

Illinois SCHOOL BOARD *Newsbulletin*

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School board members to get thanks on their special day on November 15

To offer a heartfelt thanks to the nearly 6,000 elected school board members in Illinois, November 15, 2012, is designated as “School Board Members Day” in the state. Many local school districts see this as an opportunity to build community awareness and understanding about the crucial role an elected board of education assumes in a representative democracy.

This observance offers an opportunity to build a stronger relationship

between school board members and the community. That’s why IASB is encouraging appropriate district personnel to contact their community leaders, business partners and local civic groups to join in the recognition efforts.

By working with the community, districts can assure that these dedicated public servants are recognized for their board policy and governance work on behalf of children, parents and families. If districts prefer, these

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Illinois ACT scores remain highest among states that test all students

Composite score unchanged at 20.9

The graduating Class of 2012’s composite ACT score in Illinois was the highest of the nine states that test 100 percent of their students, according to The Illinois State Board of Education.

The state composite score of 20.9 remained the same from 2011, although nearly 2,400 more students were tested than the previous year. The percentage of students meeting all four

of the test’s College Readiness Benchmarks increased from 23 percent in 2011 to 25 percent this year.

Illinois requires all 11th graders, unless they’re exempt, to take the ACT as part of the required state testing under the federal No Child Left Behind law. Eight other states with 100 percent of 2012 graduates taking the ACT were: Colorado, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, North Dakota, Tennessee, and Wyoming.

In 2012, 146,822 Illinois students took the ACT.

The state’s composite score remained below the national average of 21.1, which was also unchanged from 2011. The ACT is scored on a scale of 1 to 36, with 36 being the highest possible score.

The assessment also measures academic performance within the framework of college and career readiness. To be considered college and career ready, students must possess the skills and knowledge required to

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Referenda deadline nears

The deadline for school boards to adopt a resolution placing a public policy question, including a school finance referendum, on the Feb. 26, 2013, primary election ballot is Dec. 7, 2012 (10 ILCS 5/28-2). For details: <http://www.elections.il.gov/DocDisplay.aspx?Doc=Downloads/ElectionInformation/PDF/2013ElectionCalendar.pdf>.

Breakfast grants offered

Grants via Share Our Strength and the Illinois No Kid Hungry Campaign will support schools expanding breakfast participation. Grants will be up to \$5,000 on a rolling basis. Visit the Illinois No Kid Hungry website at <http://il.nokidhungry.org/grants-school-breakfast>.

General State Aid corrected

Due to a correction, the Fiscal Year 2013 General State Aid (GSA) entitlements and payments have been recalculated; districts will see a slight increase to their bi-monthly payments scheduled through June 2013. An 89.17 percent proration is being proportionally applied over all remaining payments through June 2013. Final computations and district claim information can be accessed in General State Aid Inquiry at: <http://webprod1.isbe.net/gsa inquiry/default.aspx>.

Blue Ribbon schools honored

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recognized 269 schools as 2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools based on their academic excellence or progress. Fifteen schools from Illinois will be among those honored Nov. 12-13 in Washington, D.C. The list of all Blue Ribbon Schools can be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-secretary-education-arne-duncan-recognizes-269-schools-2012-national-blue-rib>.

Survey about state education services sent to board presidents in all districts

An important survey request was recently distributed to board presidents of all Illinois school districts. The State Service Evaluation Survey is being conducted by the Lieutenant Governor's office in order to gather feedback on the need for and quality of the services provided by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Regional Offices of Education.

State law (105 ILCS 5/2-3.112) requires this annual survey about the nature and quality of state services being delivered to school districts. By statute a service evaluation committee under the Lieutenant Governor's direction is impaneled each year, composed of seven members, including representatives of IASB and the Illinois Association of School Administrators.

There are two parts to the survey. Part I evaluates the services and functions of the Illinois State Board of Education. Part II evaluates the services and functions of the Regional Offices of Education.

This year the survey is being con-

ducted in partnership with Illinois State University's Center for the Study of Education Policy, which annually surveys district superintendents regarding current education issues.

Board presidents are being asked, with the assistance of superintendents, to complete the survey, which can be accessed online at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ltgov-survey>. Specifically, the president of the board of education is authorized to "cause the evaluation form to be completed."

"We do encourage school board presidents to work with their superintendent to complete the survey in an effort to find ways to better deliver education services to students," explained Ben Schwarm, IASB deputy director.

The survey needs to be completed by Nov. 1. School officials are asked to complete both parts.

The results will be tallied and Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon will submit a written report of the results to the governor, the legislature, ISBE, and ROEs by Dec. 15.

IASA Conference set for Oct. 17-19

The Illinois Association of School Administrators' 48th Annual Conference will be held Oct. 17-19 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield. The event annually draws more than 650 school administrators to Springfield. Attendees include school superintendents, assistant superintendents, state agency staff and college professors of educational administration.

The theme for the 2012 IASA conference is "Quality Counts." Speakers will include Steve Dembo, director of social media strategy and online community for Discovery Education, who will speak about how education


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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**

Brooks, Fisher nominated as officers for association leadership

The IASB Delegate Assembly will elect Association officers on Nov. 17 at the Joint Annual Conference in Chicago. IASB's nominating committee has endorsed the following slate of officers: Carolyne D. Brooks, **West Richland CUSD 2**, as president; and Karen Fisher, **Ottawa THSD 140**, as vice president.

