

# Illinois SCHOOL BOARD Newsbulletin

November 2012 / Issue No. 725

## 15 local school finance referenda decided by voters

### Four county sales tax questions voted

Fifteen school finance referendum questions were set to appear on Nov. 6 general election ballots, including two proposals to increase property taxes and nine bond issues, according to state records. But many additional school districts also would benefit from four county-wide referenda on sales tax propositions earmarked for school facility purposes.

According to the Illinois State Board of Elections, countywide sales tax propositions for schools were scheduled in the following counties: Boone, LaSalle, Lee, and Mar-

shall. The earmarked sales tax for schools is allowed under a state law that took effect in January 2008. Revenue from the sales tax would benefit all school districts in the county where such questions win voter approval.

Districts placing property tax increase proposals before voters in November included **Golf SD 67**, Morton Grove, and **Somonauk CUSD 432**.

The Morton Grove proposal sought to raise the so-called tax cap rate, "from the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index over the prior levy year to 16.3% for the 2012 levy year. The approximate additional tax extended on a \$100,000 single family resi-

Also see *Election deadlines, Nominating papers*, page 4

dence is estimated to be \$90.40."

The education fund increase proposition in Somonauk asked voters this question: "Shall the maximum annual tax rate for Educational purposes of Somonauk Community Unit School District No. 432, Counties of LaSalle and DeKalb, State of Illinois, be increased and established at 3.95 percent upon all taxable property of said school district at the value, as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue, instead of 3.05 percent,

See **REFERENDA** on page 5

## NSBA names Gentzel executive director to replace Bryant on Dec. 1

The NSBA board of directors announced in September the appointment of Thomas J. Gentzel as executive director, effective Dec. 1. He replaces Anne Bryant, who stepped down from that position on Sep. 28.

See **EXECUTIVE** on page 10



Thomas J. Gentzel



Anne Bryant

## IASB Governance Awards go to eight local school boards

Eight school boards were recently recognized as recipients of IASB's second annual "Governance Recognition Award."

The award is designed to acknowledge school boards that have engaged

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'Pension  
enhancements'  
amendment on ballot  
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## School improvement help

ISBE is establishing a Center for School Improvement to provide assistance and support to schools and districts. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has been awarded the contract to lead these efforts. The mission will be to provide high quality, coordinated and consistent support to the Illinois Statewide System of Support (SSOS) to increase district capacity and improve student performance. Closing the achievement gap will be emphasized. Federal school improvement dollars under Title I will fund The Center. For information visit <http://www.isbe.net/grants/center/default.htm>.

## Library grants offered

Applications are being accepted for the FY13 School District Library Grant. Applications and all other grant information can be found at <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/grants/schoolpercapgrant.html>. When submitting, "FY13 SDLP Per Capita Grant – (School District Office Location)" must be in the subject line on the email. The deadline is Nov. 16. For information, contact Robert Jones at [rjones1@ilsos.net](mailto:rjones1@ilsos.net) or 217/785-1168 or Becky Hunter at [bhunter1@ilsos.net](mailto:bhunter1@ilsos.net) or 217/782-7849.

## Reorganization studies

ISBE is now accepting agreements for the FY 2013 School District Reorganization Feasibility Studies. A tool to help school districts investigate reorganization options, the feasibility studies are funded on a "first come-first served" basis with grants of between \$4,500 and \$8,000. For information, contact Michelle Heninger, School Business Services, at 217/785-8779 or [mheninge@isbe.net](mailto:mheninge@isbe.net).

# 'College Illinois' prepaid tuition plan resumes sales, now offering 2011 rates

Families of Illinois college-bound students may have received some good news Oct. 1 with the reopening of the "College Illinois" 529 Prepaid Tuition plan. The program, begun in 1997, now has 52,000 active participants after a one-year hiatus in sales. The plan is designed to help families to avoid tuition inflation and increasing student loan debt by prepaying for college while enjoying tax advantages.

To mark the resumption of sales, College Illinois contracts will be offered at 2011 rates until Dec. 31.

The program's sales were suspended after an audit found that some investments were susceptible to market fluctuations. As college tuition costs soared in recent years, the fund's investments had soured.

But state officials say they have made structural changes with the operation of College Illinois, and that they now have a better product. Critics had questioned the agency's past decisions to make alter-



Eric Zarnikow

native — arguably riskier — investments partly as an effort to balance out higher-than-predicted tuition increases. The fund is dependent not only on market fluctuations, but also on how much Illinois' public universities raise tuition, and therefore how much the fund will have to pay out as its beneficiaries attend college.

"We have much stronger governance, transparency and an improved investment policy in place. The funded status of the program (70 percent funded) we expect will improve over time," according to Eric Zarnikow, executive director of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, which oversees the program. Zarnikow's remarks were quoted in an Oct. 02 story published in the *Chicago Tribune*.

