

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD *Newsbulletin*

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Poll: voters favor more state funds for public schools

Coalition seeks input to Ill. governor's race

A survey of Illinois voters released on Aug. 28 by a coalition of pro-education groups shows they see public education as the top priority for state government. Education topped the list of major issues of concern to voters: jobs, economy/gas prices, the combined issues of taxes/budget/government waste and health care costs.

"Illinois voters clearly are supportive of public education and want to see the next governor invest more in our schools," said Samantha Anderson of Communities for Quality Education, which commissioned the survey. "Groups such as the Illinois NAACP, PTA, school nurses, and the Healthy Schools Campaign are working together in the unique Speak Out for Illinois Schools coalition to hold community roundtable events and a candidate forum this fall to advance these important issues."

Key findings in the poll included the following:

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EEE judges pick top school designs Judges of the 2006 Invitational Exhibition of Educational Environments examine entries at IASB in Springfield on Sep. 21. Left to right are Randolph Harhausen, Supt., Williamsville CUSD 15; Dennis Wonderlick, architect, Chicago; Russ Middleton, architect, Normal; and Bill Reichert, architect, Fairview Heights

Slater, Metzger slated as top IASB officers for delegate vote

The IASB Delegate Assembly will elect Association officers on Saturday, Nov. 18, during the Joint Annual Conference in Chicago. IASB's nominating committee has endorsed the following slate of officers: Marie Slater, Wheaton-Warrenville District 200, for President; and Mark C. Metzger, Indian-Prairie CUSD 204,

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Marie Slater



Mark C. Metzger

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State Board updates useful guidebook of agency

Superintendents and school board members may recall the debut of the Illinois State Board of Education's *Programs and Services Locator*, which was first published in early September of last year. Basically, the *Locator* is a catalogue of every State Board of Education program and service that the agency can collectively identify, listed with a contact person, email, and phone number. The idea behind this document is to help school leaders better know who in the agency to contact directly.

To download a copy, visit: <http://www.isbe.net/excel/locator.xls>.

ISBE awards ISAT testing contract to Pearson

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) awarded a contract to Pearson Educational Measurement (PEM) on Oct. 4 for administrative services for the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT), beginning in spring 2007. The board's vote follows problems that arose in the spring 2006 testing cycle when Harcourt Assessment, Inc. did not deliver tests and answer documents to schools on time, and produced tests that included printing and collation errors.

In a special meeting, the board unanimously voted to award the contract to PEM for the following:

- ISAT printing
- test distribution
- test retrieval
- providing raw scores from multiple choice and open response test questions to Harcourt for scoring
- providing on-line services for review for demographic data and score review
- preparing reports of assessment results for students and schools.

Local districts, boards set tone for education changes; Dunn

"Education in this state will be just fine." Those were the parting comments as Illinois State Superintendent of Schools Randy Dunn addressed the 29th Annual ISBE Superintendents' Conference. Dunn leaves in December to take over as president of Murray State University in Murray, Ky.



Randy Dunn

"I'm not worried about what's going to happen with the agency and Illinois education," Dunn said. "You're all going to keep doing what you all do."

Real change in education, he said, has always come at the local level, even though state and federal agencies have "blunt instruments" to wield in the change. And while things have changed at ISBE in the past two years under his leadership, he does not see additional major shifts in the offing.

Dunn said ISBE will continue to

try to find the right balance between gubernatorial control and agency independence, fleshing out the new blend into a quasi-independent agency with stabilized roles and responsibilities.

Dunn's remarks came at a closing brunch on Friday. Earlier in the two-day event, Douglas B. Reeves, chairman and founder of the Center for Performance Assessment, addressed the conference on the issue of educational excellence and how to use current research to produce changes in schools.

Reeves encouraged superintendents to identify the people in their district who can make change happen, especially those that others seek out for advice and information. He referred to these people as "super hubs" who connect with many different groups.

IASB's Barbara Toney, a Targeting Achievement Through Governance consultant, presented a breakout session with superintendents Carol Auer, Keeneyville SD 20, and Diane Rutledge, Springfield SD 186, on the school board's policy role and the Targeting program.

RECENT IASB MAILINGS

IASB regularly sends informational materials to all member districts. Here is a list of such items recently mailed to representatives of your district. For more information about any item, contact your board president or district superintendent or get in touch with IASB.

E-tools for boards & districts brochure, 9/18/06 to board presidents and district superintendents.

2006 Election Kit, 9/19/06 to board presidents and district superintendents.

2006 Report to the Membership for the 2006 Delegate Assembly Meeting, 9/22/06, sent to district superintendents.

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

Illinois Association of School Boards

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ISBE transfers national board certification to ROE

ISU protests loss, state bidding rules

State education officials have transferred the state's National Board Certified Teachers program from Illinois State University (ISU) to an agency Gov. Rod Blagojevich once tried to eliminate.

The teacher training program, which seeks to identify and reward top teachers across the state, will now be administered by the Iroquois/Kankakee Regional Office of Education.

The program, administered by ISU for the past four years, has resulted in 1,557 Illinois teachers being designated as National Board certified. After a rigorous certification process, the teach-

ers are expected to return to their respective school districts to mentor other teachers.

The move comes just three years after the governor unsuccessfully attempted to eliminate the state's regional offices of education, saying they were an unneeded bureaucracy.