Brooks, who has been on her local board in Noble, Ill., since 1995, is completing her first year as Association president. She represented the Wabash Valley division on the Association board of directors from 2005 through 2009, and served as IASB treasurer for three years. She chaired the resolutions committee in 2010 and 2011 and the audit committee in 2008 and 2009. She has served as a delegate at the NSBA Delegate Assembly for the past five years.

Fisher, who has served on her local school board since 1979, is seeking her



Carolyne Brooks



Karen Fisher

second term as Association vice president. She represented the Starved Rock division on the Association board of directors from 2007 through 2011. She served on the executive committee in 2009 and 2010, the nominating committee in 2008, and the audit committee in 2009 and 2010. She also served as an alternate delegate to the NSBA Delegate Assembly in 2009 and 2010. Fisher is completing her first year as chair of the Resolutions Committee.

The nominating committee, which met in August to interview candidates,

is chaired by past president Joseph Alessandrini and includes directors Ben Andersen, Simon Kampwerth and Jackie Mickley. Michelle Skinlo and Mary Stith serve as alternates.

The Association leaders elected by school board delegates will assume office at the close of the annual meeting of IASB's Delegate Assembly.

The next meeting of the board of directors will be on Thursday, Nov. 15, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

August board meeting

At the annual retreat in August, the IASB board of directors received the Association's official audit for FY 2012. There were no audit "findings" and final numbers for the FY12 budget show deficit spending of \$100,000 for FY12, which was \$400,000 less than projected, according to IASB Executive Director Roger Eddy.

'Conference Planner' calendar tool being posted Oct. 15 on members-only site

The Joint Annual Conference is still over six weeks away; however, participants have two tools to begin planning how they will spend their time at the three-day event.

An online Conference Preview has been posted that outlines the entire schedule of activities, starting with pre-conference workshops on Friday morning and ending with the final general session on Sunday. The Preview includes dates, times, titles, and descriptions of all courses and panel sessions, workshops, and special events such as the Carousel of Panels and board secretaries' training.

The Preview is available on the IASB public website at: <http://www.iasb.com/jac12/conferenceoverview2012.pdf>.

In addition, IASB members can build a personal calendar to fill in,

download, print out and take to Chicago. This online tool will be posted Oct. 15 on IASB's Members-Only website at <http://members.iasb.com>. Once logged in, users should click on the annual conference tab across the top.

The calendar will show all conference events by day and type, listing them in chronological order. Selection is done by checking a box for each desired event. The calendar does allow users to select multiple events at conflicting times.

The Members-Only website is available free to any IASB member district superintendent, board member or secretary. Access to the site requires registration, using a seven-digit Member ID number and last name. Member ID numbers appear on mailing labels of all materials sent to IASB members, and begins with the number "2."

After signing in by member ID number, users are asked to set up an account, using their choice of e-mail address and password. Registration is only required once.

Questions about the online conference planner or the Members-Only website can be directed to ext. 1105 or 1131.

This year's event will be the 80th Joint Annual Conference of the Illinois Association of School Boards, Illinois Association of School Administrators and Illinois Association of School Business Officials. More than 11,000 members and guests are expected to attend.

More information about the conference, including registration, housing, and other features of the 2012 conference can be found online at: <http://iasb.com/jac12/>.

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is being transformed by online and social media; and Phillip Schlechty, chief executive officer with the Schlechty Center, who will speak about the need for transformational leadership.

General sessions and breakout panels provide information on topics relevant to superintendents and other administrators. The exhibit hall, which is open on Thursday, Oct. 18,

will give attendees access to more than 60 vendors.

Information is available on the IASA website at: <http://www.iasaedu.org/>.

ACT *from page 1*

enroll and succeed in a post-secondary institution, according to the ACT.

The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are minimum scores needed on the ACT subject area tests to indicate a chance of obtaining a ‘C’ or higher in corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses, which include English composition, college algebra, biology, and an introductory social science course.

The number of Illinois graduates meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks has increased over the last five years, with 25 percent of students meeting all four subject areas in 2012 compared to 23 percent in 2011.

Why is only one in four students considered college ready by ACT?

Former State Superintendent Glenn “Max” McGee, now president of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Aurora said the keen focus on meeting minimum standards is a problem. He is critical of what he considers “low-level” questions on state exams, such as asking students about how to read a table but not about the real science contained in the table.

The danger is that students will lose out on science and technology jobs of the future if they don’t acquire a deeper knowledge and understanding of science and math, McGee said.

But not everyone agrees with McGee and some question the ACT’s accuracy in defining college readiness of Illinois students. The director of research and evaluation for **Township High School District 214**, Steve Cordogan is critical of ACT’s testing and research on college readiness. He claims research shows the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks do not predict how well students will perform in college, and do not even show whether students will need remedial classes.

Cordogan says that the methodology behind the benchmarks is flawed and the ACT is best combined with other measures like high school grades

to predict college performance.

