

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

September 2012 / Issue No. 723

School board election forms, deadlines draw attention

Candidates, secretaries prepare for April 9 vote

The 2013 Consolidated Election is still seven months away, but school districts are already gearing up for the biennial event.

Tuesday, Sep. 25, is the first official day prospective candidates may circulate nominating petitions for signatures for the April 9, 2013, school board election.

Sep. 25 is just the first in a series of deadlines that must be followed throughout the election process. Those deadlines impose specific responsibilities on the candidates and on the

See *IASB election packets*, page 12

school board secretary, who serves as the “Local Election Official” (LOE).

While some districts rely exclusively on the elected board secretary to do this work, most designate additional representatives to help, according to Anna Lovern, director of IASB policy services.

Lovern, who recently spoke to secretaries in a series of election workshops, said that under Illinois law, the school board may designate one or more LOE representatives to receive nominating papers. This person(s) may include:

Helping candidates is a good idea, “Because you never know who is going to become the next school board member. And while you are not their only source, you are probably their best source of information.”

— Anna Lovern

- The elected board secretary;
- The superintendent’s secretary who

See **ELECTIONS** on page 7



Online conference preview lists all 117 panel discussions, key events, plans

A preview booklet for the 2012 Joint Annual Conference is now available online.

Information includes a master schedule of all major Conference events, descriptions and time slots for panel sessions and pre-conference workshops.

This year’s event will be the 80th Joint Annual Conference of the Illinois Association of School Boards, Illinois Association of School Administra-

tors and Illinois Association of School Business Officials in Chicago.

There are several new features to this year’s conference. There will be nine full- or half-day pre-conference workshops, including several that qualify toward state-required school board member training.

The number of panel sessions this year has increased to 117, with many designed to help districts save mon-

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Busing nonpublic school kids not always required

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NEWS FROM ISBE

Burroughs nominations

The deadline to nominate school board presidents for the Thomas Lay Burroughs Award is Oct. 5. The award will be presented Sunday, Nov. 18, at the Joint Annual Conference in Chicago. Nominations should be submitted to Amanda Elliott via email to: aelliott@isbe.net. Indicate Burroughs Nomination in the subject line. For additional information, including nomination rules and award criteria (all of it focused on leadership), visit: http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf.

General State Aid prorated

FY13 General State Aid (GSA) payments to school district are being prorated, resulting in a nearly 11 percent reduction in the GSA foundation level of \$6,119 established by the General Assembly. That will bring the prorated gross GSA for each district to \$5,733. The reduction will be applied proportionally over 22 equal payments from August 2012 to June 2013, a change from previous years, when only the final payments were reduced.

Changes on the board

Gov. Patrick Quinn re-appointed three members of the Illinois State Board of Education in mid August. Andrea Brown of Marion, David Fields of Danville and Vinni Hall of Chicago will remain on the board. Board member Lanita Koster, however, has submitted her resignation after four years on the board. Koster, who was offered a re-appointment, reportedly is stepping down for personal reasons. She brought more than 35 years of educational experience to her post and "brought unique insights from a teachers' perspective," according to Christopher Koch, the state superintendent.

School foundation directors to gather for major national conference in Chicago

A two, half-day conference is planned in October for school foundation directors looking for help to boost fundraising and build community support for local schools.

The 2012 National School Foundation Conference will be held Oct. 11-12 in downtown Chicago.

Sponsored by the American Schools Foundation Alliance, the conference will feature keynote addresses by Richard Stephens, Senior Vice President, The Boeing Company, and Patty Kryshea, Manager of Community Affairs and Grass Roots, Southwest Airlines.

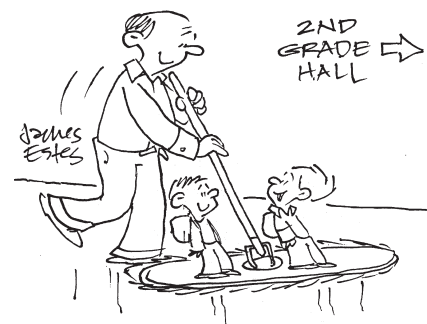
Among the other topics will be sessions on:

- Panel discussion of foundation challenges
- Increasing alumni donations
- Fundraising in economically challenged school districts
- Strengthening the foundation infrastructure
- Communication and strategies using digital media
- Payroll deduction plans
- Partner fundraising ideas



The conference begins at 1 p.m. Thursday and closes at noon Friday. Individual registration is \$140 for ASFA members and \$190 for non-members. Registration for state school board and state foundation employees is \$50. Discounted ASFA membership options are also available with registration.

Details about the conference and online registration are available at: <http://www.asfalliance.org/conferences/2012conferencedetails.html>. Questions about the conference or the Alliance can be directed to Nancy Dye, Executive Director, ASFA, at 312/930-6136, or by emailing her at: dyen@asfalliance.org.



"Thanks for the lift, Mr. Nordstrom!"

Peoria hosting IPA's principals conference

The 41st Annual Principals Professional Conference will be held at the Peoria Civic Center on Oct. 21-23. This year's theme is "Leaders Leading Change."

The conference will feature 48 small group sessions and keynote speakers Eric Jensen, an expert on brain research and learning; Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon (not yet confirmed), and Jamie Vollmer, school communications expert and author.