ISU, the primary teacher-producing university in the state, is questioning the way the state altered the bidding process that allegedly resulted in the university being stripped of the program.

University officials point to a last-minute extension of the bidding process after ISU submitted the lone proposal for the program. Once a second dead-

line passed, the board awarded the contract to the Iroquois/Kankakee regional office.

ISU's bid was one cent less than the \$500,000 offer from the regional office.

"Illinois teachers and their students are the real losers," wrote ISU President Al Bowman, in an August 14 letter to Jesse Ruiz, chairman of the state board of education.

Ruiz has defended the program's transfer to a regional office of education, however, saying the state board followed correct procedures for choosing a contractor. Further, Ruiz said the state wanted to take the program in a new direction.

Numerous notices but few teacher strikes so far in 2006

A total of 15 school districts had received intent-to-strike notices this year as of Sep. 29, but only two teacher strikes had occurred.

One of the two strikes was in Wolf Branch Dist. 113, Swansea, a district of 850 students located in southwestern Illinois, where 53 teachers struck on Aug. 18. The teachers returned to class on Aug. 27.

The new contract grants teachers a 1¼ percent base pay raise the first year, a 1¾ percent base pay raise the second year and a 2 percent base pay raise the third year.

The other strike occurred in Mendota Township High School Dist. 280, a district of similar size to Wolf Branch, located in north central Illinois, where 49 teachers struck on Sep. 25 and settled on Sep. 27.

The new contract gives teachers a 3½ percent base salary increase for each year of the three-year contract.

Wolf Branch and Mendota THSD 280 are two of eight school districts that received strike notices but have

since settled their contract disputes. Contract agreements were also tentatively reached in the following school districts:

Rantoul THSD 193 – Bargaining unit size: 60 certified staff. Notice of intent to strike filed: Aug. 25: Settled: Sep. 18.

Alton CUSD 11 – Bargaining unit size: 43 certified staff, 211 non-certified staff: Notice filed: Sep. 1: Settled: Sep. 6.

Galatia Dist. 1 – Bargaining unit size: 35 certified staff: Notice filed: Aug. 23: Settled: Sep. 5.

Eureka Dist. 140 – Bargaining unit size: 95 certified staff: Notice filed: Aug. 21: Settled: Aug. 30.

McHenry CHSD 156 – Bargaining unit Size: 151 certified staff: Notice filed: Aug. 15: Settled: Aug. 21.

Whiteside Dist. 115 – Bargaining unit size: 80 teachers: Notice filed: Aug. 7: Settled: Aug. 21.

Source: Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) Web site, Sep. 29



American Ed Week: Everyone has role in great public schools

The theme for "American Education Week," coming up Nov. 12-18, is "Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility."

The theme highlights the importance of bringing together educators, school staff, parents, students, and communities in a unified effort to build great public schools. The theme also reflects the organizing educators' vision of calling upon America to provide students with quality public schools so that they can grow, prosper, and achieve in the 21st century.

The National Education Association is providing an online toolkit filled with activity ideas, media tips, promotional materials, and background information and fact sheets at: <http://www.nea.org/aew/toolkit.htm>

Battle shaping up over electric power rate hikes

Most Chicago-area electric rates will rise a little more than 20 percent next year, and most central and southern Illinois rates will rise by 40 percent or more thanks to Illinois' first-ever power auction, held Sep. 5-8. The auction basically set the price of electricity for Commonwealth Edison Corp. and Ameren Corp. customers, whose rates had been frozen for the past nine years. The freeze on those rates expires at the end of the calendar year.

ComEd said it expected average monthly residential bills in the Chicago region to rise by about 20 percent. Meanwhile Ameren said AmerenCILCO's average monthly residential bills in the Peoria region will increase by 55 percent, and AmerenCIPS and AmerenIP monthly residential bills will increase by 40 percent under the new fixed-price system. The auction results will have no direct impact on people who buy electricity from cooperatives, municipally owned utilities, or the Illinois Energy Consortium (IEC). The IEC is a not-for-profit corporation sponsored by IASB, the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) and

the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (Illinois ASBO), which aims to target competitive power supplies exclusively to meet the planning and budgeting needs of schools.

Both ComEd and Ameren will ask lawmakers for permission to phase in the auction rate increases while charging a financing fee.

State lawmakers imposed the soon-to-expire electric rate freeze in the late 1990s as part of a deregulation of the electric utility industry. Critics say the power auction was a bad idea because a true competitive marketplace has not materialized for power companies to buy electricity from suppliers. The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) had unanimously approved the auction system, but a spokesman said the resulting electricity rates still must meet with the panel's approval.

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan on Sep. 18 asked a state appellate court to reject the results of the power auction. Madigan, who earlier went to court to try to stop the power auction, said the ICC lacks authority to approve market-based rates for electricity "because the market does not

yet offer competitive choices," meaning that most Illinoisans still have to buy electricity from their local provider.

The Attorney General's view is that the power auction violated the state Public Utilities Act because the law forbids utility companies from charging market-based rates to customers who have no choice about which company provides their electricity.

Madigan also indicated the auction will deal an especially harsh financial blow to Ameren customers. Benjamin Weinberg of Madigan's office said Ameren historically has charged less for power than ComEd, but the auction will set the same price for both.

The price that Ameren Corp. and ComEd may charge for *delivery* of electric power has yet to be decided by the Illinois Commerce Commission. Delivery charges presently make up about 20 to 30 percent of a total electricity bill.