“ACT maintains that a student is not college-ready if they do not meet all four of the benchmarks. Yet they came out with a subsequent study that showed that 65% of the students who met NONE of the benchmarks persisted to their second year of college. If meeting the benchmarks was critical, how could so many do so badly and still succeed?,” Cordogan asked.

Meanwhile, the state is pushing to improve student readiness.

In 2010, Illinois adopted the internationally benchmarked Common Core Learning Standards in English and Math for grades K-12. The standards, written under the leadership of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), aim to better prepare students for college and career.

Five-Year Trend Composite Scores

	2008	2012
Illinois	20.7	20.9
National	21.1	21.1

The year-to-year composite score for Illinois students mirrored the national average by holding steady from 2010 to 2011.

DAY *from page 1*

Illinois-specific materials may be adapted for use in January, when many states celebrate board member service for an entire month.

Materials available on the IASB website can help districts organize their activities, including the following materials:

- Memo from IASB’s executive director
- News release for local media
- Tip sheet of suggested activities
- Letter to community groups
- Sample article for district newsletters and other publications
- Sample marquees

Year-to-Year Composite Scores

	2011	2012
Illinois	20.9	20.9
National	21.1	21.1

Illinois students have made gains in all four subject areas from 2008 to 2012.

Five-Year Illinois Subject Area Scores

Subject	2008	2012
English	20.4	20.5
Mathematics	20.7	21.0
Reading	20.6	20.7
Science	20.5	20.8

“Since Illinois began administering the ACT to all 11th grade students more than a decade ago, the state has been ahead of the curve in emphasizing college and career readiness,” said State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch.

“Illinois, once more, had the highest composite ACT score among states that require the ACT for all students, showing that our efforts are paying off. We are confident that our more rigorous learning standards will not only improve test scores but ensure that more students excel in their academic pursuits after high school.”

- Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
- 2012 Illinois School Facts
- Education quotes
- Proclamation for use by local government
- Printable logos
- Certificates for district presentation to board members (provided in a fillable form to personalize and print directly from the website)

For more information, contact Linda Dawson at 217-528-9688, ext. 1104, or ldawson@iasb.com. Information about the observance is available online at: <http://www.iasb.com/sbmd.cfm>.

In-district board development workshop participation grows

The IASB Field Services department has increased the number of in-district board development workshops in which member districts participate. The latest fiscal year total is 211 member districts (25%) participating in 281 in-district workshops, including 162 board self-evaluations.

As with many IASB activities, the numbers rise and fall over a two-year election cycle. So, in FY 10 the Association drew active participants from 198 member districts (23%) with in-district workshops for the board and superintendent governance team. In FY 11 IASB served 161 (19%) of member districts.

Overall, IASB is experiencing a trend-line increase for in-district board development workshops. Generally over half of the workshops school leaders take part in are board self-evaluations. That makes sense because the board self-evaluation is a way for boards to hold themselves accountable for

In-district board development workshops			
	2010	2011	2012
Member districts	198	161	211
Percentage workshops	23%	19%	25%

effective governance and to help them identify areas for board improvement and professional development.

Other workshops frequently requested include Setting District Goals and Direction, Board-Superintendent Relations, and Teambuilding.

“Our member boards are increasingly aware that in the current culture of accountability and evaluation for all areas of the educational system, modeling continuous improvement efforts and professional development starts at the top – with the school board,” said Cathy Talbert, IASB’s associate executive director of Field Services and Policy Services.

School board representatives plan to share school concerns with Congress

The National School Boards Association’s Federal Relations Network (FRN) lobbying effort by school board leaders will be held in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 27-29, 2013. More than 900 local school board members from across the nation are expected to attend.

Conference participants will join with colleagues to obtain congressional support for achieving excellence and equity in public education.

Organizers say the FRN involves local school board members from every congressional district in the country who are committed to grass-roots advocacy for public education. The ultimate goal of this FRN advo-

cacy is to make public education a top priority of the federal government.

IASB officers and staff are usually among those in attendance, along with interested school board representatives. FRN members are appointed by their state associations to attend the FRN Conference and remain in contact with their members of Congress throughout the year to discuss their state association’s positions on key education issues, and NSBA’s positions.

Information about the FRN conference is available from Kathleen Branch, kbranch@nsba.org, or Susan Hilton, shilton@iasb.com.

NEWS FROM IASB

Annual school calendar

IASB’s Annual School Calendar of legal dates and deadlines for 2012-2013 is now available on the IASB website as a PDF at: <http://iasb.com/law/cal12.cfm>. Subscribers to IASB’s Online Update service will get word if or when any revisions are made to this school calendar.

Section 504 tips shared

Franczek Radelet P.C. has granted permission to IASB to publish their updated Section 504 Procedures as a sample and resource for schools. Most, if not all, districts already have procedures implementing this federal act (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits districts receiving federal financial assistance from discriminating against an otherwise qualified student with a disability. IASB expresses its gratitude to the law firm for allowing publication of these procedures, which are online at: <http://www.iasb.com/law/SampleSection504Procedures.pdf>.