For more information about the principals' conference visit the IPA conference website: <http://www.ilprincipals.org/professional-development/ipa-conferences/principals-professional-conference>.

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**

Fall division meetings feature Eddy, school leadership updates, workshops

Want to learn more about bonds and borrowing or some other special topic or issue of central importance to school leaders these days? Want to catch up with what your neighboring school boards are doing and meet your new IASB leadership?

Board members and superintendents can do all of this and more by attending one or more of this year's fall division dinner meetings.

Beginning on Sep. 13 at the Starved Rock Division, and concluding Oct. 30 at the Three Rivers Division, IASB's division dinner meetings are the place to catch up on school leadership developments, and share ideas and solutions with fellow school leaders and IASB leadership.

The complete schedule is available at IASB's online Events Calendar at <http://www.iasb.com/calendar/calendar.cfm>.

Featured dinner speaker at many division meetings this fall will be Roger Eddy, IASB's new executive director. He will share his views on the chal-



Roger Eddy

lenges and opportunities ahead for school boards. As a former school superintendent and state legislator, he will discuss the current happenings in education policy, consider the implications for school districts, and will welcome questions from members.

The fall division dinner meeting is also where information will be presented about school board training opportunities, the upcoming Joint Annual Conference, legislative reports, Delegate Assembly resolutions, as well as reports from IASB board of directors and division officers.

Awards will also be presented to board members receiving Master Board Member status. Through the Master Board Member program, IASB recognizes and honors board members for the time and effort they devote to self-improvement and leadership activities. Recognized activities are a means of achieving the Association's mission of excellence in local school governance.

Many meetings also will offer a variety of breakout panel sessions and will range from school finance and bargaining to the state's new common core standards.

Information about division dinner meetings is being mailed to every school board member and district office.

Journal asks: Who should pay for costs of student extracurriculars?

As districts face financial uncertainties, some school boards have approved fees for students to participate in extracurricular activities. The September/October issue of *The Illinois School Board Journal* looks at these "pay-to-play" fees, including interviews with a district that has fees, one that has decided against fees, and another that has an interesting alternative.



In addition to this cover story, *The Journal* will feature the third in a series of articles on Common Core State Standards and two legal articles, one concerning student free speech rights in light of today's technology and another that outlines steps a board can take to control bad language on district property and at away events.

The Journal is mailed to all IASB members. In addition, a digital version is now available online at <http://iasb.com/journal/>.

NEWS FROM IASB

Board secretary nominations

The deadline to nominate school board secretaries for IASB's Holly Jack Outstanding Service Award is Sep. 28. School districts are encouraged to nominate local district employees (superintendent's secretary, superintendent's administrative assistant, school board secretary, etc.) who do the work required of the school board secretary for this honor.

The award will be presented at the IASB/IASA/IASBO annual conference in Chicago on Friday, Nov. 16. Nomination forms are now available on the IASB website, <http://iasb.com/jac12/HollyJack.cfm>, or contact Anna Lovern, director of policy services, at 217/528-9688, ext. 1125, or at the email address alovern@iasb.com.

School Board Members Day

IASB has just posted a packet of materials on its website for local school superintendents, district secretaries and school public relations specialists to help districts organize the activities celebrating "School Board Members Day" on Nov. 15.

This annual day of observance was designated by state lawmakers in 2008 to help build community awareness and understanding about the crucial role that elected school boards play in a representative democracy. More information and materials for "School Board Members Day" can be found now at <http://www.iasb.com>.

Member district rejoins

After being gone since 1999, Geff CCSD 14 in Wayne County has rejoined IASB as a member district. Geff is located in the association's Egyptian Division. Membership now totals 853 or 98.9 percent of all school districts in the state.

Nine preconference workshops set to offer key training

Nov. 16 events qualify participants for credits

Registrants for the 2012 Joint Annual Conference can choose from nine workshops on Friday, Nov. 16. These workshops require a fee (\$220 for full-day workshops; \$140 for half-day workshops) and advance registration.

The workshops will take place at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers. The five full-day workshops will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration includes a continental breakfast at 8 a.m. and lunch at 11:30 a.m. The four half-day workshops will be held from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. or from 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Registration includes a continental breakfast with the morning workshops at 8 a.m., or lunch with the afternoon workshops at 11:30 a.m.

All pre-conference workshop participants must be registered for the Joint Annual Conference.

All nine workshops qualify participants for School Board LeaderShop credit; with some qualifying for “core” and others earning “elective” credits. Core subjects relate directly to principles of effective school district governance, while elective subjects focus on additional board and board member skills and issues affecting board work and decision-making.

In addition to earning these credits, participants will be awarded 10 Master Board Member points for full-day workshops or 5 points for half-day workshops. Attendance at the conference also earns 30 Master Board Member points.

Core subject workshops are:

The Basics of Governance

This workshop will focus participants on board and board member roles and responsibilities and what effective school district governance looks like. Topics will include:

- The role and work of the school board and how to distinguish it from the role and work of the superintendent and staff;



Last year just seven preconference workshops were offered, compared to the nine offered this year, drawing big crowds to earn both core and elective IASB LeaderShop credit.

- The school board’s relationship to the community;
- How each member relates to the full board;
- Some practical tips as well as pitfalls to avoid.

Participants will also have an opportunity to try out some tools and procedures that make a school board effective and to sharpen their own decision-making skills. (This workshop also fulfills the governance overview requirement for admission into the LeaderShop Academy.)

Financial Oversight Essentials for School Boards

School boards are responsible for the financial governance of the school districts. But how much does the average board member know about internal controls, auditing procedures or financial statement analysis? Attend this session to learn more about the board’s role in understanding the key components of financial oversight. Specifically, this workshop will explore:

- The board’s legal, ethical and governance responsibilities for sound financial policy and practices;
- Establishing clear expectations for the maintenance of “financial health;”
- The importance of internal controls to protect district assets;
- The purpose and function of the school district audit.

School Board Accountability: Monitoring District Performance

This workshop will provide board members and administrators an opportunity to think and talk about how boards can fulfill their role as trustee for the community through their efforts to monitor district progress and operations without overwhelming either the board or the staff. Specifically, this workshop will provide participants the opportunity to:

- Define the appropriate board role in monitoring;
- Develop monitoring processes that:
 - Identify monitoring criteria;
 - Identify indicators of district progress and evidence of compliance with board policy;
 - Utilize a board monitoring calendar and dashboard

The Board and its Superintendent: Developing and Maintaining an Effective Relationship (half-day)

This workshop will explain how to engage in a deliberate process that benefits the board, superintendent and district. Participants in this workshop will:

- Understand the complementary roles and responsibilities of the board and the superintendent;
- Discuss how school board and superintendent teams can develop and maintain productive relationships;
- Discover the role trust plays in developing an effective leadership team;

See **WORKSHOPS** on page 5

WORKSHOPS *from page 4*

- Learn four principles of trust and how to incorporate them into the board room.

Elective subject workshops are:

Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents

Participants will learn the role of the president as it relates to the rest of the board and superintendent, the keys to effective meetings, parliamentary procedure, managing board conflict, communications, ethics and teamwork. This hands-on, interactive workshop will give members an opportunity to learn and compare notes with other board presidents from around the state.

An Introduction to Collective Bargaining for School Board Members and Administrators

What every school board member and administrator needs to know about collective bargaining, including:

- What the law requires of school boards and employee unions;
- Steps involved in bargaining labor contracts;
- Alternative processes;
- Politics and psychology of school bargaining;
- Roles and responsibilities of boards

and administrators;

- How to handle labor disputes;
- How to keep labor relations problems from destroying human relationships.

Diversity and Inclusion Awareness (half-day)

Through engaging, interactive exercises, this workshop is designed to increase “diversity and inclusion” awareness — the first step in the diversity education process. Workshop objectives include:

- Creating a common understanding of “diversity and inclusion”;
- Linking diversity issues with achieving district goals;
- Broadening the scope of diversity beyond typical race and gender issues to include education; religion, age, physical abilities, sexual orientation, class/income, language and others;
- Revealing and assessing the impact of subtle biases on school district success;
- Discussing the behaviors required to create an inclusive environment.

Leading Across Generations (half-day)

Gain understanding that can help leaders engage their teams, motivate

individuals to volunteer their greatest contributions, and resolve points of friction. Insights will help value the contributions each generation can make, and participants will get tips to help engage individuals from any generation to apply their unique talents in the team effort.

Inspiring Trust (half-day)

This workshop led by Haydn Shaw, a senior consultant with Covey’s organization, will help leaders understand how to gain credibility and influence while achieving better results—faster. Shaw will also explain just how costly lack of trust is to any organization, and what school leaders can do to create an environment of higher trust.

More information including detailed workshop descriptions are available at: <http://www.iasb.com/jac12/PreConWorkshops12.pdf>. Online registration is available now at: https://www.iasb.com/jac12/precon_reg.cfm.

Note: participants are encouraged to make hotel reservations Thursday night in order to attend these workshops. Limited rooms at conference rates are available; if they are not made at the time of conference registration, an option would be to arrange a Thursday night stay at a suburban hotel.

PREVIEW *page 1*

ey, increase revenue or better monitor school finances. Panels such as Finance for Veteran Board Members, Ten Ways to Implement Technology on a Shoestring, School Finance, Revenues for the Novice, Revenue, and School Finance: Expenditures for the Novice speak to these concerns.

Featured again this year are the tours of Chicago Public Schools, Carousel of Panels, professional development activities for board and district secretaries, coffee and conversation sessions, Delegate Assembly, conference bookstore, and three interesting and entertaining general session speakers.

The conference preview does not include room locations for events; that information will be available in the official Conference Program, which

can be picked up Nov. 16-18 at the registration desk at the Hyatt Regency.

Reminders

October 19 is an important date for registration. That’s when the registration fee increases from \$375 to \$400. Also, registrations received in the IASB office or postmarked after Oct. 19 will not be mailed to the district, but will be taken to the conference to be processed. That means that registrants will need to go to the registration desk pick up name badges. And registrants must bring their badges to the registration desk to arrange to make changes.

All of the information to register for this year’s Joint Annual Conference is available at <http://www.iasb.com/jac12/>.

There are links on that page to register and to secure conference housing.

To make any changes to registrations, please submit them in writing, with the replacement registrant’s name noted on a copy of the original registration form, to the attention of Sandy Boston. The completed forms, fees, or any changes, must be forwarded to: IASB Conference Registration/Housing, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62703.

Questions about registration or housing procedures should be directed to 217/528 9688, ext. 1115 or 1102.