College Illinois has served tens

of thousands of Illinois families and paid postsecondary institutions nearly \$400 million in tuition and fees. College savings vehicles such as 529 plans are tax deductible and grow tax free. While about 75 percent of program beneficiaries have opted to attend college in Illinois, the benefits can be used at public and private colleges throughout the country.

"Because we're able to offer this particularly low rate — as little as \$42 a month — through the end of 2012, we're encouraging families to consider purchasing a College Illinois contract now for their children or grandchildren," Zarnikow told the *Tribune*.

In August Gov. Patrick Quinn signed into law House Bill 3923 which requires transparency in investment decision making to protect stakeholders. Due to this law, and a management overhaul, College Illinois is more transparent and better positioned for the future, according to Zarnikow.

"College Illinois is a critical piece in our effort to keep college affordable and build an educated workforce,"

See COLLEGE on page 5

*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**

# Those Who Excel awards honor five school board members

## Top-level prize awarded to two

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) singled out five school board members for their outstanding service to schools at the 38th annual Those Who Excel/Teacher of the Year banquet on Oct. 20 in Bloomington.

There are several levels of recognition in the annual awards program, including the top-level Excel award, as well as the Award of Merit and the Award of Recognition.

Receiving the Award of Excellence were: Renee Klass, Board Vice President, **Kildeer Countryside CCSD 96**, Buffalo Grove; and Ronald Moehring, Board President, **Illini Central CUSD 189**, Mason City.

Receiving the Award of Merit were: Maryann Ovassapian, Board President, **Libertyville SD 70**; and Ellyn Ross, a board member in **Aptakisic-Tripp CCSD 102**, Buffalo Grove. Ross is also a community volunteer in **Adlai E. Stevenson High School District 125**, Lincolnshire, where she won the award.



Renee Klass



Ronald Moehring

The Award of Recognition went to Sharon Lynch, a board member in **CCSD 62**, Des Plaines.

“I am pleased to have the opportunity to publicly recognize these individuals who work tirelessly to help all students reach their full potential,” said State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch.

Candidates are nominated by their local school districts or members of their communities. The nomination includes a brief biography of the nominee, his or her philosophy of education, professional development, community involvement and views on the state’s most pressing educational needs. Letters of recommendation are also required.

A committee of peers chooses the award winners. The committee rep-

resents statewide education organizations and former award winners.

The categories for recognition are:

- Classroom teacher
- School administrator
- Student support personnel
- Educational service personnel
- School board member and/or community volunteer
- Teams—which recognizes groups of teachers and/or administrators; citizen committees; civic organizations; parent organizations; school boards; booster clubs and others that have a significant impact on teaching and learning in a school or district.
- Early career educator

There were 202 winners chosen this year, including 48 recipients of the Award of Excellence, 70 recipients of the Award of Merit, 84 recipients of the Award of Recognition, and one outstanding Early Career Educator. A complete list of award recipients can be found online at: <http://www.isbe.net/pdf/those-who-excel12-13.pdf>.

## Federal ‘sequester’ spending limits could reduce funding to schools next year

NSBA has begun warning school leaders that the federal “sequester,” slated to become effective Jan. 2, 2013, could impact certain school bond programs, reducing federal funding next year.

Unless Congress intervenes to rescind sequestration (defined as the automatic, across-the-board cancellation of some budgetary resources), school operating budgets could face cuts of 8.2 percent or more in federal funding.

Schools could lose Title I aid for underprivileged students as well as grants for special education and Head Start programs. An estimated \$2.7 billion in public education cuts could take place in districts throughout the United States unless Congress agrees to alternatives.

There would also be cuts to capi-

tal improvement budgets because of a reduction in federal subsidy payments that school districts (bond issuers) receive under certain direct-pay, tax credit bond programs – namely Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs), Build America Bonds (BABs) and Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs).

Under the economic stimulus, these tax credit bond programs were designed to help provide a significant cost savings to school districts for capital improvement. School districts had the option of issuing QSCBs as Build America Bonds, and receiving a direct federal payment from the U.S. Treasury Department that would be equal to a portion of the interest costs or the federal tax credit that would otherwise be provided for these bonds. For example, BABs are taxable bonds for which the fed-

eral government makes payments to issuers equal to 35 percent of their interest costs.

Nationwide, about \$255 million in subsidy payments would be cut for BABs, along with \$62 million in payment cuts for qualified school construction bonds and \$3 million in payment cuts for qualified zone academy bonds, according to the White House Office of Management and Budget. These cuts would equate to an estimated 7.6 percent reduction in payments to bond issuers in 2013.

NSBA has contacted the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Treasury Department to address this concern. If a school district issued direct-pay bonds under any of these programs, the district is being urged to consult its bond counsel regarding the effect of sequestration on the subsidy payments.

# School officials brace for holiday election filings

While candidates for school board seats in the April 9, 2013, election continue to circulate nominating petitions, local school officials are preparing for the filing dates that will take place for one week next month.