Board election tools

A form is now available online for school leaders to use to order communications tools for the 2013 school board election. It lists three separate items available from IASB: a series of brochures called Recruiting School Board Candidates (no charge, limit 8 copies), sets of the board candidates kit (\$5 each), and extra copies of one item included in that kit, the booklet “The Effective School Board Member” (\$2 each). The kit also includes election requirements, and articles titled “Before You Turn in Those Petitions,” and “Some Rules For Staying on The Ballot,” plus a school board candidate calendar, and other publications. The order form now is online at: <http://www.iasb.com/pdf/order-form.pdf>.

Both sides claim success after first Chicago teachers strike in 25 years

Lake Forest union also strikes, settles amicably

The first Chicago teachers strike in 25 years lasted eight days, ending on Sep. 18. A 1987 walkout lasted 19 days. This time more than 350,000 students and 26,000 teachers and support staff were kept from their classrooms for more than four percent of the school year as bargainers worked to end the strike.

According to headlines in *Chicago Tribune* front-page coverage on Sep. 19, the union claimed success in changing evaluation and rehiring proposals, while the district touted its success in securing longer school days.

District 299 officials noted the main sticking points in the strike involved the details of the new, state-required evaluation system and a union demand that laid-off teachers receive first consideration for rehiring. District leaders reportedly were concerned the latter could result in principals being forced to hire unsuitable teachers.

The front-page *Tribune* story indicated a compromise had been reached on these differences. The reported settlement would allow principals to determine teacher hires while adding a recall provision for top-performing teachers who are laid off because of school closings, according to the story.

Meanwhile, the district will institute a teacher evaluation system set down by state law that uses student performance as a factor. But only 25 percent of teacher grades will be based on pupils' performance in the first two years of the new contract, and 30 percent in the third year. Thus, the contract will peg the impact of the student performance factor at the lowest level allowed under Illinois law, the *Tribune* said.

Although the union reportedly sought assurances that laid-off but qualified teachers would get dibs on jobs anywhere in the district, Illinois



The eight-day strike in **Chicago District 299** idled more than 26,000 teachers and kept more than 350,000 students out of class. It was the first strike in the city in 25 years.

law gives individual principals in Chicago the right to hire the teachers they want. Mayor Rahm Emanuel argued it would be unfair to hold principals accountable for their schools' performance if they can't choose their own teams.

The Sep. 19 *Tribune* reports said other provisions contained in the unofficial final settlement, pending ratification by a majority of rank and file teachers, included:

- Smaller teacher raises than under the previous contract
- 3% raises this year, and 2% for the two following years
- Average pay raises of 17.6% over four years, when including cost-of-living raises, experience raises, and raises for advanced educational degrees
- No merit pay system

Lake Forest teachers also strike

A separate strike at **Lake Forest Community High School District 115**, which began Sep. 12, was settled on the same day as the Chicago strike, Sep. 18. The Lake County school district employs 138 IEA/NEA Certified Teachers. No details were released about the settlement there.

That strike left about 1,700 students out of class as teachers and board members' negotiations were aided by a federal mediator. Despite the ongoing strike, the school reopened on Sep. 17 with a variety of educational programs for students. Officials lined up 50 substitute teachers and at least 50 community volunteers to keep classrooms operating. But the Illinois State Board of Education ruled that the substitute-led school days will not count as official days for school funding purposes.

These two strikes were the first in Illinois this school year. The last previous strike occurred in Rockford District 205, lasting just two school days; it began March 29 and ended April 2.

In the 2011-12 school year, there were a total of three strikes in Illinois. According to Illinois State Board of Education spokeswoman Mary Fergus, there were two strikes in 2010-11, three in 2009-10, one in 2008-09, and six in 2007-08.

Three more districts on notice

Strike notices have been issued in three other school districts this school year, namely:

- **Evergreen Park ESD 124**, located in IASB's South Cook Division; bargaining unit size: 204 IFT/AFT teachers, social worker, speech, aides; notice filed Sep. 11.
- **Argo CHSD 217**, Summit, located in IASB's South Cook Division; bargaining unit size: 117 IFT/AFT certified teaching personnel; notice filed Sep. 7.
- **Prairie Grove Cons. SD 46**, Crystal Lake, located in IASB's Kishwaukee Division; bargaining unit size: 72 IEA/NEA certified teaching personnel; notice filed Aug. 27.

Officials said they do not foresee a growing number of strikes in Illinois public schools, mainly because the money is just not there to pay for significantly higher salaries in most districts.

NEWS HEADLINES

Bloomington (Sep. 6, *The Pantagraph*) Breakfast is being served to every student who wants it in Bloomington District 87 and McLean County Unit 5 schools. The advantage of offering breakfast is clear, according to the school nurse at BJHS, who noticed the number of students needing her help went down when breakfast was offered, and teachers say students focus better on a full stomach, she said. School breakfasts also continue to get healthier. For example, Bloomington schools are replacing some breakfast juices with fresh fruit and decreasing saturated fats. Trans fats already have been eliminated, and the amount of whole grain choices has increased. The full breakfast price is \$1.25 in Unit 5 and \$1.50 in District 87.

