confusion for school districts and the public and strain the ability of the state to provide assistance and support for underperforming schools. Instead, Illinois should seek meaningful changes to its current accountability sys-

tem upon which the state can build over time.

3. All of the school and district improvement designations in the NCLB timeline should more clearly inform relevant stakeholders whether the strategies for support and intervention should be targeted to specific deficiencies or address more systemic needs, and relate more directly to the supports offered by the state for addressing those needs.
4. The restructuring designation under federal law should distinguish between the lowest performing schools needing dramatic transformation in a short period of time and those that require less transformative, yet still fundamental, interventions.

These guiding principles informed the following strategies, which are more fully described in Section II:

- Strategy 1: Throughout the federal accountability system for schools and districts, differentiate those schools and districts requiring

focused interventions from those requiring comprehensive action.

- Strategy 2: Eliminate "corrective action" as a distinct school designation in the accountability timeline, and instead infuse intensive corrective action strategies earlier in the improvement process.
- Strategy 3: Focus more intensive efforts and resources on the lowest-performing schools in comprehensive restructuring.

Section III of this proposal describes how the proposed differentiated accountability model addresses all of the 10 core principles established by ED for this pilot.

ISBE believes the strategies outlined in this proposal will help the State of Illinois improve upon its current accountability system, and thereby help the state, districts, and schools improve student achievement and close the achievement gap. ISBE looks forward to addressing any questions ED may have regarding the strategies described in this proposal.

must implement one or more of a list of corrective actions. A restructuring plan is developed when the school or district has not made AYP for a total of five consecutive years.

Public school choices?

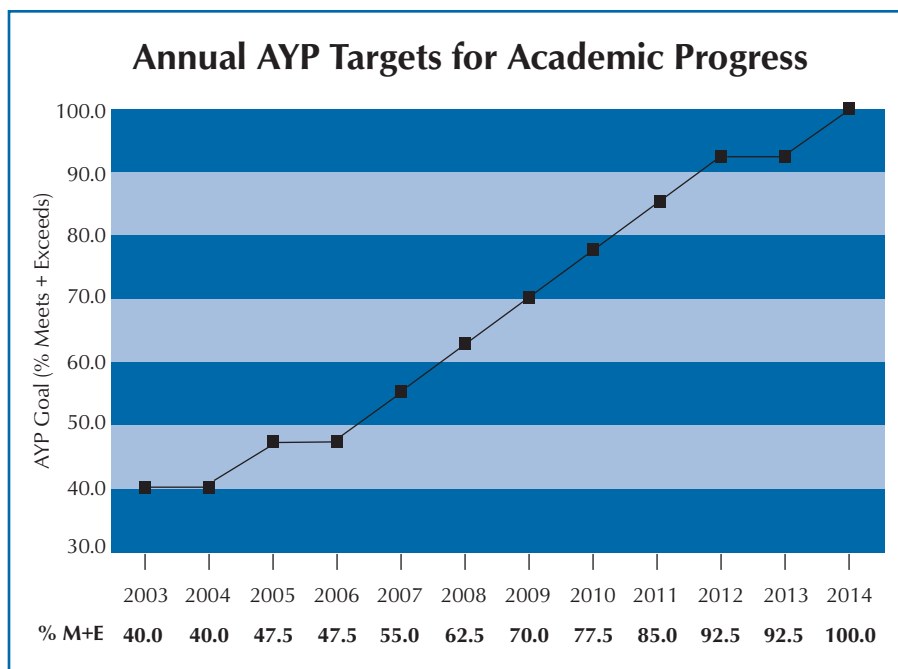
Under NCLB, if a Title I school does not make AYP for two years in a row, it is said to be “in need of improvement,” and it must offer parents public school choice. Such schools must continue to offer school choice each year until they make AYP for two years in a row. Implementing this NCLB requirement depends on the availability of other schools in the district that are making AYP and their capacity to add students to their enrollment.

If there are no qualifying schools in the district that can accept students, the district must try to make cooperating agreements with nearby districts that do have eligible schools. While a neighboring district is under no obligation to enter into a cooperative agreement, it may choose to, depending on a number of factors, including its enrollment capacity.

Supplemental Educational Services

Under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2001), Section 1116(e), students from low-income families attending schools that do not make adequate yearly progress for three or more years are eligible to receive Supplemental Educational Services (SES). School districts are responsible for funding these services, which must be provided outside the normal school day, through their Title I, Part A funds. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) must develop and apply objective criteria to create a list of approved SES providers.