State Rep. John Bradley, D-Mari- on, said extending the rate freeze should be an easy vote for lawmakers, because consumers don't have a choice in who provides them with power.

See **POWER** on page 5

Consortium offers low-cost alternative to schools

Although electric power supply choices for Illinois schools are to be based on competitive market prices beginning Jan. 1, 2007, schools should avoid getting "locked in" to long-term energy agreements with expensive providers, according to Robert J. Latham, an energy consultant with Illinois Energy Consortium (IEC).

"For most school facilities, the IEC power supply will almost certainly be more competitive than the supplies offered by the incumbent utilities, ComEd and Ameren," he said.

The IEC is a not-for-profit corporation sponsored by IASB, IASA and Illinois ASBO. Essentially the IEC operates as a pooled energy purchasing group

for schools, aimed at offering member school districts energy cost savings available from energy deregulation. More than 450 districts now are enrolled.

Over the past two years, the IEC has provided nearly \$8 million of net benefits for Illinois schools on the purchase of electric power and \$2 million on the purchase of natural gas.

"For school facilities with larger electric usage, the IEC power supply will offer a range of power supply options that we believe will be more competitive than any other supplier. The IEC will provide independent power supplies through reliable, experienced and financially viable market partners," Latham added.

He noted that the IEC is not a util-

ity or power marketer and is not motivated by profit.

Competitive market prices will almost certainly mean some increases for schools on the systems of ComEd and Ameren, he said. For the Ameren-CIPS and Ameren-CILCO service territories in central and southern Illinois, electric rates for schools may rise significantly because the market prices for power supplies from those utilities will be higher than the previous regulated rates.

"The IEC experience in this market and its competitive, dependable and financially viable market partners provide a big advantage for schools.

See **CONSORTIUM** on page 5

POWER *from page 4*

“There is no competition. I’m a capitalist, but capitalism involves competition,” Bradley said. “For power distribution and delivery, residential customers don’t have choices.”

Some state lawmakers are already talking about extending the rate freeze. “We ought to freeze rates until we can see if these astronomical increases are justified or not,” said state Rep. Mike Boland, D-East Moline.

House Speaker Michael Madigan has called for a special legislative session to address all this, but the governor must call such a session. The governor has not yet decided, although he has stated he might do so if legislative leaders first muster the votes required to extend the rate freeze. A House committee began looking into the entire matter on Oct. 9.

CONSORTIUM *from page 4*

Many schools are already receiving offers from IEC competitors to lock-up their electric supplies for 2007 and beyond. We strongly urge caution in committing to any supply other than that of the IEC ... Be particularly cautious regarding longer-term commitments where the prices are not fixed at competitive prices,” Latham said.

Illinois schools that are IEC participants will continue to receive competitive power supply or tariff rates without further action on their part, Latham said. Because it may take some time to complete approval of IEC participation within a school organization, for the IEC to process accounts with utilities and to arrange for power supply deliveries, he said the time to act is now.

Districts that are not IEC participants can become eligible (but not obligated) to receive the IEC benefits by completing the Electric Membership and Participation Agreement. Contact either: Program Administrator Kris Fitzanko at 309-677-5246 or by email, KFitzanko@ameren.com, or call IEC Statewide Marketing Director Ron Steigerwald at 847-567-3051 or by email, rsteigerwald@hotmail.com.

NEWS HEADLINES

Bradford (Sep. 1, *Kewanee Star Courier*) The school board of District 1 approved wording for a referendum asking voters about electing board members at large rather than by area of residence within the district. That issue will go to voters in November.

Edwardsville (Aug. 29, *Edwardsville Intelligencer*) The District 7 school board approved a three year-collective bargaining agreement with Edwardsville teachers on Aug. 28. The agreement calls for salary increases of 4.72 percent for 2007-08, 4.83 percent for 2008-09; and 4.91 percent for 2009-10.

Eureka (Sep. 1, *The Journal Star*, Peoria) The Congerville-Eureka-Goodfield board approved a new teachers’ contract for District 140 educators on Aug. 31. By a 5-0 vote, the board ratified a pact that features a small step back for less-experienced teachers from the district’s 3 percent across-the-board pay increase plan, and reduces the district’s contribution to teachers’ health insurance.

Hononegah (Sep. 14, *Rockford Register Star*) The Hononegah and Rockton school boards are debating the best way to collect development fees to help their overcrowded schools. Education leaders on the two boards were deadlocked on whether to accept developer fees, or forego them in favor of pursuing traditional impact fees.

Lacon (Aug. 23, *The Journal Star*, Peoria) The Midland District board votes to implement random drug testing for high school students competing in athletics and some other activities. The board voted 7-0 on Aug. 21 to adopt a policy modeled closely on one enacted for the Bushnell-Prairie City High School.

Mattoon (Sep. 12, *Mattoon Journal Gazette*) Mattoon school leaders weigh a proposal to reinstate an agricultural program at the high school. The plan – developed by a committee of local agriculture experts, busi-

ness officials and educators – calls for the creation of eight new courses, the construction of a greenhouse and the employment of an agriculture teacher. The board is slated to vote on the program at its October meeting.

Minooka (Aug. 31, *Morris Daily Herald*) District 111 has instituted a rule whereby all elementary and junior high students who want to attend high school football games must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Superintendent David Middleton said the new approach is not in reaction to any trouble-causing incident but is rather a proactive move to continue to maintain a good atmosphere.