The first day to file petitions and related paperwork is Monday, Dec. 17; the final day is Dec. 24.

State law [10 ILCS 5/10-6, and 105 ILCS 9-10] requires a school board candidate's petition must be filed from 113 through 106 days prior to the date of the election, which this year means the petition must be filed no later than 5 p.m. on Dec. 24. Even though most districts will be closed for winter break on or before Christmas Eve, the Local Election Officials must be available to accept and process this paperwork.

As mentioned, the filing deadline is set by the number of days preceding the election day. Experts note that the date of the consolidated election usually falls in the first week of April in odd-numbered years. But because the 2013 consolidated election was scheduled for the second Tuesday in April, to avoid conflicting with Passover the filing deadline had to be moved. The move was outlined by state election law.

That means that for the 2013 election, the final day for candidates to file is December 24, 2012, Christmas Eve. The law requires that the office be open on that date and that the office remain open until 5:00 p.m., regardless of the usual closing time. Virtually every school district will be closed for winter break, but there is no exception in the law that would allow a district to not have someone available to accept nomination papers.

Nominating papers may be filed by the candidate in person, by mail or by an agent. If the papers are in order, the local election official will write or stamp the date and time filed on each sheet. Candidate's names will appear on the April election ballot in the order in which their nominating papers are officially received in the secretary's office.

There is an effort under way to ask the General Assembly to change the law; however, it appears unlikely that the dates can be changed for this election, according to Ben Schwarm, IASB deputy executive director.

"The IASB is working with individual legislators to try to get the date changed this fall, but it appears that in the limited timeframe available it is an uphill climb against long odds," said Schwarm.

In addition to the filing deadline, another hardship will be caused by the period that immediately follows that date, when objections to nominating petitions must be accepted.

That process begins after the last day for filing and continues for the five business days following the final filing date. That means that objections can be filed beginning Wednesday, Dec. 26, and ending Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013. The exception to this are permitted office closings on Dec. 25 (Christmas Day), Dec. 29 and 30 (Saturday and Sunday), and Jan. 1, 2013 (New Year's Day).

Jan. 2 is also the last day that a

candidate who has filed for two seats, perhaps for a full-term seat and a partial term, may file a "withdrawal of candidacy" form for one of the seats. Failure to withdraw from running for one of the open seats means that the individual's name will not appear on the ballot for either seat.

Local election officials will also have to schedule a lottery prior to Jan. 3 to settle ballot positions for candidates that simultaneously filed first on Dec. 17. IASB Policy Director Anna Lovern suggested that districts schedule the lottery earlier, rather than later. January 3 is the final date. It may be held any time prior to that date. Seven days' notice of the time and place of conducting the lottery must be given to all simultaneous filers and the community by posting notice of the time and place of the lottery in a conspicuous, open, and public place, such as the entrance of the central office. Nothing seems to prohibit posting the notice at least seven days prior to December 17. By the time the

See **DEADLINES** on page 6

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## Board candidate nominating papers must include this specific information

When it comes to running for the school board, nominating papers consist of the following:

- Statement of candidacy, which includes a request that the candidate's name be placed on the official ballot, the address of the candidate, the office sought, and a statement that the candidate is qualified for the office and has filed (or will file before the close of the petition filing period) a statement of economic interests as required by the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act.
- Nominating petitions signed by the required number of voters residing within the district. Each signature must have an address. Petitions must

be securely bound together, with pages numbered consecutively, and each page must carry the notarized signature of the petition circulator.

- A receipt from the county clerk showing that the candidate has filed the statement of economic interests before the day for filing, but within the year. Incumbents filing for another term need only provide a copy of the receipt from their 2012 filing. Filing another statement of economic interest is not necessary, unless the board member filed their statement electronically. A paper copy must accompany the nomination papers. The Electronic receipt is not sufficient.
- A loyalty oath. This is optional.

## State constitutional amendment on pension enhancements hinges on statewide referendum

A proposed constitutional amendment appearing on the November ballot was designed to make it harder for state and local governments to sweeten public-sector pensions.

The question asked whether a three-fifths vote should be required when city councils, school districts, state lawmakers, or other local government officials move to increase employee pensions.

“The IASB did not take a position on the spring legislation that placed the question on the ballot, and therefore we are not taking a position on the ballot question itself”, said Ben Schwarm, IASB deputy executive director. “We continue to support school district personnel and do not believe that their current promised pension benefits should be eroded, but this proposed constitutional change would not affect current benefits. It would only set a higher threshold to approve future pension enhancements,” Schwarm said.

The proposal was placed on the ballot in the spring when the Gener-

al Assembly and Gov. Pat Quinn remained at loggerheads over how to resolve an \$83 billion-plus gap in the state’s pension funding.

Some said the constitutional amendment question would serve as a referendum on what Illinois residents want the House and Senate and Quinn to do. But unions representing government workers, including teachers, were educating their members to vote “no” on the amendment.