Conference registration packets and badges will be mailed on Nov. 2 for all registrations received prior to the Oct. 19 registration deadline.

Four counties plan sales tax referenda in November

School districts in four more counties (Boone, LaSalle, Lee, and Marshall) will attempt to adopt a County School Facilities Sales Tax this fall.

The Nov. 6 general election will mark the seventh time since the law was adopted in October 2007 that county voters will have had the chance to decide whether their local district can tap into this alternative funding source to improve school facilities.

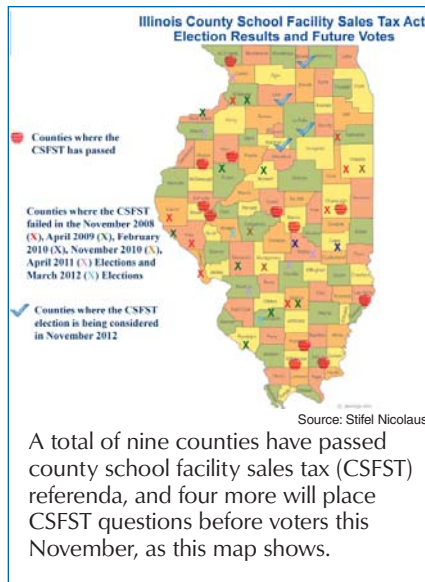
The sales tax referendum, when adopted, imposes up to an additional 1 percent sales tax on everything the county taxes, but it does not impose any tax on goods or services not already subject to sales taxes.

Goods and services that are not subject to the additional sales tax include cars, trucks, ATVs, boats and RVs; mobile homes, unprepared food, drugs, farm equipment and parts. The revenue produced can nevertheless be significant.

If approved, the sales tax proposed in LaSalle County, for example, could generate as much as \$10 million per year for schools, according to estimates. Likewise, Champaign County's estimated sales tax proceeds in 2010 amounted to more than \$16 million.

School districts have three basic options to use the funds: to save for capital projects, to issue new bonds for current capital needs, or to retire existing debt by abating taxes or not levying property taxes for facilities. But districts can choose to use the funds in any combination of these three ways, and there is little red tape involved.

For many school districts, the funding provided by the county tax may be the best immediate hope to raise funds for needed construction, repair and maintenance. Before a state construction funding bill was signed into law this spring, Illinois had not approved new construction funds earmarked for schools since 2003. As a result, there is a backlog of needed construction projects in



many districts, but of course the funding is not sufficient to fund all of them. So only a limited number of districts can expect state help soon, experts say.

The school facilities sales tax proposition is not a sure thing. In fact, the tax has been approved by voters in just 12 of 41 county referendums since 2007.

Such a referendum qualifies to be placed on the ballot when school boards representing more than 50 percent of the resident student enrollment in a county adopt a resolution to certify the question.

The Aug. 17 deadline has just passed for school boards to adopt a resolution. The Regional Office of Education will certify such questions to go on the ballot for the November election. The deadline for boards to adopt a resolution putting a public policy question on the ballot in the next election, the primary to be held on Feb. 26, 2013, is Dec. 7. Likewise, the deadline for boards to adopt a resolution for getting such a question on the ballot in the next subsequent election, to be held on April 9, 2013, is Jan. 18.

Timing of the sales tax referendum is important, however, because the revenue does not flow immediately upon passage. One drawback with the school facilities sales tax, in fact, is that it takes months for dis-

tricts to receive any funds because the state revenue department only changes the tax rates for counties twice a year, on Jan. 1 and July 1. In addition, experts say it takes four months after the countywide tax goes into effect for the funds to be distributed from the state.

The revenue is distributed among school districts based on their student population percentage in the county where the tax is applied.

In addition to the sales tax issues, at least three school districts have placed bond issues on the Nov. 6 ballot. Bond issues are on the ballot in:

- **Illini West High School District 307**, Carthage (\$9 million bond issue to build a new \$27 million high school to end the widespread use of temporary buildings, with the rest of the cost to be paid for by the state)
- **Rockford SD 205** (\$80 million bond issue in order to help pay for repairs to the current school buildings and build new facilities as needed, with no change in the bond rate. School officials note that school buildings are in need of repair and maintenance and that this bond is critical to the district)
- **Ball-Chatham CUSD 5**, Chatham (\$35 million to renovate four school facilities in order to keep up with growing class sizes)

Rockford SD 205 has also placed a tax question on the November ballot. While not a tax increase, the question would continue 58 cents of the district's property tax levy, if approved. Voters will be asked to maintain the tax levy raising approximately \$16 million a year for the district's education fund, which helps to pay for employee salaries, benefits, textbooks and other education materials.

Results of all November referendums intended for school purposes will be reported in a subsequent issue of this newsletter.

ELECTIONS *from page 1*

serves as the board secretary;

- Another district employee who serves as the board secretary; or
- A district employee who is the “designated representative” of the school board secretary for purposes of the election.

“I recommend at least two,” she said. “The constraints of the filing deadlines will be eased considerably if you have more than one person available to do this work.”



Anna Lovern

It is not required by law that districts provide the forms that candidates must file; however, if they do, they can be distributed to candidates at any time, Lovern added.

Districts may but are not required to hand out supporting materials to help candidates become familiar with the district or board duties. Such optional materials might include a summary of the district strategic plan, district newsletter, and the like.

Helping candidates is a good idea, she said, “Because you never know who is going to become the next school board member. And while you are not their only source, you are probably their best source of information.”

Nominating forms and all other forms required at the time of filing are available from individual county clerks or online at the Illinois State Board of Elections website in its 2013 Candidates’ Guide (see “Forms,” starting on Page 64): <http://www.elections.il.gov/Downloads/ElectionInformation/PDF/2013CanGuide.pdf>.

What forms are needed when a candidate files?

- A Statement of Candidacy, signed and notarized;
- Nominating papers bearing the required number of signatures (each signature must have an address), and a notarized signature of the petition circulator;
- A receipt from the county clerk showing that the candidate has filed a Statement of Economic Interests

before the day for filing, but with the year (2012). Note: Incumbents only need to provide a copy of the receipt from their required May 1, 2012, filing, unless they filed electronically;

- Loyalty Oath (this is optional)

Monday, Dec. 17, is the first day that candidates may file these papers. If received prior to this date, Lovern advised districts to send them back. “You can only accept them in the filing days designated by the state,” she said.

Monday, Dec. 24, is the last day candidates may file. That day, of course, is Christmas Eve; however, the state requires that district offices remain open until 5 p.m. that day to accept nominating forms. “This is one reason why you want to have more than one designated representative,” Lovern said.

The unusual filing deadline is set by law, i.e., it must be 113 through 106 days prior to the date of the election. Typically held on the first Tuesday in April, the 2013 Consolidated Election is scheduled for April 9 to avoid conflict with the Passover holiday, Lovern said.

If the candidate’s forms are in order, the LOE or designee should write or stamp the date and time filed on each sheet. This establishes the order of filing and the order that the names will appear on the ballot.

Lovern noted that it is not the duty of the LOE to review petitions and other forms for accuracy or even ethics violations. “They are only authorized to turn down forms with obvious defects, such as missing pages, signatures, or notary seals,” she said. It is appropriate, however, to inform the candidate if something is missing.

For example, some candidates forget to circle on the Statement of Candidacy whether they running for a full term or unexpired term (vacancy).

“But once you accept them, nothing can be changed,” Lovern added.

The LOE must acknowledge to the candidates in writing that their forms have been accepted. The number of pages that were received should be noted on the receipt. It is required that the LOE provide candidates with

a notice of obligations under the Campaign Financing Act, and it is common for candidates to be provided with information regarding the Code of Fair Campaign Practices, a copy of the School Board Election Calendar, and a Request for Withdrawal form.

All nominating papers are open to public inspection; however, the district may establish reasonable regulations as to when and under what conditions the papers may be viewed. “You should never hand out originals; make a copy if you are going to share them. And it is acceptable to charge a fee,” Lovern said.

Once received, state law requires that the district must keep the nomination papers for not less than six months. Destruction of such records must comply with Section 14a of the Local Records Act.

Although not all districts receive objections, Lovern noted that it is best to be prepared to handle them. “Just because you never have, doesn’t mean you never will,” she said.

Any legal voter of the district may object to any nomination forms; however, they must file an original and one copy of an objector’s petition with the LOE. This petition must include the objector’s name, address, and state fully the nature of the objections, their interest, and what relief is requested.

The day and hour of this petition must also be noted and the original petition, along with the contested material, must be sent by registered mail or receipted personal delivery to the president of the school board no later than noon on the second business day after the objection petition is received.

A copy of the objector’s petition must be sent to the candidate by registered mail or receipted personal delivery.

There are several other deadlines to note before Election Day:

- Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2012: Last day to provide written Notice of Simultaneous Filing Lottery (if a lottery is required);
- Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013: Last day

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Governmental relations adds new staff member for lobbying

IASB has announced the addition of a new staff member for the Governmental Relations Department. Zachary Messersmith began Sep. 1 as an assistant director for governmental relations.

Messersmith, who previously worked as a staff member for the Illinois State Senate, has a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Illinois State University and formerly



Zachary Messersmith

served as an intern for IASB. During his internship, he worked closely with the IASB's legislative specialists in the Statehouse.

His duties include monitoring legislation, conducting legislative research, and providing committee testimony. He will also assist in developing legislative communications back to local school board members through assisting with the writing of IASB legislative publications and presenting legislative reports to the membership.

Messersmith will assist Director of Governmental Relations Deanna

Sullivan and Director of State and Federal Relations Susan Hilton with the legislative duties. Other Governmental Relations staff include Director of Advocacy Cynthia Woods and Connie Crowder, administrative assistant.

The workload increased for the IASB lobbying staff when Associate Executive Director Ben Schwarm was tapped to serve as the Deputy Executive Director. Schwarm will continue to head the Governmental Relations department but, with his new duties, will need support with the day-to-day lobbying in the Capitol.

Open Meetings Act course to roll out soon through Online Learning Center

Mandatory training on the Illinois Open Meetings Act will be available by mid-September via IASB's Online Learning Center.

By completing this interactive online course, board members will satisfy the requirement to receive training on the Open Meetings Act. The timetable for completing the training follows:

- A board member in office on Jan. 1, 2012, must complete the training within one year.
- An individual becoming a board

member after Jan. 1, 2012, must complete the training within 90 days of taking the oath.

After completing the course, participants will receive a certificate of completion that should be presented to the board for verification that is posted on the district's website.