Multiple locales (Sep. 21, *U.S. Department of Education*) Fifteen individual schools in Illinois are named winners of the NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools award for 2006. Winners are located in: Arlington Heights, Barrington, Cambridge, Des Plaines, Lombard, Loves Park, Matteson, Mount Prospect, Oak Brook, Palatine (2), Park Ridge, Tuscola, Wilmette and Winfield.

Naperville (Sep. 1, *Sun Publications*) Indian Prairie Dist. 204 plans to ask the state legislature for “quick-take powers” to seize land for a third high school approved by taxpayers in March. The district is trying to stay on schedule to begin construction next year despite being stymied over land prices. If the district is granted the requested powers a jury would determine a fair price for the land.

Ottawa (Sep. 2, *The Times*, Ottawa) Three local districts hope to soon hear a federal judge’s ruling on their lawsuit against NCLB, which was filed in February 2005. It claims that NCLB, which requires students to test at grade level, contradicts another federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which requires schools to teach students with special needs at their own pace and level.

Gubernatorial campaign proposals fall short

Alliance weighs each against IASB positions

This year for the first time the education proposals offered by the Democratic and Republican candidates for governor were evaluated against the position statements made by the Delegate Assembly of the Illinois Association of School Boards.

A detailed analysis of each proposal and how it measures against IASB's 126 existing position statements was distributed Sept. 22 via an Alliance Legislative Report and posted online at: <http://iasb.com/files/alr-9473.htm>.

Information was compiled by Ben Schwarm, Associate Executive Director, and Deanna Sullivan, Director, Governmental Relations for IASB.

"This year was unique as both gubernatorial candidates had forwarded comprehensive education proposals before the election," Schwarm said. "Though neither plan was totally fleshed out, they both contained enough information to make a fair comparison with our position statements."

The information is not presented in the form of an endorsement; in fact, the Alliance Political Action Committee, a group made up of school board members, superintendents, school business officials, and principals that support pro-education legislation candidates, voted to make no endorsement in the race for Illinois governor.

"The Alliance PAC acknowledges and appreciates both candidates' efforts to forward an education plan. Although many components had merit, there is doubt about the reliability of revenue streams offered by the candidates," according to an Alliance PAC trustee statement.

The Democratic candidate, Gov. Rod Blagojevich, has proposed to sell the Illinois State Lottery. The Republican candidate, Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka, has proposed to establish a land-based casino in Chicago to increase state revenue for public schools.

The Alliance PAC did not comment



IASB associate executive director Ben Schwarm explained the Alliance review of gubernatorial campaign positions at several IASB fall division meetings in September and October, including this one in Alton.



Rod Blagojevich



Judy Baar Topinka

further on either revenue proposal.

Blagojevich put forth 19 education proposals, six of which were consistent with existing IASB positions; one was considered inconsistent; seven did not present enough information; and the others were not applicable because IASB has no position statements on the proposals.

Topinka put forth 22 education proposals, nine of which were consistent with existing IASB positions; one was considered inconsistent; three did not present enough information; and nine others were not applicable because IASB has no position statements on the proposals.

Although none of the Topinka proposals were new mandates on school districts, several of the Blagojevich components contained new requirements.

The lone Blagojevich proposal that conflicts with IASB's official positions

on issues claims to reduce administrative costs by consolidating procurement, health insurance and construction. It would also require districts to publish their spending on administrative costs directly onto the tax bill.

This proposal is inconsistent with IASB position (6.01) on local control: "IASB shall take all appropriate action to encourage members of the U.S. Congress, the Illinois General Assembly, related administrative agencies, and state and federal courts to refrain from introducing, supporting or promulgating rules, regulations and legislation which deprive local school districts of decision-making powers on matters in which there is not a clear and compelling state or national interest."

The Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance has, in fact, already defeated legislative proposals initiated by the governor that would have forced all school district employees into one state-run health insurance pool, required all districts to make commodity and other product purchases from one central state-run purchasing pool, and required that the state would

See **GOVERNOR** on page 7

Blagojevich prefers own school construction list

Carterville campaign stop prompts claim

In early September, Gov. Rod Blagojevich promised \$1.9 million to repair an aging school in the southern Illinois town of Carterville. He visited the school after local media criticized him for not focusing on the school's disrepair during a previous visit to the town.

The state's school construction funding program ran out of money two years ago because lawmakers could not agree on a plan to continue its funding. But districts that have already been approved to receive grants have not lost sight of it, and other schools continued to apply because the law establishing the program remains in effect.

The Illinois State Board of Education and the state Capital Development Board, which jointly administer the program, have approved 24 grant applications for \$149 million in funds.

The idea behind the ISBE/CDB program is that the influence of politics over funding should be kept to a minimum. Grant applications are subjected to a review whereby the agencies rank each application according to criteria such as whether a district has sufficient classroom space to meet

a booming population.

Republican Gov. Jim Edgar launched the latest version of the program in 1997 with \$1.4 billion. Republican Gov. George Ryan later authorized another \$2 billion.

The program ran out of money near the end of Blagojevich's second year in office. The state maxed out its borrowing authority, and the program issued its last grant — \$2.3 million for Oregon Community Unit School District 220 — in November 2004.

Last spring, lawmakers turned down a plan to borrow \$1 billion for the program. Some legislators said it wasn't clear how the state would pay back the borrowed funds.

Blagojevich, a Democrat, has blamed the Republicans for holding up the program. During a visit to Carterville in late August, he said people looking to the state to help the town's high school should lean on Republicans to go along with the Democratic plan.

He turned down an invitation to see the school for himself. But two days later, after being criticized for passing on that invitation, Blagojevich returned in dramatic fashion.

"I am throwing the George Ryan priority list out the window," he declared, according to the *Marion Daily Repub-*

lican. "We are going to make our own list and the Carterville High School is going to be at the top of that list."

It's not clear whether the governor has the power to unilaterally assign Carterville first place on the list — if indeed his comment even meant what it appeared to mean. State Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka, a Republican, will face Blagojevich in the Nov. 7 general election.

The \$1.9 million for Carterville is expected to come from a pool of money the legislature set aside for unspecified grants. The governor has tremendous discretion over this spending.

After approving local dollars for their school construction project, Rochester voters approved — in a second referendum — local dollars to cover the state's share.

"I'm more than a little concerned myself that this doesn't seem to be the way the procedure ought to happen," said ISBE board member Dean Clark.

During another visit to southern Illinois on Sept. 14, Blagojevich responded to critics.

"If they have a problem with me putting Carterville at the top of the list," he told local news outlets, "sue me."

GOVERNOR *from page 6*

have selected the architects, engineers, contractors and laborers for all school construction projects.

The lone Topinka proposal that conflicts with IASB's official positions would create a teacher income tax credit of up to \$150 for 50 percent of their personal classroom expenditures for school supplies.

This proposal is inconsistent with IASB position (2.34) on school finance reform: "Adequate funding should be sought through the addition of new state revenues for public education." Schwarm said this position statement has compelled IASB staff to oppose all legislative moves that would result in a loss of revenue to the state through

sales or income tax credits and exemptions.

Blagojevich proposals that agreed with IASB positions included: school construction, flexible district consolidation, funding for special education, resources for technology and libraries, and preschool funding.

Topinka proposals that agreed with IASB positions included: school construction, foundation level funding, funding for special education, multi-year funding and continuing appropriations, pre-K expansion, state aid payment schedule, unfunded mandates, teacher qualifications, and access to state budget information.

IASB position statements are devel-

oped by the IASB Delegate Assembly. Proposals may be submitted for new resolutions, amendments to existing position statements, or reaffirmations of existing position statements. Resolutions adopted by the Delegate Assembly provide major policies for the Association and establish its stance on legislation and related matters of public policy. The Delegate Assembly, consisting of one voting representative from each member school board, will meet this year on Saturday, Nov. 18, at the Joint Annual Conference in Chicago.

IASB position statements can be found online at: <http://iasb.com/files/positions.htm>.



Construction is nearing completion on the addition to IASB's Springfield headquarters, which is designed to boost delivery of services by adding space to the warehouse at the back of the building.

Largest-ever Carousel of Panels features 33 rotating subjects

Imagine one extremely large room where 33 different presentations on school leadership topics are being offered all at one time. That describes the “carousel of panels” event at the 2006 Joint Annual Conference.

Over a one-hour-and-45-minute time block, attendees can participate in three different panels of 30 minutes each. You can hop aboard this Carousel at the Sheraton on Saturday, Nov. 18, from 1:30 to 3:15 p.m., in Sheraton 5, on Ballroom Level IV.

The presentations will include:

- Multiculturalism: Real Balance or Political Correctness
- Against the Odds: Making NCLB Progress
- How Are Your Finances?
- Getting a Handle on Energy Costs
- Coming Off the Academic Warning List
- Inspired Teaching and Learning Environments
- Portfolios That Promote Success for All Students: Bridging the Transition From High School to the Future
- Enhancing Student Learning Opportunities through Public/Private Partnerships
- Dropping Your Dropout Rate
- Dabbling With DIBELS: Catch Them Before They Fail Using DIBELS Data to Design Interventions in Reading
- Supporting New Principals via Mentoring
- District-Wide Facilities Master Planning: From Vision to Occupancy
- Performance Contracting
- Financing Options for Illinois School Districts

- Introducing the Illinois NCEA Best Practices Website
- ISAT Olympians Go For the Gold
- Throw Out the Cookie Cutter: Making Education Meaningful and Relevant Through Differentiated Instruction
- Who Says You Can't Run Schools Like a Business?
- Realities of Green Construction: A Contractor's Perspective
- Meet the Principal: Making Connections With School Leadership
- Old School + Performance Contracting = New Efficiencies and Improved Facilities
- From Community Attendance Centers to Grade-Span Building and One Common District Prep Period
- Co-Created Leadership: Unlocking the Potential in Your School
- A Two-Year, State-Approved Mentoring Program That Works: Attract & Retain Highly Qualified Teachers
- From Good to Better: Transitioning From a Traditional Math Program to a Standards-Based Program
- Conducting a Feasibility Study
- Controlling Energy Costs in K-12 Schools
- Response of Selected Illinois School Districts to the Failure to Make AYP
- Breaking Ranks to Ensure the Success of All Students
- Policies, Procedures and Protocols for Effective Student Handbooks
- Planning & Implementing a Newcomer Center
- Alternative Certification Initiative for Superintendent Certification
- Educational Facility Planning

NOMINATIONS *from page 1*

Naperville, as Vice President.

Slater is finishing her first term as IASB president and has been a member of the Wheaton-Warrenville board since 1986. She has served as president, vice president and secretary of the District 200 board.

Slater joined the IASB Board of Directors in 1994 and has been a member of the executive committee since 2000. She has also served on the nominating, audit, ends, ad hoc, and executive director search committees, along with being a co-chair of the Joint Annual Conference.

She was the resolutions committee chair for the 2004 and 2005 IASB Delegate Assembly. Slater has also been a presenter at the NSBA annual conference, which she has attended regularly during her school board tenure.

Slater is employed by a social service agency. She is also a community volunteer in various organizations, and a member of the local Chamber of Commerce.

Metzger is completing his first term as vice president and has been a member of the Indian Prairie CUSD 204 Board of Education since 1991.

Metzger joined the IASB Board in 2001 when he was elected statewide director-at-large. In 2003, he was elected director of the DuPage Division, and he has been a member of the IASB executive committee since 2004. Metzger previously served on the nominating committee and as an alternate to NSBA's Delegate Assembly.

He has long been an IASB delegate, a presenter at the Joint Annual Conference, and a frequent NSBA and AASA conference presenter. He chaired the resolutions committee for IASB's 2006 delegate assembly. He has also presented at IASB LeaderShop offerings, and he has held both LeaderShop Academy membership and Master Board Member status since 1997.

Metzger is an attorney whose practice includes school law, information technology and mediation. He is a member of the board of directors of Rush-Copley Medical Center, a church volunteer, and a member of the local Chamber of Commerce.

Robert M. Cole awards given for school board news coverage

Fifteen newspapers received awards in the 26th annual Robert M. Cole Awards competition, including the *Herald News*, Joliet, which earned first place in the large daily newspaper category for 2006.

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

The Joliet paper was one of four first-place Cole Award winners. In addition, *The Naperville Sun* won first prize in the medium-size daily category, the *Marion Daily Republican* won first prize in the small daily newspaper category, and the *Zephyr*, Galesburg, won first prize in the non-daily newspaper category.

The *Rockford Register Star* earned second place in the large daily newspaper category, followed by the *Panagraph*, Bloomington, which finished in third place; and the *Herald News*, Joliet, which won honorable mention in addition to the first-place prize.

With a second-place finish in 2006, the *Rockford Register Star* has now



Joliet reporter Catherine Velasco, right, accepts her first-place award from Linda Dawson, IASB director of editorial services.

earned more Cole Awards than any other newspaper in the competition's 26-year history, a total of 15 awards.

Other prizes in the mid-size daily newspaper category went to: *The Naperville Sun*, second place, and *The Daily Times*, Ottawa, third place.

Second prize in the non-daily category went to the *Galena Gazette*, and third prize went to the *Ledger-Sentinel*, Oswego. Honorable mention was awarded to the *Orion Gazette*.

The Robert M. Cole Award is named in memory of the first executive director of IASB.

Tech purchase program offering discounted computer software

All Illinois school districts have been invited to take part in a program that makes Microsoft computer programs available at discounted prices to faculty, staff, students and parents.

Schools or districts that participate in the program have access to costly software at large discounts. For example, Microsoft Office Professional or Office Macintosh are available through the program for \$79, a large reduction from the standard retail price

of \$499.

The program is being conducted by Technology Resource Corporation (TRC), one of the vendors selected for participation in the Illinois Learning Technology Purchase Program (ILTTP). TRC is a large account reseller for Microsoft Corporation that serves the academic marketplace. ILTTP was developed in 1994.

Information about ILTTP is also available on the Web at <http://www.iltpp.k12.il.us/>.

NEWS FROM IASB

Three districts join Association membership

IASB has recently acquired three more member districts, which means more than 97 percent of the state's 872 school boards are members. There are only 18 non-member districts. The new member districts are:

- **Joppa Maple Grove USD 38**, located in the Shawnee Division
- **Bannockburn SD 106**, located in the Lake Division
- **Oglesby ESD 125** in LaSalle County, Starved Rock Division

Gift ban law dangers seen

School leaders and their families attending the 2006 Joint Annual Conference, need to be aware of stringent new state restrictions if they plan to participate in any raffles or drawings or other giveaways.

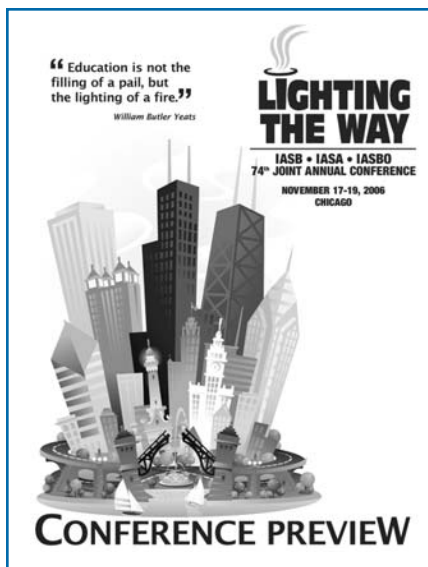
The Illinois Gift Ban Law makes it unlawful for a school board member or administrator to accept prize(s) valued at more than \$100 from any single vendor. Further, the \$100 limit applies to the total of prizes from any one vendor won by a school official *and his or her family members*. Therefore IASB is advising that:

- No exhibitor should give away a prize valued at \$100 or more;
- Exhibitors giving away such prizes should be cautious not to give more than one \$100 prize to more than one member of a family.