Evanston-Skokie (Aug. 27, *Chicago Tribune*) A potential teachers strike in Evanston-Skokie District 65 was avoided on Aug. 27 when the elementary district and its teachers' organization reached a tentative contract agreement. The district and union did not provide contract details. The current contract was set to expire on the first day of classes, Sep. 4. A federal mediator was employed in August after negotiations between the two sides stalled. The negotiations began in March, but broke off in June, and the two sides did not meet in July. Salaries and benefits were not the issues of contention, teachers said at the time. Fine arts funding and teachers' preparation time during the school day were among the terms being worked out.

North Chicago (Aug. 27, *Lake County News-Sun*) North Chicago public schools Superintendent Milton Thompson was dismissed from his district post on Aug. 24. Thompson was hired under a four-year contract in March 2011. The decision was made by State Superintendent

Christopher Koch, who recently ordered the dissolution of the elected school board, a historic action also taken in a district in East St. Louis. Koch has replaced the board with two oversight bodies — a Financial Oversight Panel (FOP) and Independent Authority. Thompson will be replaced by Ben Martindale, a retired Lake County superintendent who has acted as state liaison for District 187 for the last two years. The FOP approved Martindale's appointment as chief executive officer.

Olympia Fields (Aug. 31, *The Southtown Star*) Having lost millions of dollars in state aid to the Southland College Prep Charter High School, Rich Township High School District 227 is pushing legislation that would cut future losses by changing the formula for funding charter schools. Funding would be capped based on the percentage of District 227's budget that comes from state aid. If the plan were in effect, District 227 would keep nearly \$5 million more in state aid this school year alone. Losing the money, it has cut staff and eliminated a class period. District 227 officials say the plan also would make the state financially responsible for granting Southland College Prep's charter. They argue it would give new charter schools statewide the financial confidence to open, knowing their funding wouldn't have to come from the local school district. When the charter school's inaugural class is set to graduate in 2014 officials estimate that \$19 million the district would have received in state aid over four years will have been diverted to the charter school.

Orland Park (Sep. 7, *Southtown Star*) Parents who recently moved into communities served by CHSD 230 believing their children would attend a particular high school may be in for a shock. The board is weigh-

ing boundary changes that would impact enrollments at district high schools in three communities. The changes, which would be optional for a three-year transition period, are being considered because of the vast enrollment disparity projected in four years, according to the district. A special board meeting to discuss the proposed changes was held Sep. 18 at the district's administration center. The board was expected to vote on the recommendations at its Sept. 27 meeting.

Rockford (Sep. 6, *Register Star*) No drugs or weapons were found during a surprise search of Jefferson High School lockers Sep. 5 in what is part of an effort to discourage students from bringing illicit drugs to school. The high school was placed on a "soft" lockdown for about 30 minutes while four K-9 units — police dogs and officers — searched the sprawling school, Rockford police Sgt. Michael Spelman said. Spelman noted it is good news that no drugs were present. Such searches are used as a deterrent, school officials said.

Wheaton (Sep. 7, *Wheaton Patch.com*) Wheaton North and Wheaton Warrenville South high school students had an extra hour to sleep or study on the morning of Sep. 5, as District 200 teachers met for their first of 12 morning Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions to streamline high school student assessments. In 2010, Illinois became one of 45 other states and the District of Columbia to adopt Common Core Standards for public education. Using the PLC meetings to determine common expectations in the Wheaton and Warrenville high schools, District 200 soon will begin to implement the new math standards in the fall of 2013 and English standards in the fall of 2014, according to the District 200 website.

Open Meetings Act (OMA) training offered online

The online version of mandated training on the Open Meetings Act is up and running on IASB's Online Learning Center. The addition brings to two the number of mandatory training courses available online. The other is Professional Development Leadership training.



Sandra Kwasa

The new OMA online course was launched in mid-September. It satisfies the requirements for mandatory board member training per Public Act 097-504, and focuses specifically on the law as it applies to school board meetings and members.

Who must receive the mandatory training? Every school board member in office on Jan. 1, 2012 must complete the training within one year. Every school board member elected or appointed after Jan. 1, 2012, must

complete the training within 90 days of taking the oath.

Any board member who took one of IASB's 2011 Basics of Law on Board Meetings and Practices workshops or who attended the Joint Annual Conference Open Meetings Act panel presented in 2011 or one of the 21 spring 2012 division dinner meetings that offered OMA training have met the OMA requirement.

Successful completion of this online course will earn 5 Master Board Member points and will count as one School Board LeaderShop elective course. The cost of this online course is \$30 for IASB members and \$60 for non-members.

The course was launched after an extensive pilot and review. One board member who participated said that online learning experience was "tremendous" because of the immediate feedback it provided, the amount of information provided, and because it allowed users to print the information learned for future reference.

The new course is highly interactive, according to IASB Director of Board Development Sandra Kwasa.

"I find board members like the overall presentation and feel that it is user friendly. They also enjoy receiving feedback on their responses," Kwasa said. The training uses fact-based scenarios based on real-life situations faced by school board members, she added.

OMA training will be offered again at the 2012 Joint Annual Conference. It is scheduled at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 17. A certificate of completion will be provided to anyone attending the full panel session. The conference panel has limited seating, however, on a first-come, first-seated basis. Pre-registration is not required. A \$15 processing fee will be billed to the district.