To access the course go to www.iasb.com and click on the Logins drop-down menu on the left side of the screen. Then click Online Learning and follow the directions.

The course will cost \$30 for IASB members, \$60 for non-members.



"No, you can't stay home from school, Jacob. Nobody ever caught a virus from a computer."

State's high court OKs suit to be tried in sex abuse-related case

School administrators can be sued for allegedly failing to warn a nearby district that it was about to hire a teacher with a record of sexual misconduct, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled on Aug. 9.

The state's highest court essentially ruled that plaintiffs have alleged facts sufficient to prove that a nearby district owed them a duty of care. But whether that duty, which was essentially owed to the students enrolled

in the nearby school district, was violated is a question for a jury to decide.

In a 5-2 ruling, the court found the never-presented information that the teacher did not finish out the school year might have been a red flag that would have triggered more scrutiny. The court said the students who were later abused can proceed with a lawsuit versus school officials.

The teacher was sentenced to 48 years in prison for molesting eight

girls in one district and 12 years for earlier actions with two girls in another district.

The Supreme Court ruling indicates that it was the action of providing incomplete information on the employment verification form that now opens the way for a lawsuit.

The state supreme court's opinion in this Aug. 9 case can be found online at: http://www.state.il.us/court/Opinions/recent_supreme.asp.

NEWS HEADLINES

Champaign (July 30, *Champaign News-Gazette*) Kindergarten enrollment in Champaign schools has risen for the last three years, along with elementary enrollment (through fifth grade) as a whole. The district did not expect such a large increase, because a 2008 demographic study predicted only a 4.5 percent elementary enrollment increase through this year, and then a 1.3 percent decrease over the following five years. Instead, kindergarten enrollment is up more than 17 percent since 2002, and the district is expecting 821 kindergartners next fall, which beats last year's record of 803. Elementary enrollment as a whole has increased more than 7 percent. To deal with the increases, the district is adding "bubble" classrooms for kindergartners and first-graders, which means additional classrooms in certain grades that may not be there next year.

Chicago (Aug. 2, *Chicago Sun-Times*) Five thousand additional Chicago toddlers will gain access to early childhood education programs by the 2015-16 school year — and the quality of existing programs will be upgraded — according to a mayoral plan aimed at reducing the high-school drop-out rate. At a time when early childhood programs in other cities are on the chopping block, Mayor Rahm Emanuel is making a three-year investment in the windy city's version, beginning with a \$10 million down payment in the fall of 2013. Roughly 37,000 three- and four-year olds are enrolled in early childhood programs bankrolled by state and federal funding. Instead of doling out funding to the same old organizations every year and automatically renewing that funding, the city intends to start from scratch with a whole new set of "internal and external reviewers" with expertise in what it takes to prepare kids to succeed as students.

East St. Louis (Aug. 7, *Belleville News-Democrat*) East St. Louis SD 189 has cut 50 non-certified administrator jobs, the latest in a series of moves designed to trim district spending. The cuts come at a time when school officials say the district will run out of money by the end of September unless the schools get an emergency bank loan. Cut would be jobs like administrative clerk, custodian, coordinator, warehouse worker, security guard and attendance officer, according to Beth Shepperd, assistant superintendent. Shepperd said the 50 job cuts were necessary. "We were told by the Financial Oversight Panel that if we want to bring back the staff we felt was necessary, we had to find a way to cut \$3.5 million. They didn't want us to increase the deficit to bring back the staff we needed," she said.

Morton (July 30, *Peoria Journal Star*) A near-tragic incident at a Morton elementary school in February prompted Principal Susan Grzanich to seek approval for adding a 160-foot fence on the playground that should prevent balls from rolling and students from running into a busy street. The tubular steel fence is four inches off the ground and 42 inches high. The project cost Morton CUSD 709 about \$8,000. The district is spending more than \$300,000 on summer projects, so this is one of the smaller ones.

Normal (Aug. 7, *The Bloomington Pantagraph*) McLean County Unit District 5 school officials value preschool and parental involvement in it. That is why the district is participating in the Child-Parent Center program, which will give parents the tools and training they need to help their children succeed. "It lays the foundation. The earlier a student starts learning, especially with literacy, the more benefits you see long term," said Michele Lamboley, Unit 5's special education director. The Child-Parent Center model goes

beyond traditional academics to help teach parents, who sign a pledge to participate weekly, everything from nutritious cooking to how to do laundry. School officials say it has been successful in other districts for decades, and is coming to Unit 5 this fall, thanks to a five-year, \$15 million U.S. Department of Education grant.

Quad-Cities (Aug. 7, *Quad-City Times*) The Living Lands & Waters organization hosted work sessions for teachers Aug. 6 and 7 to introduce them to curriculum focused on rivers and developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Organizers said it is critical to teach children why it's important to keep rivers clean. The workshops also were a way to introduce the Quad-Cities to the organization's floating classroom. The classroom barge was put into service this spring. In addition to hosting groups of teachers, groups of students also will be able to attend workshops on the barge to learn more about river life. The organization has hosted more than 1,800 educators, most on their previous barge, which was not equipped to host children. Local students were scheduled to visit the floating classroom later in August. In addition to teaching them about river wildlife and environmental issues, one of the goals is to teach kids about the wide variety of careers that are focused on the river.