As required by the United States Department Education, ISBE provides assistance to districts with the implementation of the SES requirements and regulates the SES provider services.



Target goals for AYP continue to rise under NCLB. The goal for 2008 is 62.5 percent meeting standards in math and reading.

Schools in Corrective Action (CA)

If, after two years of undergoing school improvement (that is, after not having made AYP for four years), implementing a school improvement plan, and receiving extensive technical assistance, a school still does not make adequate yearly progress, ISBE and the school’s governing district must identify it for Corrective Action (CA). Identifying a school for CA signals the district’s intention to take greater control of the school’s management and to have a more direct hand in its decision-making. This identification signifies that the application of traditional school improvement methods and strategies has been unsuccessful and that more radical action is needed to improve learning conditions for all students. Taking CA is designed to increase substantially the likelihood that all students enrolled in the school will meet or exceed the state’s proficient levels of academic achievement in reading and mathematics.

A school identified for CA must continue to offer choice and Supplemental Educational Services during the period it is identified for CA if Title I funds are used at the school.

What is CA? CA is a “significant intervention” measure that requires the district to promptly notify the par-

ents of each child enrolled in the school (in an understandable format and in a language that the parents can understand) and explain:

- What the identification means, and how academic achievement levels at this school compare to those at other schools in the district and in the state.
- Why the school was identified and how they as parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that led to the identification.
- The parents’ option to transfer their child to another school in the district that has not been identified for improvement. That includes providing information that helps them make an informed decision about whether or not to exercise this option.
- How parents of eligible children can obtain supplemental educational services for their child. This notice must include information about the availability of providers and brief descriptions of their services, qualifications, and effectiveness.

For more info on this subject visit the ISBE Web site at: <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/>.

NCLB *from page 1*

tutoring as an earlier option, students will have access to additional services such as academic assistance in reading and math, to take place before school, after school or during the summer.

State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch agreed: “With this additional flexibility we will be able to identify and focus our efforts on the students that need it the most.”

However, Illinois’ approval to participate in the federal “Differentiated Accountability” pilot project is conditional: state assessments administered in 2007-08 must still be fully compliant with NCLB. The overarching goal of NCLB is for all students to meet or exceed standards in reading and mathematics by 2014; and that won’t change.

What may ease that burden is a new flexibility that allows ISBE to differentiate between low-performing schools under the new pilot program. Schools and districts will continue to move through the process of improvement each year they do not make AYP; however, instead of all schools failing to meet state standards being labeled as in ‘need of improvement’, under the new system, schools and districts will be classified as either in a ‘focused’ or ‘comprehensive’ category. Schools and districts that make AYP in the “ALL students” subgroup, but not in one or more of the other subgroups would be placed in the ‘focused’ category, while schools that fail to meet state standards in the “ALL students” subgroup would be identified as ‘comprehensive.’ Most local districts that missed AYP last year did so because they failed to sufficiently improve the test results among special-education students.

According to ISBE, Illinois’ testing data shows that schools in the ‘comprehensive’ category are achieving lower than those in the ‘focused’ category and would greatly benefit from more intensive and specific interventions. In addition, ISBE would

also eliminate ‘corrective action’ as a school designation of improvement. The corrective designation for schools will be replaced with a third year of either ‘focused school improvement’ or ‘comprehensive school improvement so that interventions have longer to work.’

Critics have complained NCLB is too rigid and treats schools the same regardless of whether they fall short of the target by a little or a lot. The pilot program is supposed to address that concern.

“Hopefully the new ‘comprehensive’ and ‘focused’ designations will better allow ISBE and districts to focus their attention and limited resources on schools with the greatest need,” said Peifer.

The other five states approved for the pilot include Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Maryland and Ohio. The six states approved were among 17 that submitted proposals for the program.

State proposals were reviewed for their ability to show or make a commitment to building their capacity for school reform; taking the most significant actions for the lowest-performing schools, including addressing the issue of teacher effectiveness; and using data to determine the method of differentiation and categories of intervention.

The state’s new flexibility does not impact how students are measured, and it will not be accompanied by any new state or federal funding. But it will allow the state to identify problems through sophisticated data analysis and intervene sooner.

“All eligible schools in Illinois will now participate in this pilot program, and schools soon will be receiving guidance about the details of that participation,” according to ISBE’s Molina Wright.

ISBE will begin implementing portions of the proposal during the 2008-09 school year, with full implementation in the 2009-10 year. To learn more about the pilot program, visit: <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/differentiatedaccountability/index.html>.