But some vendors may not remember to take these steps. So school leaders should be vigilant.

IASB's school board journal examines vital role of data

The importance of collecting good information in governing schools is the key theme of the September-October edition of *The Illinois School Board Journal*. Get excerpts from this issue online at http://www.iasb.com/files/j091006_01.htm



Start planning for Annual Conference with Preview guide

A Conference Preview for the 2006 Joint Annual Conference in Chicago was scheduled to be mailed in mid-October but is already available online at: http://iasb.com/jac06/conferenceoverview_06.pdf

Information contained in the preview includes a Master Schedule of all events; descriptions and time slots for more than 100 panel sessions to be offered over the three-day conference; descriptions of eight pre-conference workshops to be offered on Friday, Nov. 17; a schedule for book signings; the lineup of 33 participants in the Carousel of Panels on Saturday, Nov. 18; a list of panels to be offered on Friday, Nov. 17 and Saturday, Nov. 18 for board/district secretaries; and biographies for this year's three general session speakers: Troy Evans, Erin Gruwell and Bob Ash.

A complete Conference Program with room assignments for all events, an index of participants, hotel maps, a panel planner by topic and time, and an index of all exhibitors will be available as soon as conference registration opens at 7:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 17.

Conference registration packets and badges will be mailed Nov. 3 for registrations received prior to the Oct. 13 deadline.

IHSA proposing steroid testing for state tournament qualifiers

Are high-school athletes copying their sports heroes by taking non-prescription drugs? Apparently the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) thinks they may be. The IHSA is discussing a plan of random drug testing to check for use of steroids and growth hormones. If adopted, the testing would take place for athletes who participate in state finals competitions in football, basketball, track and other sports, possibly within the next two years.

Athletes who test positive would receive a one-year ban and would be required to pass a second test before returning to competition. Schools would not be required to hand back trophies in team sports such as football and basketball if players test positive. Those who refuse testing would not be allowed to compete.

According to the Associated Press, the American Medical Association reported in 2003 that use of steroids among young people was on the rise, increasing from 2.1 percent of high school seniors in 1991 to 4 percent in 2002. Reasons for usage — highest

among athletes — included the quest to enhance performance and the dream of competing at the next level.

New Jersey is the only state that now employs steroid testing for prep athletes. No Illinois schools currently test for steroids, though at least 75 have testing programs for alcohol. In 2005, the Illinois legislature approved a bill requiring schools to provide education to kids about drugs. That state's materials for classrooms have been enhanced this year with the addition of a new DVD and educational unit about steroids.

Meanwhile, the IHSA appears on its way to bringing the issue of steroid testing to its membership. IHSA member schools could provide feedback by November and a vote could go before the IHSA board by springtime. If approved, the program might take effect by the 2008-09 school year.

Tests likely would only be imposed in sports where doping scandals have surfaced at the Olympic and professional levels, such as in football, basketball, wrestling, track and swimming. The \$175 cost per test would not be passed on to member schools.

Variety of topics prepared on school, community relations

The counseling room for the Illinois School Public Relations Association (INSPRA) is changing its format this year as well as changing its location. In moving from the Gold Coast Room in the concourse area to Grand Suite I behind the registration area, the group also is going to a "call for advice" format.

Anyone with a public relations challenge, whether at conference or later in the year, is urged to call one of the INSPRA board members, who are experts in school public relations. Officers for the current year are President, Melea Smith (630/854-0676); Incom-

ing President, Terry Ryan (847/826-6095); and Past President, Brett Clark (847/638-8578).

In addition, INSPRA will present four opportunities to learn how districts are meeting specific PR challenges with the following sessions.

- 10–11 a.m. Friday, "Strategic Communications Planning"
- 2–3 p.m. Friday, "Partnering with Business to Teach Financial Literacy"
- 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Saturday, "Communicating Natural Disasters"
- 3–4 p.m. Saturday, "E-Newsletters"

School board election rules, deadlines reviewed

Workshops held at three state locations

Starting Tuesday, Nov. 7, the first day that prospective school board candidates may circulate nominating petitions for signatures, a series of deadlines will begin marking the progress toward the April 17, 2007 election and beyond. Those deadlines and their related duties were the topic of three recent workshops for board secretaries.

More than 250 people registered for the workshops, held in Normal, Downers Grove and Mt. Vernon on Sep. 22, Sep. 29 and Oct. 6.

As the designated “local election official,” the board secretary (either employed or elected) has the responsibility of assisting the district and candidates for office to comply with the Illinois Election Code and Illinois School Code.

Anna Lovern, IASB Director of Policy Services, walked the groups through the process and deadlines, discussing nominating forms, filing procedures, accepting petitions, ballot resolutions, certification of ballot, petition challenges, districts in multiple jurisdictions, ballot positions, procedures for candidate withdrawal, certification of election results, oath of office, and board reorganization.

A variety of questions were also



IASB Policy Services director Anna Lovern directed three workshops on school board elections for board secretaries on Sep. 22, Sep. 29 and Oct. 6.

answered at the workshops. These involved releasing candidate information, the elimination of election canvassing, who may give the oath of office, who runs the reorganization meeting, and when board meeting dates and times should be established.