In addition to setting a higher threshold for approving pension sweeteners, the proposal asked whether the Illinois Constitution should require a two-thirds vote for lawmakers to override a governor’s veto or accept a governor’s proposed changes in a rewrite of pension increase legislation.

Currently, it takes a three-fifths vote to override an outright veto and only a simple majority to accept a governor’s changes.

Information about the proposed amendment was mailed by the Illinois Secretary of State’s office to 5.6 million households.

## REFERENDA *from page 1*

the present maximum rate otherwise applicable to the net taxes to be extended for said purposes?”

The nine bond issues on the November ballot included six building bond propositions, two working cash fund proposals, and one funding bond issue earmarked to pay claims. The building bond issues were aimed at providing funds for construction or building repairs in: **Ball Chatham CUSD 5**, Chatham; **Galeana CUSD 120**; **Illini West High School District 307**, Carthage; **Rockford SD 205**; **Brookwood SD 167**, Glenwood; and **Golf SD 67**, Morton Grove.

Working cash bond proposals were on the ballot in **Farrington CCSD 99**, Bluford; and in **Highland CUSD 5**. An \$11 million funding bond issue earmarked to pay claims was on the ballot in **Ford Heights SD 169**.

The proposed bond issues ranged in size from \$150,000 in Bluford to \$139 million in Rockford.

In addition to this list of finance referendum questions on the general election ballot, a number of miscellaneous questions directly impacting school districts also went before local voters.

Three school districts were seeking voter authorization to elect school board members at large and without restriction by area of residence within the district. At-large voting would lift the restriction that a number of members on the board must be selected from one congressional township in the school district.

Districts seeking such at-large representation included **Mendota CCSD 289**; **Sullivan CUSD 300**; and **Waverly CUSD 6**.

At least two school district consolidation proposals were on November ballots. One would join **Abingdon CUSD 217** with **Avon CUSD 176**. The other would combine **Christopher CUSD 99** with **Zeigler-Royalton CUSD 188**, Zeigler.

The IASB website and the December issue of the *Newsbulletin* will have results of the November school referendum results.

## COLLEGE *from page 2*

said Governor Quinn. “In an era of spiraling tuition inflation and increasing student loan debt, families can see significant savings with this program as they plan for their children’s future.”

In May 2011, Governor Quinn moved to increase accountability for the program. He appointed new Commissioners to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, including ISAC Chair Kym Hubbard (Chief Investment Officer at Ernst & Young, one of the world’s top consulting firms), and ISAC Vice Chair Miguel del Valle (the former Chairman of the Illinois Senate Education Committee who now chairs the state’s P 20 Council). The Commission then named a new executive director, chief investment officer and investment advisor, and created

investment and audit committees to ensure stronger oversight.

A child born today is projected to incur college costs of \$180,000 at a four year public university, according to College Illinois. This allows families to lock in a price to cover future tuition and fees, program administrators say.

College Illinois says it offers various plans that let purchasers choose a pricing option that best fits their financial needs. The enrollment period that opened in October will run through April 30, 2013.

Additional information about ISAC’s College Illinois Prepaid Tuition Program is online at <http://www.529prepaidtuition.org/> or call 877/877-3724.

# Five board members achieve LeaderShop Academy Fellowship

Five board members became School Board LeaderShop Academy Fellows in 2012. This honor was recognized at division dinner meetings this fall and brings to 30 the number of living school board members who have achieved Fellow status since the program began in 2005.

The School Board LeaderShop Academy promotes and recognizes board members' continuous learning and professional development. Some programs are offered every other year to accommodate board turnover following the biennial election. Other programs are offered every year.

The board members honored as fellows this year are: Linda Eades, **Northwestern CUSD 2**; Betty J. Owens, **Rich THSD 227**, Olympia Fields; Marjorie Loudenburg, **Bradford CUSD 1**; Rob Rodewald, **Bourbonnais SD 53**; and Ann Welk, **Round Lake CUSD 116**.

They join longstanding (honored as fellows in 2007 through 2010) Fellows: Sean Doyle, **Summit Hill SD 161**, Frankfort; Dale Hansen, **Grant Park CUSD 6**; Susan Argentine, **Marquardt SD 15**, Glendale Heights; Robert Brown, **Winfield SD 34**; Jean Randazzo, **Marquardt SD 15**, Glendale Heights; Carol Rahim, **Fairview SD 72**, Skokie; Barbara Somogyi, **Comm. Cons. SD 59**, Arlington Heights; Michael Smith, **West Harvey-Dixmoor SD 147**, Harvey; Vicki LePere, **Millstadt CCSD 160**; Nancy Tobin, **Mannheim SD 83**, Franklin Park and Lawrence Blackburn, **Reed-Custer CUSD 255U**, Braidwood.

Honored as fellows in 2011 were: Terri Golwitzer, **Bradley SD 61**; Dee Molinare, **Summit Hill SD 161**, Frankfort; Richard Reyes, **St. George CCSD 258**, Bourbonnais; Sharon Thiesen, **St. George CCSD 258**, Bourbonnais; Mark Verstraete, **Bradford CUSD 1**; Bruce Klein, **Lexington CUSD 7**; Karen Fisher, **Ottawa THSD 140**; June Maguire, **Waukegan CUSD 60**; Rhonda G. Jenkins, **Millstadt CCSD 160**; Teri Ehrenhardt, **Eureka CUSD 140**; Mary Stith, **Geneva CUSD 304**; Sylvia



Linda Eades



Marjorie Loudenburg



Betty J. Owens



Rob Rodewald



Ann Welk

Zielke, **Richland SD 88A**, Crest Hill; Steve Cantrell, **Jacksonville SD 117**; and Jayne Raef, **Bourbonnais SD 53**.

Eugene Wroblewski, former board president of

**Argo CHSD 217**, was the first Academy Fellow in 2005. Wroblewski died in 2008.

As board members work their way through the School Board LeaderShop curriculum, they earn and maintain membership in the Academy. The rules for earning and maintaining membership are as follows:

1. Admission to Academy membership requires completion of three School Board LeaderShop programs:
  - a. At least two of these must be from the core curriculum and one of those must be the district governance overview
  - b. The third program may be either a core or an elective offering
2. Academy membership is maintained by completing at least one additional program (either core or elective) over a two-year period.
3. Upon the completion of seven core and five elective programs, members will be recognized as Academy Fellows.
4. The Member Emeritus designation is for those board members who retire from or leave their boards while maintaining a Fellowship designation.

Academy members are recognized for their commitment to continuous learning in various ways. Upon admission to the Academy, members

receive a LeaderShop Academy pen. They also receive a plaque recognizing their achievement and are invited to serve in advisory and/or mentoring positions around effective governance issues. The names of Members Emeritus are displayed on a permanent honor roll displayed at IASB and they are offered a lifelong subscription to IASB publications.

## DEADLINES *from page 4*

first mail runs on Dec. 17, the local election official will know if a lottery is required and can then hold the lottery at the posted time, perhaps even the afternoon of the 17th.

A complete list of dates for the April 9, 2013, election is available online at: <http://www.iasb.com/pdf/13electioncalendar.pdf>.

Local election officials can also find help at: <http://www.elections.state.il.us/Downloads/ElectionInformation/PDF/2013LEOBook.pdf>.

Candidates seeking help can be directed to this online guide: <http://www.elections.state.il.us/Downloads/ElectionInformation/PDF/2013CanGuide.pdf>.



SCHWADRON  
"We'll put you in our snail mailroom."

# Nearly 500 board members honored as Master Board Members for 2012 activities

IASB handed out Master Board Member awards to 497 school board members at division dinner meetings this fall, or nearly 100 more awards than last year. Many board members received awards for reaching Level I (114 award recipients) and/or Level II (112 recipients), both awards that precede the Master Board Member status.

A total of 76 individual board members achieved Master Board Member status for the first time this past year, and 241 were recognized for maintaining their status.

The awards are designed to recognize board members for the time and effort they devote to self-improvement and leadership activities in various IASB and/or NSBA activities within and beyond their local districts.

Each of these activities is assigned from 5 to 30 Master Board Member credits, depending upon the time commitment involved. Credits are cumulative and individuals are recognized at different milestones as they acquire these points.

Individuals receiving the Level I designation have accumulated at least 60 credits. Those receiving the Level II designation have 130 credits or more. Individuals reaching the 200-credit level receive the Master Board Member designation. Thereafter, the MBM designation is maintained by accumulating 50 additional credits each year.

Participation in the program is self-reported by board members, via data available at IASB's Members-Only website, <http://members.iasb.com>. That is the place where program participants can go to view participation in relevant activities, and track their progress in the program.

The pertinent forms and individual database information can be found on the Members-Only site under the tab, "Your IASB Involvement" at the top of the home page.

Forms are available for each school year going back to 1999-2000 and are provided in portable document format (PDF).

## AWARDS *from page 1*

in activities and modeled behaviors leading to excellence in local school governance in support of quality public education.

"The recognition for our efforts at improving our governance process is most welcome," said Quintin Shepherd, district superintendent of **Skokie / Morton Grove School District 69**, which was one of the eight winners.

Other boards receiving the recognition were: **Prairie Grove Cons. SD 46**, Crystal Lake; **Harlem SD 122**, Machenesney Park; **THSD 214**, Arlington Heights; **CCSD 62**, Des Plaines; **Grayslake CHSD 127**; **Hawthorn CCSD 73**, Vernon Hills; and **Waukegan CUSD 60**.

The main focus of this new program is on full board development and participation, not individual board member efforts, according to Angie Peifer, IASB associate executive director.

"Effective school boards under-

stand that excellence in local school board governance requires full board commitment to obtaining the knowledge, skills and abilities critical to good governance," she said. "It is that commitment that provides the opportunity for the board to practice and model continuous improvement and life-long learning for the staff, students and community," Peifer said.

Other areas cited in the application are the board's success with encouraging stakeholder participation in important issues facing the district; monitoring the district's performance over time; and taking responsibility for its own performance, including school board member orientation procedures.

More information about the School Board Governance Recognition program is available from Judy Williams at ext. 1103.

## NEWS FROM IASB

### Constitution to be mailed

Upcoming IASB mailings following the Joint Annual Conference will include the 2012 IASB Constitution and Position Statements booklet. Both the IASB Constitution and the Association's official position statements are products of the IASB Delegate Assembly, which meets annually at the conference. IASB operates within the framework of its Constitution, and lobbies on behalf of its position statements, which reflect the beliefs, aspirations and aims of the association as established by its member school boards. Position statements are those resolutions adopted by the IASB Delegate Assembly.

### Board members day

Nov. 15, 2012, is designated as "School Board Members Day" throughout Illinois. IASB is encouraging appropriate district personnel to contact their community leaders, business partners and local civic groups to join in the recognition efforts. For more information, contact Linda Dawson at 217-528-9688, ext. 1104, or [ldawson@iasb.com](mailto:ldawson@iasb.com). Information about the observance is available online at: <http://www.iasb.com/sbmd.cfm>.

### Conference schedule planner

Here's a reminder that the 2012 Conference personal schedule planner is available on the Members Only website. This planner lets users create and print a customized schedule for the upcoming conference. All events are listed by event type or category, and in chronological order within categories, by title and description. Listed at the right of each event is the location by hotel, time of event and room name. Instructions for use are on the site, after log in, at: <https://members.iasb.com/conference/myjac.cfm>.



Book signings at the conference bookstore are scheduled for each day of the 2012 Joint Annual Conference, just like last year.

## Sample news releases can help in sharing about 2012 conference

Sample news releases and a special post-conference panel session have been developed by IASB to assist those districts that want to share and report what their representatives saw, heard, did, and learned at the 2012 Joint Annual Conference.

With school budgets tightening and demands for accountability growing, IASB believes public school districts should be pro-active in sharing their board development experiences.

Thus the news releases contain language that allows the district to specify who attended, how much the district spent, and how it fit into the district budget and board policy. Districts may choose to use one or both of the sample releases. Each has optional remarks, depending on how the district plans to report or share its experiences.

These sample news releases are not prescriptive; rather, district officials are to edit or add their comments or data as needed.

They may also want to schedule interviews with their media or presentations at a board meeting or to community groups, instead of relying on the news release alone.

IASB recommends that the sample news releases be printed on district letterhead and distributed to local news media prior to leaving for conference. It is also suggested that the board president or superintendent schedule time to answer questions.

The releases are also suitable for use in district newsletters and websites. Sample news releases and memos are available on the Members-Only website: <http://members.iasb.com>. More information about the sample news releases is available from IASB, by phone, at ext. 1131.

## Ravitch heads list of book signers scheduled at conference bookstore

Diane Ravitch, a nationally recognized education historian and former assistant secretary of education, will be among the authors signing books at the 2012 Joint Annual Conference bookstore.

Ravitch, who is the Second General Session speaker on Saturday, Nov. 17, is the author of *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*.

She is scheduled to meet visitors and sign books for purchase beginning at 10 a.m., immediately following her general session presentation.

The bookstore, which features nearly 3,000 titles and other gifts, will be located on the Grand Ballroom Foyer level of the Hyatt East Tower. It will be open 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 8 to 10 a.m. Sunday.

Here is scheduled list of book signings by date, time, author and book title:

### Friday, Nov. 16

- 10 a.m., Patrick Anderson, *The Kid in Purple Pants: Structured Approaches to Educating Underprivileged Students*
- 10:30 a.m., Richard R. Gibson, *A Celebration of State Capitols*

Noon to 3 p.m., Maureen Hughes, *Sins of the South & The Countess and The Mob*

1 to 3 p.m., Tim Pletkovich, editor, *Civil War Fathers: Sons of the Civil War in WWII*

5 p.m., Rory Vaden, First General Session Speaker, *Take the Stairs: 7 Steps to Achieving True Success*

### Saturday, Nov. 17

9 a.m., Patrick Anderson, *The Kid in Purple Pants: Structured Approaches to Educating Underprivileged Students*

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Maureen Hughes, *Sins of the South & The Countess and The Mob*

9:30 a.m., Howard Bultinck and Lynn Bush, *99 Ways to Lead & Succeed*

9:30 a.m., Tim Pletkovich, editor, *Civil War Fathers: Sons of the Civil War in WWII*

9:30 a.m. to noon, Scott Day and Brian Swartz, *Illinois Law in the School Office*

9:30 a.m., Richard R. Gibson, *A Celebration of State Capitols*

10 a.m., Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*

10 a.m., Jim Fritts, *Sixth Edition: Essentials of Illinois School Finance* and editor, *Fourth Edition: Good School Maintenance*

10 a.m., Thomas A. Kersten, *Moving into the Superintendency*



# School design award winners to be displayed at Conference

Cannon Design, a Chicago architectural firm, is the top winner in the school design competition sponsored by IASB Service Associates, in the annual Exhibition of Educational Environments.

Winning school designs will be on display at the 2012 Joint Annual Conference, including those earning awards in this judged competition.

The awards were chosen by a blind jury pool of architects and superintendents on Sep. 13 at IASB offices in Springfield. This year's jury chose one Award of Distinction (the top winner), three Awards of Merit, and two Honorable Mentions.

The award-winning designers, and their project schools and districts:

## *Award of Distinction*

- Cannon Design, for Carrie Busey Elementary School, Champaign Unit 4 School District

## *Award of Merit*

- Wight & Company, for Orchard Place Elementary School Additions & Alterations, Des Plaines



Conference goers last year carefully looked over the award-winning school designs on display in the Columbus Ballroom hallway, which is where this year's winners also will be shown, in the Hyatt East Tower.

## CCSD 62

- DLA Architects, Ltd., for Ridgewood High School Sound Abatement, Ridgewood HSD 234
- Wight & Company, for South Elementary School, Des Plaines CCSD 62

## *Honorable Mention*

- Healy, Bender & Associates, Inc., for Isaac Singleton Elementary

School, Joliet Public School District 86

- FGM Architects, Inc., for Sycamore Middle School Addition/Renovation, Sycamore CUSD 427

The award of Distinction will be presented at the first general session of the Joint Annual Conference. All 19 participating projects will be displayed in the Columbus Ballroom hallway, just around the corner from the Bookstore in the Hyatt East Tower.

At the conclusion of this year's conference, all of the projects on display will be added to IASB's School Design Data File. A service developed by IASB for its Service Associates organization, it is available for use by IASB member school districts and their architectural firms. The file currently consists of a detailed computer database on over 459 design projects involving Illinois public schools.

School officials and architects may use this service by calling the IASB at ext. 1105, or by emailing [jnelson@iasb.com](mailto:jnelson@iasb.com).

## Hyatt revisions will move hotel registration desk down to main lobby, shutter Stetson's

Conference goers in November will note three relatively minor changes in the facility itself, all of them part of a renovation in the East Tower that should, in no way, affect their stay or the conference itself.

The first and most obvious change is that hotel registration desk has been moved to the main lobby of the East Tower from the previous mezzanine level location one level above. The desk will occupy what used to be the main gift shop in the main lobby.

A second change is that one half of a short pair of escalators, the up escalator from the concourse level to the East Tower lobby, will be closed during the conference. All other escalators throughout the facility will

operate as usual. Guests may still walk up at this stopped escalator or take the elevator immediately to right of it to go up to the lobby.

There is also an alternate escalator nearby that provides complete up and down operational access between the East Tower Lobby and the Grand Ballroom level. It is located on the east side of the main lobby restaurant. The Hyatt is providing overhead signage in the lobby and on the ballroom level to clearly guide visitors to this alternate escalator.

A third change is that Stetson's Steak House will be closed for renovation during the dates of the conference. All other restaurants in the hotel will not be affected.

None of these issues affect anything in the West Tower.

## Online survey seeks Conference feedback

Those attending the 2012 Joint Annual Conference are being invited to share their opinions of their conference experience in an online evaluation survey.

The brief survey, which asks questions ranging from the ease of the registration process to the quality of programs and exhibits, will be posted Monday, Nov. 19. The link to this survey can be found at <http://www.iasb.com/JAC12>.

The survey's purpose is to get a "big picture" overview of conference attendee perceptions, as well as to provide the association with information that may assist in planning conference panel sessions and other events in the future, according to Angie Peifer, Associate Executive Director.

The survey will be closed on Dec. 31, 2012.

Joe Villani has been serving as NSBA interim executive director.

Gentzel has been the executive director of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association since 2001, and in various roles since 1980. He also knows NSBA well, having served as chair of the State Association Member Executive Directors' NSBA Liaison Committee during the 2010-11 term.

The appointment came after national search and vetting process, with more than 90 applicants. Gentzel was recommended by unanimous consent of the search committee as the nominee and the full board voted unanimously to accept the recommendation on Sep. 20.

"I am honored to lead NSBA at such an important time for the organization and for public education," Gentzel said. "I am deeply committed to community ownership of public schools, which is the essence of school board governance. We will build on a strong foundation, taking an active role in shaping education policy and ensuring a quality education for all children in America."

Bryant, a native of Boston, came to the NSBA in 1996 after serving 10 years as executive director of the American Association of University Women. Prior to that, she worked for an association management firm in

Chicago.