NEWS FROM IASB

Learn about getting grants in latest School Board Journal

“It’s a jungle out there” when school districts endeavor to obtain grant money. Find out how grants work and the best ways to get funds in “Struggling to survive in the grant ‘jungle,’” the cover story for the July/August issue of *The Illinois School Board Journal*. Also learn key details of the new county sale tax options for school revenue and other important matters.



IASB offering first-ever diversity workshops soon

IASB will be presenting its new Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Workshop on Thursday, Sep. 4 at IASB offices in Springfield, and Wednesday, Sep. 10 at IASB offices in Lombard. The workshops will run from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Through engaging interactive exercises, this half-day workshop aims to increase diversity and inclusion awareness — the first step in the diversity education process.

At the conclusion of the workshop, participants will be able to explain why “diversity and inclusion” is not simply the phrase *du jour*, but a vital component of ensuring the future success of your school district.

Tuition is \$195 per person, which includes materials and meals. Advance registration is required and must be received two days prior to each workshop.

If you need lodging information for the workshop you plan to attend, call Judy Williams at 217/528-9688 or 630/629-3776 extension 1103. More information about the program is available online at: <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/diversityawareness.pdf>.

SYMPOSIUM *from page 1*

mer Illinois school superintendents – Ray Lauk and Lawrence Baskin – both of whom now work with business leaders and managers.

Lauk said board members should look to bellwether companies to see how their corporate philosophy and strategy can apply to school boards.

As General Electric's education solutions manager, Lauk said successful firms such as his have extraordinary focus on their mission, which permeates into every aspect of the operation and management.

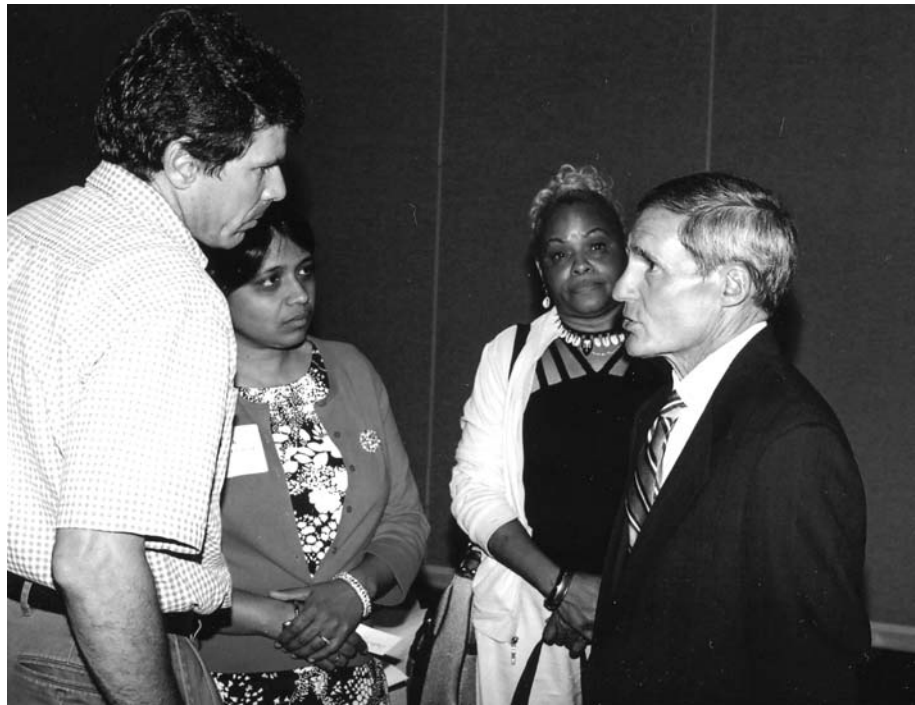
"When you know what your priorities are, you can tie board work and meetings into that focus," he said. But Lauk also acknowledged that best intentions are not enough, with many reasons interfering with or preventing boards and districts efforts to stay focused.

Symposium participants were asked to list various reasons into "good," "bad," and "life" categories. There was no shortage of potential distractions offered.

"It takes discipline, especially when good reasons interfere...that's why the focus must come from the top," he said. Sometimes that means starting over, without consideration of such distractions.

Using a target and bulls eye as an example, Lauk said that money should only be attached to priorities after they are arranged by need. After assigning costs to each priority, if the money is not available for the lowest priorities, then they should automatically be removed from the district's focus. That method can help the board explain its decisions and reasoning to the community. And sometimes it can also help to start conversations about raising expectations and the support needed to accomplish them.