Course descriptions, instructions and registration for any of the six IASB online courses is available at: <http://www.iasb.com/training/online-learning.cfm>.

Registration set to open Oct. 17 for 2013 NSBA convention in San Diego

Registration and housing for the National School Boards Association's 2013 Annual Conference, to be held April 13-15 in San Diego, is scheduled to open Oct. 17.

Registration fees are \$895 (or \$725 for National Affiliates). After Jan. 10, 2013, the registration fee will go up to \$920 and \$755, respectively. When registering nine or more people, the ninth and subsequent registrations receive a discount of \$125 off the cost of the registration fee.

The 73rd annual conference will be held at the San Diego Convention Center. Pre-conference workshops will be held on Friday, April 12. The conference has been reduced by one day again in 2013.

The conference will feature gen-



eral sessions, panel sessions, pre-conference workshops, exhibits, school architectural displays, a 5K race, and other activities.

Housing information was scheduled to be posted on Oct. 1.

Information about the conference will be posted online at: <http://annualconference.nsba.org/>.

Pro bono law clerks help write summaries

Megan Barbara, a third-year law student at Valparaiso University Law School in Valparaiso, IN, will be working as a pro bono law clerk for IASB this fall, as will Valparaiso second-year law student Rachel Prezek.

Barbara is graduating in December and plans to take the Illinois bar exam in February. In school, her legal interests involve constitutional, international, and environmental law, and she hopes to work for either the state or federal government after graduation. In addition to Barbara's pro bono work with IASB, she is an intern with both the Illinois Attorney General and the City of South Bend Legal Department.

Prezek is originally from the Chicago area; she expects to graduate in May 2014.



IASB Executive Director Roger Eddy was interviewed Aug. 20 at IASB headquarters in Springfield.

Eddy explains pitfalls, high cost of pension ‘cost shift’ proposals

The background and issues involved in the proposed pension shift from the state to local school districts was recently discussed by IASB Executive Director Roger Eddy. Eddy was interviewed Aug. 20 by the Illinois Channel, a public affairs TV program that examines public policy issues.

A former superintendent and state lawmaker, Eddy’s insights into public funding for education and the legislative process are highlighted in the interview. In it, he expresses concern about uncontrollable future costs to schools that could arise from efforts to shift the cost of teachers’ pensions to local districts.

“School districts are being asked to be accountable for a pension system and benefits that were established by those other than the school districts,” he explained. He said the concern of school districts over cost shift proposals generally is: “What if in the future a benefit is added by the legislature?”

If that occurred, school districts could be overwhelmed by costs they have no control over, he stated.

School districts are being asked to be accountable for a pension system and benefits that were established by those other than the school districts.

— Roger Eddy

The interview, which runs 43 minutes, is available to local school districts. It can be seen on the Illinois Channel website at: <http://www.illinoischannel.org/>. IASB is encouraging local school leaders to use the information presented in the interview as they prepare their response to the proposal to their own lawmakers.

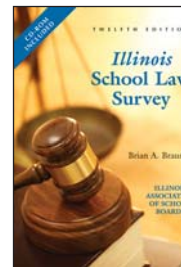
The interview is also archived on YouTube at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ZiLpvr8lsUQ&list=UU4WsG4bc4tF5Eifl-nCCHpQ&index=3&feature=plcp>.

Programming on Illinois Channel is aired in 134 communities and broadcast to 1.6 million households on cable access channels.

‘Law Survey’ book questionnaire draws user feedback online

One of IASB’s most popular publications – the Illinois School Law Survey – has been regularly published for 22 years.

Since 1990, this valuable school law resource has been used by thousands of school board members, administrators, attorneys and secretaries. The book,



which is updated and re-issued in even-numbered years, is also widely used by state agencies such as the Illinois State Board of Education and regional superintendents, state lawmakers, university professors, and even members of the media who want a thorough and convenient source for answering frequently repeated school legal questions.

In an effort to improve the usefulness of the book, IASB has developed a brief questionnaire. Comprised of just 10 questions, this survey seeks to determine who is using the book, what features are most useful, and which features can be improved.

The answers provided will be used by IASB and the author in preparation of future editions.

“We appreciate the value that this book brings to our readers, and their support of it,” said James Russell, IASB associate executive director of communications. “We want to make the *Illinois School Law Survey* as useful as we can. We know the content is essential; we now want to know if it is presented and organized in the most effective way.”

The questionnaire, which will be open until Nov. 1, is currently posted at: <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22GP7UF7S5S>. Participants will not be asked for any personal information, other than to identify their title or position, Russell added.

Releases, 'wrap up' help explain value of attending Conference

IASB has developed two tools designed to help participants at the Joint Annual Conference to effectively share and report what they saw, did and learned.

On Sunday morning at 8 a.m., a roundtable discussion entitled "Wrap It Up and Take It Home" will walk participants through their own conference experience and explain how to share the information and resources they obtained with colleagues, staff and the community.

"Wrap it Up and Take it Home" is one of eight topics included in the informal "Coffee and Conversations" roundtables on Sunday morning. The coffee is free and the sessions will be held in rooms on the Grand ballroom level of the Hyatt East Tower. They will conclude at 9:30 a.m., in time for the Third General Session.