Wood Dale (Aug. 1, *The Daily Herald*) Officials in Wood Dale Elementary District 7 hope to expand a teacher home-visit program launched last year. The program allows teachers to visit the home of each of their students, with parent permission, in an effort to build better relationships. Ultimately, the goal is to improve students' academic performance. District 7 teachers were trained last summer with resources from the Parent Teacher Home Visit Project in Sacramento, Calif., which has a similar program.

When closed, public schools need not bus kids to private schools



Jared Boyer
IASB extern

The logistics of getting students from their homes to their schools can present school districts with many challenges. One challenge always on the minds of public school board members, is how to finance transportation costs. State funds have been crucial for many districts. But with transportation costs on the rise and a state budget crisis to consider, the Illinois State Board of Education is considering changing the reimbursement formula. The governor's FY 2013 budget provides for 42% less transportation reimbursement funding than the FY 2010 amount. With all of the transportation funding headlines surrounding a decrease in the funds available, it is no surprise that many districts are looking to reduce costs as much as possible.

Further complicating the issue of public school transportation funding, state law requires that private and charter school students meeting specific eligibility requirements be permitted to use the buses to get to their schools. The law is written to exclude private or charter schools which would be a great distance from the bus route. This ensures that busing to these schools does not substantially add to the cost of the district's busing system. The law is silent, however, as to whether it requires districts to bus students to eligible private schools when public schools are not in session.

In *C.E. and C.L. v. Board of Education of East St. Louis No. 189, No. 11-0390 (Ill. App. 5th June 18, 2012)*, the lack of statutory instruction on this matter was brought to the court's attention. The Board of Edu-

DEVELOPMENTS IN SCHOOL LAW

cation of East St. Louis No. 189 (District) had been busing students to the Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School (Bowman) regardless of the public school schedule for several years. Toward the end of the 2009-2010 school year, the District notified the Catholic school that beginning in the 2010-2011 school year the District would only provide transportation services when public school was in session. The new practice meant that there were fifteen days during the school year for which the Catholic school students would have to arrange alternate transportation.

In an effort to force the District to bus parochial students to the Catholic school regardless of the public school calendar, the parents of several Bowman students filed a lawsuit. The parents' argument had two parts. The first was that under Illinois School Code Section 29-4, the school district had a statutory duty to provide transportation services. Second, they argued that the statute's silence on the issue of conflicting school calendars simply means that the duty to provide transportation survives the public school calendar.

The court looked to the statute in an effort to determine what the legislature intended. The court noted that the statute: requires districts to bus only nonpublic students who reside on or along the regular bus route, affords districts the ability to operate a separate route for nonpublic students if that would be safer and more economical, and states that transportation is required "on the same basis as it provides transportation to its own pupils..." The court concluded that the legislature intended to pass a statute which prioritized district budgetary efficiency. The court determined that the statute could not be used to require districts to bus nonpublic students on days in

which public students would not be bussed.

This decision is significant because this case presented a question of first impression. A legal term of art, 'question of first impression,' is used to signify that a court in this jurisdiction has not ruled on the issue before. This kind of decision has a greater impact because it represents the courts' only stance on a particular question of law. Any future cases that ask the same or similar questions will begin by evaluating this decision. Attorneys will cite to this case when developing arguments on the topic and will advise

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clients on its meaning. Furthermore, school board professionals will rely on this decision in evaluating their district's busing procedure and policy.

From this case, school administrators and board members can conclude that the Illinois School Code does not require districts to bus nonpublic students when public school is not in session. Before discontinuing such bus service, school administrators and board members should consult their board's attorney. Illinois lawyers are divided between believing that a court of appeals decision is binding across the state, or only on the trial courts in that judicial district. With the FY 2013 budget quickly approaching, and changes to the transportation reimbursement fund still under consideration, many districts will likely be evaluating their transportation costs in the near future. This decision gives many of them one more option to discuss and consider.

Economist: Is another recession around the corner?

By Edward H. Boss, Jr., Chief Economist, Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability, Illinois General Assembly

Note: The following article is reprinted from the July Monthly Briefing of the legislature's Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability.

For the third year in a row, the hoped-for “Summer of Recovery” not only failed to develop, but the pace of activity, rather than improving, slowed sharply. With the economic recovery now entering its fourth year, not only is it the weakest expansion in at least the post World War II period, but at no time did it generate the type of growth normally associated with economic expansions despite massive fiscal stimulus and easy credit policies.

Real gross national product, Gross Domestic Product, slipped from an annual rate of 4.1% in the final quarter of calendar 2011, to 2.0% in the first quarter of this year, to 1.5% in the quarter just ended. As a result, employment slowed. After rising by an average gain of 225,000 in payroll employment each month during the first quarter of 2012, the average gain in the second quarter plunged to 75,000.

The weakening pattern was not confined to employment, but was rather

wide spread. The consumer, which accounts for the largest sector of spending, in excess of two-thirds, reversed course as depicted in retail sales which, after rising each month during the first three months of the year, declined in each month during the second quarter. Not surprisingly, given the employment slowdown and declining retail sales, consumer sentiment as measured by the University of Michigan fell to its lowest level of the year in the advance report issued in July.

Business activity also changed course. Manufacturing business actually contracted in June for the first time since July 2009, the first month after the start of the current recovery, as the Institute of Supply Manger's Index (ISM) hit 49.7%. (Anything less than 50% represents contraction). The non-manufacturing or service sector also has softened according to the ISM, falling in June to 52.1%, while still expanding, was at its lowest level since November 2010. With much of Europe in recession and a slowdown in China and India, U.S. exports have suffered while cutbacks in government spending have occurred at both at the federal, State, and local levels. Finally, even the long depressed housing sector, which has shown some indication of improvement, seems to have lost some momentum.

In June there was a softening of new privately owned building permits, a precursor to new housing activity, and a decline in new single-family home sales to the lowest level in more than a year and prices resumed their downward trend.

The keys to whether these disturbing trends continue, leading to an actual decline in activity and a recession, may well depend on policy decisions. This includes how the crisis in the Euro Zone develops. It has been first negative then positive developments in the viability of the union in Europe that has been a major factor leading to uncertainty and sharp swings in the equity markets. In the U.S., clarity is needed on whether the recent softening in the economy will spark yet another forced credit easing in terms on implementing QE3 [the proposed third round of quantitative easing of credit by the central banks of major developed nations].

Finally, and most importantly, is what becomes of the “Fiscal Cliff,” that is the automatic increase in taxes, elimination of the payroll tax reduction, mandatory government spending cuts that will automatically take place at the end of the year, etc. which, if fully implemented, would most certainly raise the odds of another recession developing.

INDICATORS OF ILLINOIS ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

INDICATORS	June 2012	May 2012	June 2011
Unemployment Rate (Average)	8.7%	8.6%	9.9%
Annual Rate of Inflation (Chicago)	-0.6%	-0.8%	0.9%
	LATEST MONTH	% CHANGE OVER PRIOR MONTH	%CHANGE OVER A YEAR AGO
Civilian Labor Force (thousands) (June)	6,583	-0.1	0.4%
Employment (thousands) (June)	6,011	-0.2%	1.7%
New Car & Truck Registration (June)	50,524	-2.2%	4.2%
Single Family Housing Permits (June)	795	-17.1%	16.9%
Total Exports (\$mil) (May)	5,969	0.4%	6.1%
Chicago Purchasing Managers Index (July)	53.7	1.5%	-8.7%

Board election packets update districts on 2013 dates, deadlines, duties, forms

Material and other announcements related to the 2013 school board elections were recently mailed to all IASB member school districts.

Included is information on accepting or rejecting nominating petitions, school board election calendar, checklist of election duties of the board secretary, sample news release, list of sample election forms, sample letter to prospective candidates, and an order form to purchase candidates' kits.

The kit contains new and updated publications and materials about school board candidacy, including a job description, election tips, the 2013 election calendar, a resource list, a pamphlet on effective board service, and IASB divi-

sion meetings information.

In conjunction with the election dates and deadlines mentioned above, IASB recently posted online the Annual School Calendar of legal dates and deadlines for 2012-2013. The calendar is available at: http://iasb.com/pdf/cal_13.pdf.

Links to other essential election material and information is available at: <https://www.iasb.com/elections/>.

Dates contained in the updated calendar will comply with all statutory deadlines contained in the Election Code, School Code and selected acts of the Illinois General Assembly. The calendar does not contain dates imposed by the state board of education or its regulations.

ELECTIONS *from page 7*

- to file objections to nomination papers or petitions;
- Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013: Last day for candidates who have filed for two seats (full and partial terms) to file Withdrawal of Candidacy forms. This is also the last day that lottery can be held;
- Thursday, Jan. 31, 2013: Last day for LOE to certify candidates to the county election authority for the April 9, 2013, school board election. This is also the last day candidates may file notarized papers withdrawing their nomination;
- Thursday, Feb. 7, 2013: Last day for individuals to file a notarized

declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate with the county clerk.

After the election, the county election authority has until April 30, 2013, to canvass the votes and proclaim results. A complete abstract of votes will be transmitted to the LOE and the State Board of Elections.

More information regarding the duties of the LOE or designee soon will be available from the State Board of Elections by downloading the Local Election Official's Handbook for the 2013 Consolidated Elections. When published it will be linked at: <http://www.elections.il.gov/InfoForLocalElectionOfficials.aspx>.



The sales tax for schools has generated nearly \$21 million so far, benefitting many schools in Champaign County, including this elementary school. See story on page 6.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 12 – Professional Advancement – Seeking the Superintendent, IASB, Lombard

September 13 – Starved Rock Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Ottawa ESD 141, Central Intermediate School, Ottawa

September 18 – Professional Advancement – Seeking the Superintendent, IASB, Springfield

September 19 – Board Book Webinar, online

September 19 – North Cook Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Rosewood Restaurant and Banquets, Rosemont

September 20 – Northwest Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Durand CUSD 322, Durand

September 25 – Wabash Valley Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Jasper Co. CUSD 1, Newton

September 25 – Western Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Macomb CUSD 185, Macomb

September 26 – Central Illinois Valley Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Washington CHSD 308, Washington

September 27 – Illini Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Unity High School CUSD 7, Tolono

September 27 – Kishwaukee Division Fall Dinner Meeting, DeKalb CUSD 428, DeKalb

October 2 – Blackhawk Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Sherrard CUSD 200, Sherrard

October 2 – Shawnee Division Fall Dinner Meeting, Joppa-Maple Grove District 38, Joppa

October 2 – DuPage Division Dinner Meeting, Crowne Plaza, Glen Ellyn

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