In addition to focus, Lauk said board decisions also have to apply urgency to their work. "Evaluation of any proposal helps us to measure and decide what is working and what is not working. This has to be done quickly and repeated, so that necessary



Larry Baskin (above right) speaks with board members after his presentation on "creating profit" at the IASB LeaderShop Academy Symposium on June 21 in Lombard. Below left, the other speaker, Ray Lauk, discusses business practices. Below right, participants create lists of "values."



adjustments or modifications can be made. Urgency helps to eliminate the excuses, but schools often lack this component," he said.

Another successful corporate tactic that boards can use is invoking energy and enthusiasm. "You can either suck the breath out of school or create energy by supporting the superintendent, principal, and teachers. It makes a big difference."

Baskin, the Symposium's afternoon speaker, emphasized the board's role in creating "value" for their districts and constituents.

"There is no such thing as a not-

for-profit enterprise," he said, noting that all decisions are based on the relative value of a program or expense. "Profit is expected whenever an investment is required or a transaction takes place. If there is no perceived profit or value, then there is no support," Baskin added.

The next LeaderShop Academy Symposium will be held in the summer of 2010. For more information about the Academy and its qualifications, see IASB's board training information on its web site at:

<https://www.iasb.com/training/leadershop.cfm>.

IASB's fall division meetings will 'cover the waterfront' of hot topics

A wide range of topics—from school funding matters to the latest communications ideas—will be covered at division meetings this fall throughout IASB's 21 divisions. In addition to program presentations on hot topics and legislation, IASB Master Board Member Awards will be handed

out. Choose the meetings you wish to attend from the full list that will be available on the IASB Web site online. Updates on the following list of fall division meetings that have already been scheduled can be found on the IASB Web site at <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/calendar.cfm>.

Tues., Sept. 9.....	Starved Rock	.....Celebrations 150, Utica
Tues., Sept. 9.....	Wabash Valley	.....Lawrence Co. CUSD 200, Lawrenceville
Wed., Sept. 17.....	North Cook	.....Rosewood Restaurant, Rosemont
Tues., Sept. 23	DuPage	.....Spring Wood Middle School, Hanover Park
Thurs., Sept. 25.....	Kishwaukee	.....Belvidere CUSD 200
Thurs., Sept. 25	Illini	.....Mattoon CUSD 2
Thurs., Sept., 25	Southwestern	.....Millstadt CCSD 160
Mon., Sept. 29	West Cook	.....The Elmerest, Elmwood Park
Wed., Oct. 1.....	South Cook	.....Oak Lawn Hilton
Thurs., Oct. 2.....	Abe Lincoln	.....Sangamon Valley CUSD 9
Thurs., Oct. 2	Egyptian	.....Hamilton Co. CUSD 10, McLeansboro
Thurs., Oct. 2	Northwest	.....Sterling CUSD 5
Mon., Oct. 6.....	Shawnee	.....Goreville CUSD 1
Tues., Oct 7	Three Rivers	.....Renaissance, Joliet
Tues., Oct. 14.....	Corn Belt	.....Pontiac H.S.
Wed., Oct. 15.....	Central IL Valley	.....Tremont H.S.
Wed., Oct. 22	Blackhawk	.....Erie H.S.
Tues., Oct. 28.....	Two Rivers	.....Pikeland CUSD 10
Tues., Oct 28.....	Western Division	.....Macomb H.S.
Wed., Oct. 29.....	Lake County	.....Wauconda CUSD 118
Thurs., Oct. 30	Kaskaskia	.....Centralia HSD 200

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- September 4 – Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Workshop**, IASB Springfield office, 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.
- September 9 – Starved Rock Division Fall Dinner Meeting**, Celebrations 150, Utica, 6 p.m.
- September 9 – Wabash Valley Division Fall Dinner Meeting**, Lawrence Co. CUSD 20, Lawrenceville, 6 p.m.
- September 10 – Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Workshop**, IASB Lombard office, 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.
- September 16 – Professional Advancement Seminar: Seeking the Superintendency**, IASB Springfield office, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- September 17 – North Cook Division Fall Dinner Meeting**, Rosewood Restaurant, Rosemont, 6 p.m.
- September 18 – Professional Advancement Seminar: Seeking the Superintendency**, IASB Lombard office, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- September 19 – Board Secretary Workshop – The 2009 School Board Election**, IASB Springfield, 9:30 a.m. - Noon
- September 23 – DuPage Division Fall Dinner Meeting**, Spring Wood Middle School, 6 p.m.



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