IASB has also developed sample news releases to assist districts to share the 2012 conference experience, either in advance of the event or upon returning home.

The news releases contain language to allow the district to specify who attended, how much the district spent, and how it fits into the district budget. They also explain the value of professional development and what participants are doing to improve their skills and knowledge in school board governance or district management.

These sample news releases are not prescriptive, rather, district officials are encouraged to edit or add their own comments or data to meet their own purpose and situation. Information is also available on how to effectively interview with local media.

Districts intending to use the news releases are also encouraged to include copies in the board meeting packet as part of the report on agenda items at the board meeting that precedes the November conference.

Instructions and sample news releases are available on the IASB Members-Only website at: <http://members.iasb.com>.



The IASB Delegate Assembly registration desk at the Joint Annual Conference is always a hub of activity as representatives of local school boards register in advance of voting on officers and resolutions to lead their association.

Funding, budgeting the focus of several resolutions recommended for approval

The resolutions committee of the Illinois Association of School Boards has recommended adoption of seven of 17 new resolutions submitted by local school districts, to be decided at the annual Delegate Assembly on Nov. 17.

The resolutions committee, chaired by IASB Vice President Karen Fisher, met on Aug. 3 in Oak Brook to review the proposals put forward this year.

IASB's 21 divisions each vote annually to choose a resolutions committee chairman, and those chosen comprise the Resolutions Committee. The committee is empowered to recommend approval or disapproval of proposed resolutions, and to determine which ones are presented to the Assembly.

Committee decisions may be appealed, but appeals must be submitted by member districts in writing to the committee at least eight days before the assembly's meeting.

This year, according to IASB governmental relations staff, representatives appeared to testify on 11 of the resolutions. After hearing the testimony, the committee recommended adoption of seven of the 17 resolutions. Of the remaining ten resolutions, seven were recommended "do not adopt," two were withdrawn, and

one was merged with another.

"The committee did an outstanding job of sorting through some very complicated and important issues and pushed to the forefront the most significant proposals," said Ben Schwarm, IASB's deputy director.

The seven resolutions supported by the committee involve state authorized charter school funding, PTELL levy penalties, cyber-bullying, third party contracting, homeless student transportation, general state aid funding, and two-year state budgeting.

In addition to the new resolutions, delegates will also vote on one proposed amendment and 15 re-affirmations of existing IASB positions.

A summary of all resolutions is included in the IASB Report to the Membership that was mailed to member districts and superintendents in September. The resolutions are also accompanied by the rationale for the proposals and the resolutions committee recommendation of adopt or do not adopt and its rationale.

The 2012 Report to the Membership document, which contains the full text of all resolutions plus the rationale of the sponsors and of the resolutions committee, is available online at: <http://iasb.com/pdf/report-tomembership2012.pdf>.

Open Meetings Act (OMA) change tops list of key legislation adopted

OMA revisions hit board agenda items

Illinois Governor Pat Quinn recently signed into law a bill that makes changes to the Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA) regarding school board agendas. HB 4687 (Pihos, R-Glen Ellyn) is now Public Act 97-0827, effective Jan. 1, 2013.

The bill changes the OMA in two respects: (1) Agendas must set forth general subject matter of any item that will be the subject of final action at a school board meeting. (2) The agenda must be continuously available for public review during the entire 48-hour period preceding the meeting. Continuous availability on the district's website will satisfy this requirement.

If a notice or agenda is not continuously available for the full 48-hours period due to actions outside of the district's control, the lack of availability does not invalidate any meeting or action taken at a meeting.

"Basically, under the new law, boards of education will still be able to add items to the agenda late but not vote upon those items," said IASB's Assistant General Counsel Kimberly Small.

"That means that items not specifically on an agenda can still be discussed during a meeting, subject to any local rules that may exist. This is the practice school leaders are used to and know well," Small said.

Acting on other school-related legislation, Gov. Quinn also signed into

law the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) changes contained in SB 3314, which alters the rules for calculating the amount of tax extendable under the so-called tax cap law.

It specifies that the approximate amount of the tax extendable, as stated on the referendum question submitted to impose a new or increased limiting rate, shall be calculated by multiplying \$100,000 by (a) the percentage level of assessment prescribed for that property by statute, or by ordinance of the county board if applicable; (b) the most recent final equalization factor certified to the county clerk by the Department of Revenue; and (c) either the new rate or the amount by which the limiting rate is to be increased. That legislation is now Public Act 97-1087; and it took effect Aug. 24.

Gov. Quinn also signed the following other bills into law:

SB 3367 (Garrett, D-Lake Forest) makes significant changes regarding drivers' education, including:

- requires drivers' education vehicles used by public high schools to undergo an annual safety inspection if the cars are over five years of age or have over 75,000 miles on the odometer;
- requires school districts to post information about mandate waiver hearings on their websites, as well as posting the notice in the newspaper. If the mandate waiver

requests an increase in the district's drivers' education fee, the amount of that increase must be included on the website and in the newspaper notice;

- requires that school districts requesting a waiver to contract with a private company to provide drivers' education services, shall provide evidence that the commercial driver training school employs instructors who hold valid teaching certificates;
- requires the ISBE to adopt standards for drivers' education; and
- requires the ISBE to annually report the approximate per capita drivers' education cost for each school district.

