

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

August 2014 / Issue No. 746

Illinois lottery woes affect public schools

Schools fund losing hundreds of millions

While \$43 million sounds like a fair increase, the transfers to the Common School Fund as a percent of lottery

gross revenue have dropped considerably since FY 2009, falling from 29.8 percent of lottery gross in FY 2009 to 22.6 percent in FY 2013.

The Common School Fund has lost hundreds of millions of dollars as
See **TRANSFERS** on page 3

Management group falls short of goals

For the third straight year, Illinois' private lottery management group will fail to meet revenue benchmarks outlined in a contract agreed to in 2010.

The Northstar Lottery Group secured a 10-year state contract to manage Illinois' lottery with promises of lofty sales estimates. While lottery proceeds have reached record levels and revenues have increased approximately 12 percent since private management took over, Northstar continues to fall well short of contractual yearly goals.

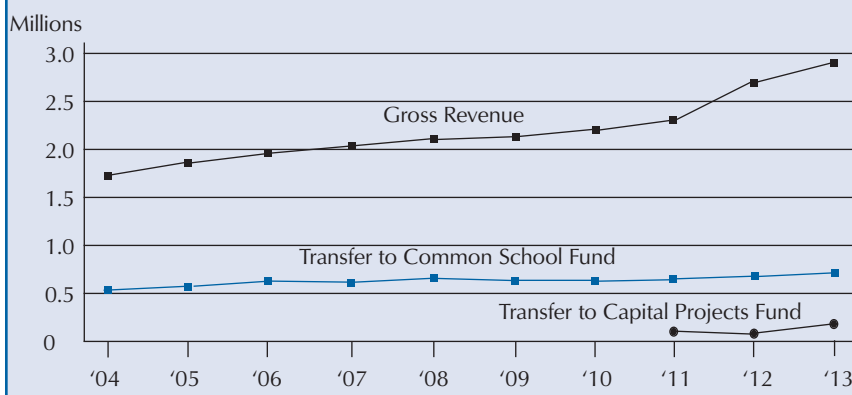
Illinois lottery funds currently make up approximately 7 percent of state education dollars, and lottery proceeds funneled a little over \$668 million into the Common School Fund in Fiscal Year 2014. Unfortunately, these dollars are not in addition to the money legislators allocate for K-12 schools, but instead are used to offset state education dollars and to free up spending in other areas of the budget.

See **LOTTERY** on page 3

State Revenue Collected (Dollars in Millions)

Fiscal Year	Gross Revenues	Transfers to Common School Fund	Change	CSF Transfers as % of Gross Revenues	Capital Projects Fund	Transfers to CSF CPF Total
2009	\$2,095.5	\$625.0	-4.9%	29.8%	-	-
2010	2,209.3	625.0	0.0	28.3	-	-
2011	2,278.8	631.9	1.1	27.7	\$87.0	\$718.9
2012	2,675.8	639.9	1.3	23.9	65.2	705.1
2013	2,902.4	655.6	2.5	22.6	135.0	790.6

Actual transfers are based on estimates. The difference between each year's estimate and the actual required amount is transferred in the next fiscal year.



2014 Conference Preview will list plans for key events

A preview of the 2014 Joint Annual Conference will be posted in early September that will include a master schedule of the major conference events, descriptions and time slots for more than 100

panel sessions, as well as descriptions of pre-conference workshops.

This year's event will be the 82nd Joint Annual Conference of the Illinois Association of School Boards,

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New report card lauded

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) recently recognized the state education agency for its New State Report Card, which shares information about schools' challenges and successes. Illinois' redesigned report card, which can be found at www.illinoisreportcard.com, was ranked as the top state report card in the nation by researchers and parents. Illinois is the only state to receive such recognition. The research report, "Rating States, Grading Schools: What Parents and Experts Say States Should Consider to Make Accountability Systems Meaningful," measures the accessibility, ease of understanding and adequacy of the data, which marked Illinois as the winner.

State ACT scores high

Illinois' ACT scores rank among the best in the country as the graduating Class of 2013 achieved a composite score of 20.6, giving Illinois the second-highest score among the nine states that give the test to 100 percent of graduates. Illinois' ACT composite score is just slightly below the national average of 20.9. Unlike Illinois, most other states' composite ACT marks are based on the scores of self-selected college-bound kids, mainly the best and brightest students.

Progress on strategic plan

ISBE recently submitted a progress report to its strategic plan, as mandated by Public Act 93-1036. Since 2005, ISBE has been required to develop a five-year Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Elementary and Secondary Education in Illinois and to update it annually. The progress report for 2014 can be viewed at http://www.isbe.state.il.us/reports/strategic_plan14.pdf.

Budget signing means schools again receiving only 89% of foundation level

Governor Pat Quinn signed the Fiscal Year 2015 state education budget bill (HB 6093) into law on June 30, the last day of the fiscal year for 2015. Generally, the budget provides for funding at the same levels as was allocated for K-12 education in FY '14.



With this budget, the proration rate for GSA in FY '14 is estimated to be 89 percent, the same proration rate as was seen in FY '13 (in FY '12 it was 95 percent). That means schools again will be funded at 89 percent of the level that would be necessary to achieve a Foundation Level of \$6,119 per student, or \$5,446.

"It does not represent progress, but the final budget for schools does treat education more kindly than most departments and agencies of the state," said Ben Schwarm, IASB deputy executive director. "But the top funding priority for the Alliance is full funding for General State Aid, and this budget falls far short of that."

The education budget bill is now

Public Act 98-0677, effective July 1, 2014.

Overall, the state brought in approximately \$1.3 billion more this year than was budgeted, allowing officials to issue all four categorical grant payments to schools on time, a development that budget experts describe as more of an anomaly than anything else.



Christopher Koch

In fact, this summer marked the first time since 2007 that schools received promised state grant payments on time, meaning grants were paid in full before June 30 — the end of the fiscal year.

Since 2007, public schools throughout the state have generally received only three of each year's scheduled categorical grant payments in any given financial year, with the fourth payment usually coming the following year.

State Superintendent of Education Christopher Koch warned schools not to expect the change to become a permanent habit.

See **BUDGET** on page 3

Illinois Energy Now offers substantial aid on efficiency projects

Illinois Energy Now, an energy efficiency grant program administered by the state, provides millions of dollars in rebates to public facilities like schools that make large-scale equipment improvements to their electric and natural gas systems.

More than \$70 million is available annually to help fund such projects.

More information about Illinois Energy Now, including a link to application, is available online at <http://www.illinois.gov/dceo/why-illinois/KeyIndustries/Energy/Pages/EnergyEfficiency.aspx>

Illinois
SCHOOL BOARD
Newsbulletin

**Illinois Association
of School Boards**

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

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**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

LOTTERY from page 1

Total yearly transfers to the Common School Fund from the lottery have increased by \$43 million (averaging 1.4 percent a year) since FY 2009, rising from \$625 million in FY 2010 to \$668 million in FY 2014 (see sidebar on how these incremental increases have actually disguised a disturbing trend in schools' share of the lottery's gross revenue).

Meanwhile, lottery sales have not done as well as private management had anticipated. For the recently ended fiscal year, total sales were \$2.8 billion, with the state receiving around \$815 million from sales proceeds. Northstar had projected sales at \$3.5 billion, which would have earmarked \$980 million for the state.

The firm has been assessed nearly \$60 million in penalty fees for previous years when sales missed their goals. It is not yet known what the monetary penalty will be for miss-



ing revenue targets this year.

Fines and penalties are not the only threat to the private management firm. The contract Northstar signed with the state of Illinois also contains a termination clause, stating that if Northstar misses projected sales goals in two consecutive years by 10 percent or more, the state can cancel the agreement. Current numbers look like the shortfall will be above that threshold for this year. Last year's revenues fell 20 percent short of the goal.

See **LOTTERY** on page 8



TRANSFERS from page 1

a result of a cap and inflation adjustment placed on monthly transfers since FY 2009. And that has meant big gains for the capital projects fund, as shown in the table on page 1.

Under the contract for a private manager to manage the lottery, monthly transfers to the Common School Fund are to equal the transfers in the same month in FY 2009 as adjusted for inflation, with any remainder (except profits earmarked from dedicated lottery tickets to aid veterans, fight diseases, etc.) going to the Capital Projects Fund.

Thus, yearly total transfers to the Common School Fund from the lottery have increased by \$43 million (averaging 1.4 percent a year) since FY 2009, rising incrementally from \$625 million in FY 2010 to \$631.9 million in FY 2011, \$639.9 million in FY 2012, \$655.6 million in FY 2013, and \$668 million in FY 2014.

BUDGET from page 2

Meanwhile, educators are concerned about the looming cost of the expiration of the temporary income tax hike lawmakers approved in 2011, which is set to expire Jan. 1, 2015. It is set to decrease back to the 2011 rate on that day.