The law is straightforward regarding procedures, i.e., the ‘what’ and ‘when,’ Lovern explained. “It’s when you get to the ‘how’ that some discretion may be required. It’s usually best to use common sense, but of course we also advise secretaries to consult with the county clerk or election commission first, and the IASB or their school district attorney if they can’t get the answers they need,” she said.

Two significant changes affecting school board elections in 2007 are the addition of a mandatory oath of office

and the elimination of vote canvassing duties.

Wording for the oath of office is now part the School Code. Lovern said that anyone can administer the oath, although some boards opt for a more formal ceremony by using an attorney or minister. Canvassing duties now fall on the county clerk or election commission.

The three workshops also provided an opportunity for board secretaries, board members and superintendents to socialize and network. A similar opportunity will take place at the 2006 Joint Annual Conference, with a two-day slate of training and networking programs scheduled specifically for board secretaries. Information about that event can be found at: http://iasb.com/jac06/sec_wkshop.htm

VOTERS from page 1

- Two-thirds of voters favor increasing the state share of funding for public education.
- A 44% plurality of Illinoisans volunteer public education as the top priority for the governor and legislature to address.
- Illinois voters support equalizing funding across the state’s school districts. Of nine possible uses for extra education funding, equalizing funding was the top priority. In fact, 51% of voters support increasing funding for low-income school districts, even if it means raising taxes.

- Six out of ten voters say funding inequality is either an extremely or very serious problem.
- More than half of all voters (55%) favor increasing the state income tax, with half of the revenue used to fund public schools and half used to reduce property taxes.

Additional information on the poll, conducted from July 27 to August 2, can be found under “Press Releases” on the Web site at: <http://www.illinoischoolsnow.org>.

Speak Out for Illinois Schools also

held a series of public events to give voters additional opportunities to express their priorities for local public schools. Starting in mid-September, the coalition held a series of roundtables throughout the state to engage parents, students, educators, and local leaders in highlighting their communities’ education priorities and potential solutions to the challenges their schools face. The priorities collected from these roundtables were to be forwarded to Governor Rod Blagojevich and Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka.

Legal deadlines, school calendar available online at [iasb.com](http://www.iasb.com)

The annual school calendar published by IASB to cover the 2006-2007 fiscal year is now available on the IASB Web site at: http://www.iasb.com/cal_07.pdf.

This annual calendar is not distributed in a printed version. Putting it on the Web instead makes it available more quickly and allows for revisions to reflect any new legislation enacted or the correction of any errors. Subscribers to Online Update [to subscribe mail to: onlineupdate@iasb.com] will be notified of any revisions to the calendar.

A law adopted in 2004 states that the annual calendar adopted by the school board must now be approved

by the regional superintendent of schools, as must any changes to the calendar, as provided in Public Act 93-1036, amending Section 10-19 of The School Code.

Public Act 94-875 makes a number of changes that are referenced at several dates in the Annual Calendar. This Act is extremely large, so some relevant portions have been excerpted on the IASB Web site for easy access by local school officials. Specifically:

PA 94-875 is cited at Nov. 30 regarding new requirements bearing on the Annual Financial Report.

The same Act is cited at July 10 and 25 and Aug. 15 regarding the filing of transportation claims with the state.

Secretary training expands to two days

IASB this year is expanding the educational strand for school board or district secretaries at the 2006 Joint Annual Conference to two days and nine topics. IASB will conduct the sessions concurrently on both Friday, Nov. 17, and Saturday, Nov. 18 at the Swissotel, Chicago. There is no separate registration fee for these programs, but participants must be registered for the conference.

The strand for board secretaries is open to school board members and

district staff who serve as board secretaries or who perform the duties of the board secretary.

Registration is available online at <https://www.iasb.com/calendar/register.cfm?ID=1209>.

For more information about this, phone IASB's Holly Jack, at ext. 1229 at either 217/528-9688 or 630/629-3776. Check the IASB Web site, www.iasb.com for information about the 2006 Joint Annual Conference.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- November 7 – General Election Day**
- November 11 – Veteran's Day**
- November 15-16 – ISBE Board Meeting**, Springfield
- November 16 – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting**, Hyatt Regency, Chicago
- November 17 – Pre-conference Workshops**, Sheraton Chicago, Breakfast, 8 a.m.; Workshops, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- November 17 – Chicago Schools Tour**, Hyatt Regency Chicago, Advance registration and fee required.
- November 17-19 – IASB, IASA, IASBO Joint Annual Conference**, Chicago
- November 17 – ICSA Seminar on School Law**, Hyatt Regency Chicago
- November 17 & 18 – A Workshop for Board Secretaries at the IASB/IASA/IASBO Annual Conference**, Swissotel, Chicago, 1:30 p.m. – Nov. 17, 2006; 10:30 a.m. – Nov. 18, 2006
- November 18 – DuPage Division Lunch at Joint Annual Conference**, Hyatt Regency, Chicago, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- November 19 – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting**, Hyatt Regency, Chicago
- November 23 – Thanksgiving Day**
- December 5 – Two Rivers Division Winter Governing Committee Meeting**, Lonzerotti's, Jacksonville, 6 p.m.
- December 6 – Abe Lincoln Division Winter Governing Committee Meeting**, La Sorella, Springfield, 6 p.m.
- December 6 – Central IL Valley Division Winter Governing Meeting**, The Chateau on the Lake, N. Pekin, 6 - Registration; 6:30 p.m. - Dinner



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