The bill is now P.A. 97-1025, effective Jan. 1, 2013.

SB 3374 (Holmes, D-Aurora) establishes the Enhanced Physical Education Task Force to promote and recommend enhanced physical education programs that can be integrated with a broader wellness strategy and health curriculum in elementary and secondary schools. IASB will have representation on the task force. The bill is now P.A. 97-1102, effective Aug. 27, 2012.

For a more detailed summary of recent legislation, please refer to the Alliance "Digest of Bills Passed 2012" on the IASB website at: <http://www.iasb.com/govrel/digestofbillspassed2012.pdf>.

2013 board election deadlines a concern to board candidates, district staff

Candidates circulating petitions for the April 9, 2013 school board election have until Monday, Dec. 24, to file the paperwork to qualify as candidates.

School districts can begin accepting nominating petitions and other paperwork on Monday, Dec. 17.

Because the deadline falls on Christmas Eve, many districts will experience some hardship to keep their offices open until 5 p.m., as

required by law. However, efforts are continuing to urge state lawmakers to change the deadline, according to Ben Schwarm, IASB deputy director.

"Most lawmakers I've spoken with are surprised that Christmas Eve is the filing deadline set by statute for board candidacies," Schwarm said. "We will urge lawmakers during the fall veto session to find a better solution and lift this burden from school district secretaries," he said.

"Christmas Eve, per se, is not specified by law. The law simply stipulates that it must be 113 through 106 days prior to the election date," he said, noting that it is far from certain the governing statute can be changed in time to shift the unusual deadline from this Christmas Eve.

Other deadlines affecting the April 9, 2013 election include:

See **DEADLINE** on page 12



Chicago Schools Tour participants can hop aboard their tour bus after a buffet-style breakfast at the West Tower of the Hyatt on Friday, Nov. 16.

Chicago Schools Tour at conference eyes 'diverse portfolio: cutting-edge programs'

School leaders are invited to attend the 41st annual Chicago schools tour, sponsored by IASB and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and tour one of five Chicago schools on Friday, Nov. 16, from 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The focus is on "Diverse Portfolio: Cutting Edge Program" for this year's Chicago Schools Tour. "The five tours offered include a wider range of options than in past years," explained coordinator Cynthia Woods, IASB director of advocacy.

The schools being toured are: The Chicago Agriculture High School; Lane Technical High School, recently named a 2012 Blue Ribbon School; Pulaski International School, offering an International Baccalaureate program; the National Teachers Academy, both a teacher's training school and a tech-

nology-driven elementary school; and Rowe Elementary Charter School, a charter focusing on college-readiness.

District leaders can be assigned to different tours or opt to take one tour together. The \$85 fee for this event includes a buffet-style breakfast, which begins at 8 a.m., at the Regency Ballroom A&B, West Tower, Hyatt Regency Chicago.

All tour participants must be paid conference registrants. Spouses and families are not required to pay registration for conference; however, they do have to pay the tour fee. Registration for the tours can be made by mail or online. A link to the brochure includes more details and the mail-in form: <http://iasb.com/jac12/tour-brochure.pdf>. Online tour registration is available at: https://www.iasb.com/jac12/tour_reg.cfm.

DEADLINE *from page 11*

- **Dec. 24** – Last day for the school board secretary to notify candidates, in writing, of the acceptance of their nominating papers. (105 ILCS 5/9-10)
 - **Jan. 31** – Last day for board secretary to certify candidates to the election authority (county clerk or election commission in some locales) for the April 9 school board election. (10 ILCS 5/10-15)
 - **Jan. 31** – Last day for board secretary to certify public policy questions to the election authority for referendum at the April 9 election. (10 ILCS 5/28-5)
 - **Jan. 31** – Last day candidate may file notarized papers withdrawing nomination. (10 ILCS 5/10-7)
- Source: 2012-2013 School Calendar, online at: http://iasb.com/pdf/cal_13.pdf.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October 10** – Lake Division Dinner Meeting, Edgewood Junior High School, Highland Park
- October 16** – BoardBook Webinar, online
- October 24** – 24 Kaskaskia Division Dinner Meeting, Damiansville SD 62
- October 25** – Two Rivers Division Dinner Meeting, Payson CUSD 1
- October 29** – West Cook Division Dinner Meeting, Elmcrest Banquets, Elmwood Park
- October 30** – Three Rivers Division Dinner Meeting, The Renaissance, Joliet
- November 15** – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago
- November 16-18** – IASB/IASA/IAS-BO Joint Annual Conference, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago
- November 16** – Illinois Council of School Attorneys' 26th Annual Seminar on School Law, for school attorneys only, Advance registration & fee required, Hyatt Regency Chicago
- November 16** – Chicago Schools Tour, Breakfast 8 a.m. Tour 8:45 a.m. Advance registration & fee required, Hyatt Regency Chicago
- November 18** – IASB Board of Directors' Meeting, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago