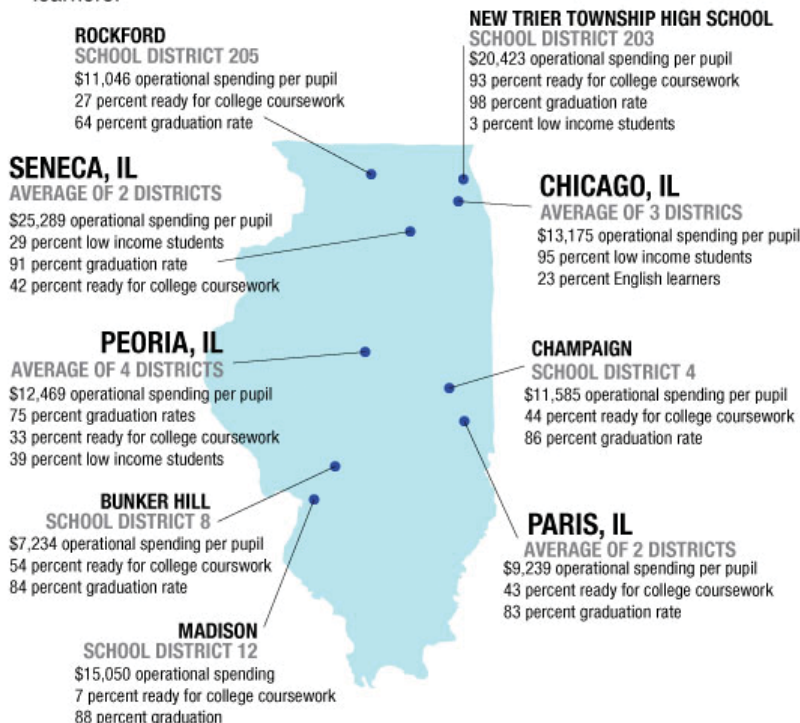
The current individual income tax rate is 5.0 percent; and the current corporate income tax rate is 7.0 percent. On Jan. 1, the individual rate drops to 3.75 percent and the corporate rate falls to 5.25 percent.

If this significant loss of state revenue were to occur, public education could see a budget cut of \$1 billion for Fiscal Year 2015, putting transportation funding in jeopardy and causing General State Aid to be pro-rated at alarming rates.

"The legislature may revisit this issue in the fall veto session after the General Election in November," according to Schwarm. "To head off a significant revenue loss it will take approval of legislation to either extend the tax rates or make them permanent at the higher level," he said.

Illinois public school district funding allocation

Operational funding budgets differ greatly for public school districts across Illinois. The map also includes available information about graduation rates, college readiness, low-income students and English learners.



The pro-rated funding for Illinois schools places increasing strain on the funding formula. Its unequal support to local school districts is shown here. Reprinted with permission of the *Daily Illini*, Champaign.

Arlington Heights superintendent to head national group

David R. Schuler, district superintendent of THSD 214, in Arlington Heights, was recently elected 2014-15 president-elect of the American Association of School Administrators.

“David is an outstanding leader with a steadfast commitment to excellence in public education,” said Daniel



David R. Schuler

A. Domenech, executive director, AASA.

A member of AASA’s governance structure for seven years, Schuler currently serves on the organization’s executive committee after serving on its governing board from 2007 to 2011. Since 2005, he has been a member of the Illinois Association of School Administrators. Prior to joining IASA, he was a member of the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators for five years.

“I’m honored to be associated with

AASA—the organization which serves as a standard-bearer when it comes to strengthening school district leadership on the national scale,” said Schuler. “Through this role, I look forward to engaging with superintendents and providing professional growth opportunities so our district leaders can excel on the job. My top priority will be serving them while championing the amazing achievements occurring in our schools across the country.”

Schuler is in his ninth year leading District 214, which is the second-largest high school system in Illinois. Recognized as a Blue Ribbon High School District by the U.S. Department of Education, his school system serves approximately 250,000 residents.

Schuler, as well as all other newly elected AASA governance members, will begin their terms on July 1, 2015. Schuler was sworn in as the 2014-15 AASA president-elect during a ceremony at a summer meeting

of the governing board in Washington, D.C. on July 9.

There have been a total of 12 previous AASA Presidents from Illinois. Below are the dates they served, and the names of each:

1887-88	Newton C. Dougherty
1904-05	Edwin G. Cooley
1916-17	John D. Shoop
1924-25	William McAndrew
1947-48	Harold C. Hunt
1956-57	Paul J. Misner
1961-62	Benjamin C. Willis
1969-70	Arnold W. Salisbury
1979-80	Olin W. Stratton
1992-93	Paul W. Jung
2004-05	Donald Kussmaul
2007-08	Sarah Jerome

AASA, founded in 1865, is the professional organization for more than 10,000 educational leaders throughout the world. For more information, visit www.aasa.org.

Local school districts face annual budget adoption deadline of Sep. 30

The end of the first quarter of the fiscal year is approaching. In nearly all Illinois districts the quarter ends on Sep. 30, which is also the last day for the board to adopt its balanced budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year.

Although the law requires boards to adopt a balanced budget, the governing statute does not establish a penalty for adopting an unbalanced one. But an unbalanced budget does

trigger a statutory requirement that the school district must adopt and file with the Illinois State Board of Education a deficit reduction plan to balance the budget within three years.

In any case, within 30 days of its adoption the school board’s annual budget must be filed with the county clerk and the Illinois State Board of Education. These key budget deadlines for adoption and filing are contained in state law at 105 ILCS 5/17-1

and at 35 ILCS 200/18-50.

Note: IASB posts a new legal dates calendar at the end of August. Staffers proof it against the state’s Election and Campaign Finance Calendar (it will soon be posted on the Elections website: <http://www.elections.state.il.us/>). That calendar is not finalized until the middle of August. Dates through September of 2014 can be obtained online at: http://www.iasb.com/pdf/cal_1314.pdf.

New video, answer sheet cover key questions on school board elections

A new video from IASB explains recently enacted legislative changes to school election procedures. The school board secretary’s election responsibilities were significantly reduced and the school board president now has no election responsibilities for the April 7, 2015 school board elections, as well as for all future board elections.

With the changes, the first day

that prospective school board candidates may circulate nominating petitions for signatures will be Tuesday, Sep. 23. Signed petitions should be turned in to the county clerk’s office or the county board of election commissioners between Dec. 15 and 22, according to the Illinois State Board of Elections.

The video explaining the revised election procedures is available online

at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jU70wiBnTT8&feature=youtu.be>.

Please also see the link at <http://www.iasb.com/elections/ElectionFAQ2014.pdf> for answers to frequently asked questions about these changes to school election procedures and to follow along with the video. The FAQ file is prepared by Melinda Selbee, IASB General Counsel, and Alan Mullins, Scariano, Himes & Petrarca, Chtd.

Court ruling offers schools roadmap on employee speech

by William J. Perry, Legal Counsel,
Claims & Corporate Services, Brokers'
Risk Placement Service, Inc.

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Lane v. Franks

134 S. Ct. 1533 (U.S. Supreme Court,
June 19, 2014)

At the heart of the First Amendment lies speech by citizens on matters of public concern. The First Amendment was fashioned to assure unfettered interchange of ideas for the bringing about of political and social changes desired by the people. However, government employers need a significant degree of control over the words and actions of employees (also citizens) for the efficient operation and delivery of public services.

The U.S. Supreme Court's two historic cases (*Pickering v. Board of Ed. Of District 205*; *Garcetti v. Ceballos*) have delineated the contours of this seeming conflict. Whether a government employee's speech is protected by the First Amendment, or may be subject to discipline without violating the First Amendment, requires a balancing of interests between the employee's desire to comment upon matters of public concern versus the government employer's desire to effectively manage the employee.

In this case, Lane was an auditor retained to conduct a comprehensive audit of a statewide program for underprivileged youth. The audit concluded that Suzanne Schmitz, an Alabama State Representative, was on the program's payroll, but never reported to the program's office and never did any work with the program. Lane ultimately fired Schmitz which resulted in the FBI conducting an investigation into Schmitz for fraud and theft. Lane was called to testify at the trial by subpoena. Lane complied with the subpoena, testified against Schmitz and Schmitz was convicted. Subsequent to the conviction, the program president fired

Lane, with several other employees, citing financial difficulties. However, this termination was shortly rescinded and all but Lane and one other person was re-hired.

In response, Lane filed suit against the program alleging the program president fired him in retaliation for his testimony against Schmitz in violation of the First Amendment.

Holding [the Court's determination]

In the seminal case of *Garcetti v. Ceballos*, the U.S. Supreme Court set forth a two-step inquiry into whether a public employee's speech is entitled to First Amendment protection: 1) whether the employee spoke as a citizen on a matter of public concern (if no, no First Amendment protection); and 2) (if yes) whether the relevant governmental entity had an adequate justification for treating the employee differently from any other member of the general public (e.g., the employee's speech interfered with the efficient operations of the governmental employer).

Addressing these questions, the Supreme Court first determined that sworn testimony speech as a citizen is different from speech made purely in the capacity as a governmental employee. Moreover, the mere fact such speech concerns information acquired by virtue of public employment does not transform that speech into speech of an employee: i.e., whether the speech is itself ordinarily within the scope of duties – not whether it merely concerns those duties. Thus, the employee's duties, as a citizen, to comply with a subpoena and provide testimony, rendered the speech non-employee speech.

Next, the Supreme Court quickly determined that this citizen speech involved a "matter of public concern." A matter of "public concern" is that which relates to any matter of political, social or other concern to the community' or when it is subject of

legitimate news interest. The speech at issue here, corruption in public programs and misuse of state funds, was clearly a matter of public concern.

Finally, the Supreme Court also quickly found that the program president had no adequate justification for treating Lane different from any other member of the general public based on the needs of a governmental employer. In fact, Lane never provided false testimony or divulged sensitive, confidential or privileged material (since the audit was subject to public scrutiny). Thus, the program president could not establish that Lane violated any rules or otherwise thwarted the efficient operations of the program.

Consequently, Lane was entitled to damages for his wrongful termination in violation of his First Amendment rights.

Learning Point

School employees are governmental employees. Nevertheless, public school employees are entitled to First Amendment protection so long as they are engaging in speech as a citizen on matters of public concern. Sometimes it is difficult to determine when an employee is testifying as a citizen or pursuant to their official duties. However, this case provides a straightforward roadmap which schools may follow when the issue of employee speech arises.

William J. Perry is licensed to practice law in Illinois and the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. In private practice and as in-house counsel with insurance companies, Perry counsels clients on complex insurance coverage matters involving liability policies (primary and excess); first-party property policies and homeowners policies. In addition, he assists clients in identifying, analyzing and managing corporate risk and litigation in compliance with corporate directives and long-term goals.

PREVIEW *from page 1*

Illinois Association of School Administrators and Illinois Association of School Business Officials in Chicago. It is the 100th meeting of IASB members.

The theme for this year's conference is "Make the Connection!"

At least 20 of this year's sessions are designed to help schools save money, boost revenue or monitor school finances.

For example, the session planned on Budgeting during Difficult Times will feature ISBE staff reviewing statewide finances and what they mean for schools during FY 15 and beyond. And a panel on Funding Schools will have school funding policy makers and state budget experts on hand to review the latest developments.

Some of the other panels that relate to finances (although panel titles and descriptions could change) include:

Sowing Seeds for a New School Foundation: School districts' foundations are generally established as a way to avoid or supplement budget shortfalls and are an "easy fix." Find out the basics of starting a foundation and the criteria for recommending foundation board members.

Pennies from Heaven: County School Sales Tax: The County Schools Facilities Sales Tax is pennies from heaven for counties that have adopted it. Learn about this funding source and how to enact it in your county. School districts will provide case studies about how they passed CSFT.

Save on Energy – Spend More on Education: "Green Energy" is a mission critical for school districts. Districts across Illinois are adopting policies that require them to pursue energy conservation in affordable ways. Using "Green Energy" is allowing districts to save on energy and spend more on education.

Financial Executives Discuss Structured Multi-Year Financial Planning: Examine a structured approach to create the methodology for articulating, planning and achieving the school board's multi-years goals: financial, programmatic and others. Mastering

this approach will earn superior results.

Managing Health Care Costs under ACA: This program has been developed to provide school administrators with an opportunity to learn what is causing health insurance costs to spiral out of control and what the district can do to help control those costs.

Referendum Yes! Against All Odds! Can voters be moved to pass a referendum in difficult economic times? YES THEY CAN! With a strong district story and a supportive marketing strategy a referendum can be passed! One success story will be shared in this session.

Collective Bargaining Hot Topics: Whether bargaining now or in the future, gain a practical overview of trends at the bargaining table and management strategies to deal with reform, TRS pension reform, evaluations, health care reform, and how to negotiate when you have no money.

Municipal Advisor Rule: Why It Matters: Learn how the Securities and Exchange Commission's new Municipal Advisor Rule changes how professionals selling your school district's bonds must approach their services. Discover how you can maximize their benefit and services to the district under the new rule.

Effective Negotiation Strategies for Salary/Benefits Issues: Experienced labor negotiators will review strategies to address salary and benefits issues, including salary schedule changes or elimination, longevity pay options, health insurance cost sharing methods, health insurance and pension cost reopeners, and methods to reduce retirement benefit costs.

In addition to panel sessions, organizers say the 2014 conference will help participants "Make the Connection" with a great deal of vital information in connecting to:

- in-depth issues such as Working with the Media, The Trust Edge or Community Engagement by attending a pre-conference workshop
- successful programs in the Chicago

Public Schools by touring one of several local exemplary schools

- improved meetings and support by participating in the School Board/District Secretary Program
- the Crucial Conversations about America's Schools with speaker John Draper
- best practices in educational leadership with Jim Burgett, a former superintendent of the year in Illinois
- the inspirational work of Craig Kielburger and Free The Children
- the largest statewide collection of school exhibits covering virtually every school district need
- the very latest and best in school facility design, and
- information and publications at an expanded conference bookstore

Early registration is \$405 per registrant (spouse/children are complimentary) and \$200 nonrefundable deposit for each guestroom. Beginning Oct. 24, the registration fee will be \$430 per registrant. Members can find both registration and housing forms and instructions online at: <http://www.iasb.com/jac14/registration.cfm>. The forms, along with deposits and/or fees, must be mailed or delivered to IASB.

Conference-rate housing is available but choices are diminishing. Among the eight conference hotels, the Embassy Suites, Swissotel, Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park and Hyatt Regency Chicago are sold out, according to event organizers.

Between now and November school boards are encouraged to draft and adopt a resolution confirming their desire to attend the conference and their support for professional development for the board.

In addition to the upcoming Conference Preview, for everyone attending the 2014 event a copy of the official Conference Program will be available onsite at the conference registration desk. More information about this year's conference can also be found at: <http://www.iasb.com/jac14/>.

Guide to bills passed on schools enables districts to submit fast input

Descriptions of education-related bills passed this spring are contained in the 2014 edition of IASB's *Digest of Bills Passed*, available on the association's website at: <http://www.iasb.com/govrel/digestof-billspassed2014.pdf>. This Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance publication, written by the IASB governmental relations department, contains a list of the education-related bills approved by the legislature this spring and now pending before the governor.

Listed bill summaries in the Digest are organized under subject matter categories arranged alphabetically as shown in the Table of Contents. Two



indexes are provided, as well, enabling users to find a bill by title or bill number. Also included is a heading of "Last Action" after each bill description, a section labeled Gubernatorial Action Bills, and a section on Determining Effective Dates. These additions to the Digest are designed to help readers determine where each bill is in the legislative process.

"School leaders often use the publication to determine what bills are on the governor's desk, and to contact the governor about those that are important to their local district," said IASB Deputy Executive Director Ben Schwarm.

IASB printed the publication and mailed it on July 10 to every school district on behalf of the Alliance.

Division meetings this fall to cover wide range of topics for school leaders

A wide range of topics—from school funding matters to the latest information on teaching and learning—will be covered at division meetings this fall throughout IASB's 21 divisions. Topics will include Technology and Social Media, The Future of Illinois and State Funding, IASA Vision 20/20 Initiative, Governance, Performance Evaluation Models and Growth Metrics, PERA (Performance Evaluation Review Act), Inquiry Based Learning, Collective Bargaining and Strategic Planning.

With meetings that begin on September 11 and are scheduled to wind up in late October, IASB's fall division dinner meetings are a good place to network with other school board members and administrators and to stay informed about governance and education issues.

The schedule is now available, and will be continually updated, at IASB's online Events Calendar: <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/>. The online calendar can be searched in its entirety, or chosen events can be found.

Board of Directors to meet Aug. 22-23 in Bloomington on revising IASB vision, mission

The IASB Board of Directors' next quarterly meeting, set for Aug. 22-23 in Bloomington, is expected to include a vision statement and mission statement work session, plus board goal setting, executive director evaluation, and most likely it may include assessments of current-year activity reports and monitoring reports. The meeting is to be

preceded by Audit and Nominating Committees, who will meet on Aug. 22.

The board meeting is expected to continue ongoing work on a revised mission statement and a new vision statement for IASB. The board's next meetings after the retreat will take place around the Joint Annual Conference at the Hyatt Regency in Chicago, on Nov. 20 and 23, respectively.

NEWS FROM IASB

Updated referenda info

A recently updated Frequently Asked Questions list regarding referendum activities has been posted to the IASB website for school officials seeking guidance on these issues. This vitally important and very helpful information, compiled and published by a committee of the IASB-affiliated Illinois Council of School Attorneys, is online at: http://www.iasb.com/law/ref_FAQ.pdf.

Recent court decisions

Recent court decisions affecting schools include cases on administrator contracts, election issues, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), individual board member interests, the Open Meetings Act (OMA), and more. IASB compiles a list of these Recent Court Decisions online at <http://www.iasb.com/law/decisions.cfm?AreaID=1>.

Division-meeting brochures

Division meeting brochures will have a new look this fall: envelope-free flyers emblazoned "DIVISION MEETING" in large letters. Changing postal regulations had required IASB to move from self-mailed brochures to brochures sent in envelopes. But the Association has now purchased equipment that enables complying with postal regulations and a return to self-mailers.

Self-mailers are less expensive and they allow the recipient to immediately see that the brochure is for the popular IASB division dinner meeting. (Watch for blue and silver colors on a tri-fold brochure featuring the IASB logo.) "We have also taken this opportunity to update the look and format of the brochures," said Cathy Talbert, associate executive director, IASB Field Services/Policy Services.

Deadline nears for 'HealthierUS' awards, financial incentives

HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) applications are accepted for submission by federal officials at any time during the year. The awards program, which recognizes excellence in nutrition and physical activity, is open to all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program.

Awardees are certified for a four-year period and receive financial incentives, national recognition on the USDA's webpage, a certificate and wall-size banner. Since its inception in 2004, 279 HUSSC applications have come from Illinois schools. The application and approval process is ongoing. Currently, 213 schools in at least 17 Illinois districts have received the HUSSC award.

An application can be submitted

to seek a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Gold of Distinction award. Schools from the following Illinois school districts have earned awards for the four-year period listed in parentheses:

- **Chicago School District 299** (5/14 - 5/18)
- **River Trails School District 26** (12/13 - 12/17)
- **Egyptian CUSD 5** (5/13 - 5/17)
- **Elmhurst CUSD 205** (4/13 - 4/17)
- **Dolton School District 149** (3/13 - 3/17)
- **Payson CUSD 1** (3/13 - 3/17)
- **LeRoy CUSD 2** (2/13 - 2/17)
- **Belvidere CUSD 100** (1/13 - 1/17)
- **Crystal Lake CCSD 47** (1/13 - 1/17)
- **Woodstock CUSD 200** (12/12 - 12/16)
- **Prairie Central CUSD 8** (6/12 - 6/16)

- **Berwyn South SD 100** (5/12 - 5/16)
- **Lombard SD 44** (3/12 - 3/16)
- **Fairview SD 72** (9/11 - 9/15)
- **CUSD 300**, Carpentersville (5/11 - 5/15)
- **Evanston/Skokie SD 65** (3/11 - 3/15)
- **St. Charles CUSD 303** (3/11 - 3/15)

Applicants must meet two to eight criteria depending upon award level. The criteria include program outreach, physical activity, nutrition education, and school and community involvement in wellness efforts. For more information, including online application, plus criteria and guidance, visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/HealthierUS/application.html>.

For answers to specific questions, contact the Illinois State Board of Education's child nutrition division at 800/545-7892.

Schools can apply for Governor's Hometown Awards to recognize volunteers

Applications for the 2014 Governor's Hometown Awards (GHATA) competition are now available. This is the 32nd year of the annual event which recognizes those volunteers whose hard work and dedication greatly improve their communities. The deadline to submit applications for consideration is August 18, 2014.

Awards are given based on population in six project categories:

- services and mentorship
- beautification and sustainability
- parks and recreation
- memorials and monuments
- history and historic preservation
- general projects

A team of impartial volunteer judges

will evaluate the applications on need, use of resources, and impact. Information will be gathered from two sources: the application and a project presentation to be given in Springfield.

The judges will select the category winners and also nominate one project from each population division to receive the coveted Governor's Cup, a traveling silver trophy which signifies the project deemed most representative of the spirit of Illinois volunteerism. All award winners will be recognized at a reception at the governor's man-



sion this fall.

For more information on the Governor's Hometown Awards, including application details, visit <http://www.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/GHTA/Pages/default.aspx>

LOTTERY from page 3

In a recent interview with the *Springfield State Journal Register* editorial board, Northstar chief executive officer Tim Simonson blamed the shortfall on the state not approving new games that the company had built into its profit projections.

"Our business plan is premised on introducing several new games. We haven't been able to introduce those games that we have in our business plan. We really want the state to allow us to do what we were hired to do," Simonson told the newspaper

in early July.

While the private firm manages the Illinois Lottery, state officials have the final say on what new games are approved. Unfortunately, the public schools do not appear to be the big winners.

NEWS HEADLINES

Chicago (July 15, *Chicago Tribune*) Chicago Aldermen held a hearing July 15 on low minority numbers at elite North Side public schools. Although the City Council Education and Child Development Committee has no power to make changes, aldermen were asking CPS officials to explain the decline at selective enrollment schools and talking about ways to reverse it. "The problem is that we see minorities are not well represented at selective enrollment schools, particularly on the North Side," said Ald. Will Burns, one of the aldermen who called for the hearing. That problem arises in part because students on the South and West Sides don't always know they can apply to schools on the North Side, where white enrollment is higher, Burns added. "How do we do a better job of making sure folks know they can avail themselves of these options?" he asked.

Cook County (June 19, *Chicago Tribune*) The next set of Cook County property tax bills will indicate how much of each bill is going into special taxing districts known as TIFs, county Clerk David Orr announced June 19. Nearly 12 percent of taxpayers in the county own property located in a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. Those districts are designated by suburban and Chicago municipal governments to divert property tax revenue to economic development. But critics say municipalities, including Chicago, have abused TIF provisions in state law to finance pet projects. The amount of taxes to be paid by Chicago property owners this year is nearly \$4.3 billion, according to data from Orr's

office. The city expects about \$375.9 million to flow into 151 TIF districts, according to the city budget.

Danville (July 11, *Commercial News*) In early July, after six months of work, the Danville school district launched a redesigned website and new School Connect smart phone application to better communicate with parents, students and the community. The site is hosted by a web design company that claims 3,000-plus schools and districts as clients over the past 11 years. The app offers tools that can be used by school administrators, teachers and coaches to "push" notifications to persons that install it on their electronic device. It was designed and will be maintained by a company based in Oklahoma.

Danville (July 19, *The News-Gazette*, Champaign) Administrators say a new program soon will provide science, technology engineering and math (STEM) activities for Danville elementary students. This fall, Danville will offer STEM activities through Project Lead the Way, to be piloted for a fifth-grade class at two schools, a fourth-grade class at another and first- and second-grade class at yet another school. "This is a great way to introduce our students to this problem-solving way of thinking," said Brenda Yoho, the district's director of educational support programs. "It's not just giving them facts. It's teaching them to analyze, synthesize and apply what they know to a problem and find solutions to those problems." Project Lead the Way claims to be the nation's leading provider of STEM programs for schools.

East St. Louis (July 7, *The Associated Press*) The father of a southern Illinois teenager who killed himself a day after watching an anti-bullying movie at school has filed a wrongful-death lawsuit against the district, accusing administrators of failing to stop the alleged taunts targeting his son. The federal lawsuit, filed July 7, names a rural Illinois school district, school officials and the makers of the anti-bullying video and the owner of the shotgun used to end the teen's life in October 2013.

Morton (July 20, *Journal-Star*, Peoria) District 709 has found a creative way to offer state-mandated daily physical education classes in its four elementary schools. Students in grades one through six will have physical education five days a week for 25 minutes, a total of 125 minutes, starting in the 2015-2016 school year. In the past, they had physical education twice a week for 25 minutes, a total of 50 minutes. Their classroom teacher will teach physical education one of the five days. The same schedule will be used for full-day kindergarten classes at Jefferson Elementary School. The school gym, a designated activity room and the outdoors will be used for P.E. venues. At Lincoln Elementary School, where finding space was the most challenging, a Response to Intervention classroom will become the activity room. "We don't have the facilities to do the best rollout of daily physical education," said Superintendent Lindsey Hall. ers of the anti-bullying video and the owner of the shotgun used to end the teen's life in October 2013.

**JOINT ANNUAL CONFERENCE
November 21, 22, 23, 2014**

Merger of two Richland school districts keeps IASB Past President Brooks aboard

IASB Past President Carolyne Brooks was sworn in as an *ex-officio* member of a newly combined school district in July after two Wabash Valley districts were combined. Brooks previously served on the **West Richland CUSD 2** Board of Education before the district was annexed with **East Richland CUSD 1** at the beginning of July. Brooks has served as a member of her local school board since 1995.

"I am so pleased and proud that I can continue to serve the children of the Wabash Valley, and that the future of this community is so very bright," said Brooks.

Brooks and Steve Kinkade, who had served as president of the West Richland board, will be *ex-officio* board members at East Richland CUSD 1 until the election in April 2015.

In the face of tough economic times, the West Richland district had faced a difficult choice: be absorbed into nearby East Richland or make significant cuts to school programs. The district chose to be annexed and July 1 marked the end of the West Richland School district, following a long process.

The Regional Board of School Trustees voted 6-0 at a public hearing in late January to approve the dissolution of West Richland and the annexation of the district's students. East Richland is now the only school district in Richland County.

The West Richland school board approved dissolving the district and annexing with East Richland in November and the petition was filed with the Regional Board of School Trustees.

West Richland Interim Superintendent Rod Stover had said repeatedly that the district was continuing to lose students and revenue. The board had been forced to reduce staff and cut the curriculum.

Although a lawsuit was filed against West Richland and the regional board by opponents of annexation, that suit was dismissed by a judge, allowing the July 1 annexation to go forward.

The district will keep a Pre-K through 5th grade building in Noble, housing pre-kindergarten through

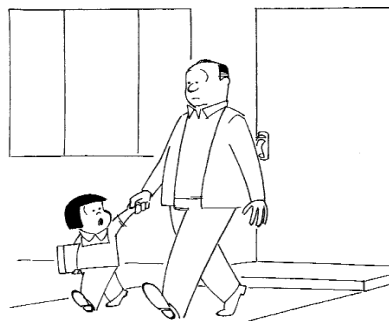


fifth-grade students, plus special-education students. But all other students in the district will be attending school 10 minutes down the road in Olney.

Former West Richland faculty and staff will be assigned according to certification and needs, and East Richland has worked with the State Board of Education to construct the budget for Fiscal Year 2015 and future years.

Transition programs have been planned for students and parents.

Note: Carolyne Brooks will remain on the IASB Board of Directors as the Association's immediate past president. She is still the immediate past president, of course, regardless of the change in the local district she serves. For as long as she is the immediate past president, she will serve on the IASB board. Brooks joined the IASB board in 2005.



"YOU USED TO WALK 10 MILES TO SCHOOL. THAT'S WHY YOU LIKED TO TAKE NAPS."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 13 – New Superintendent Luncheon, Lombard

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

September 11 – Starved Rock Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Seneca

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

September 23 – Shawnee Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Vienna

September 23 – Corn Belt Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Stanford

September 23 – IASB/IASA Professional Advancement Seminar, Springfield

September 25 – Blackhawk Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Geneseo

September 25 – Wabash Valley Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Robinson

September 30 – Illini Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Mahomet

October 1 – Central Illinois Valley Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Morton

October 1 – Kishwaukee Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Prairie Hills

October 1 – Southwestern Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Belleville

October 2 – Abe Lincoln Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Decatur

October 2 – Egyptian Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Fairfield

October 2 – Western Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Augusta

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