According to current NSBA President C. Ed Massey, Bryant "helped raise the national stature of NSBA and became the impetus behind NSBA's growth and recognition as the national voice on public education."

Under her leadership, NSBA launched the first "Key Work of School Boards" in 1999 and a revised edition in 2009, and the Center for Public Education in 2006. NSBA became a major source for legal information on education, filing more *amicus* briefs than any other education association.

In 2007, NSBA participated in two groundbreaking cases before the United States Supreme Court — *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle Sch. Dist. No. 1* and *Morse v. Frederick*. In 2010 the Center for Public Education launched the Data First website.

Between 2011 and 2012, Bryant worked in concert with the NSBA board of directors to establish the strategic plan that drives the organization's current work and lays the groundwork for the next Executive Director and board to continue its direction.

"As President of NSBA, I wish Anne the best in all of her future endeavors. I am certain that neither her work nor her heart will be far from public education," Massey said.

## Threat of strikes may be spreading, with five 2012 stoppages

Five school districts have already experienced strikes this year, but the threat of strikes appears to be growing. The latest strikes were called in **Prairie Grove Cons. SD 46**, Crystal Lake on Oct. 12, idling 72 certified teachers, followed by a one-day strike in **North Shore SD 112**, Highland Park, on Oct. 16 and 17, idling 440 certified teachers.

On the same date the Prairie Grove Cons. SD 46 strike began, however, a strike settlement was reached in **Evergreen Park Elementary District 124**, with a tentative agreement on Oct. 12. That strike by 204 teachers, social worker and speech aides lasted ten days, keeping about 1,700 students out of the classroom for 5 percent of the scheduled school year.

The first **Chicago District 299** strike in 25 years lasted eight days, ending on Sep. 18. More than 350,000 students and 26,000 teachers and support staff were idled in that labor action.

A strike at **Lake Forest Community High School District 115**, which began Sep. 12, was settled the day after the Chicago strike, Sep. 19. The Lake County school district employs 138 IEA/NEA Certified Teachers. The strike there left about 1,700 students out of classes.

Strike notices have also been filed with the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board at **Argo CHSD 217**, Summit (Sep. 7), and **Hiawatha 426**, Kirkland (Sep. 18). To date, there was one strike in progress, while two districts have received notices and six school districts have settled, based on data provided by the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board.

Settlements were reached after notices were filed at **Edwardsville CUSD 7** (Aug. 21) and **Champaign CUSD 4** (Oct. 15).

Source: Newspaper reports, and Illinois Association of School Administrators: <http://www.iasaedu.org/>.

## 2013 National School Boards Association event offers discount on early registration

Jan. 10, 2013, is the deadline to qualify for early registration discounts for the National School Boards Association's 2013 Annual Conference, to be held April 13-15 in San Diego.

Registration fees are \$895 (or \$725 for National Affiliates). After Jan. 10, those fees go up to \$920 and \$755, respectively.

The NSBA housing bureau began accepting reservations on Oct. 17. Pre-conference workshops will be held on Friday, April 12, so those mak-

ing housing reservations should consider an extra day's lodging. NSBA is offering conference rates at 19 hotels near the San Diego Convention Center.

General session speakers at the event include education advocate and actress Geena Davis, astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, and education researcher Diane Ravitch.

Details of the 2013 national conference can be found on the NSBA conference website at: <http://www.nsba.org/conference/>.

# NEWS HEADLINES

**Arlington Heights** (Sep. 25, *The Daily Herald*) Northwest Suburban High School District 214 will start considering factors of social and emotional learning as part of a districtwide goal approved by the school board on Sep. 20. According to district officials, District 214 is the first in the state to implement a quantifiable, measurable social-emotional learning goal from the board. The social-emotional learning goal is a way to chart student progress other than test scores, and will aim to “increase student learning through engagement and innovative programs to ensure students will develop self-awareness, self-management, interpersonal and decision-making skills...” according to board documents.

**Blue Island** (Oct. 9, *Southtown Star*) When it's time for parent-teacher conferences at Eisenhower High School, students speak for their parents, accompanying them and acting as translators as they meet with each teacher. Some parents don't speak English, but that hasn't stopped them from being involved in their children's education at the Blue Island high school. If students are unable to translate — or for some reason cannot be trusted to translate — parent liaisons and other bilingual staff members, roam the gym where conferences are held, ready to help both parents and teachers.

**Chicago** (Oct. 5, *Chicago Tribune*) The Chicago Public Schools announced on Oct. 5 an outline of how the district plans to pay for a new teachers contract, including refinancing \$100 million in existing bonds. District officials say that could save \$42 million, but a government watchdog group said it could ultimately hurt the district, whose debt has been downgraded by bond-rating agencies — twice by one of those agencies — because of its financial position. The district also plans reductions in lunchroom and purchasing costs and the delay

or cancellation of hiring for non-teaching positions.

**Chicago** (Oct 12, *Chicago Sun-Times*) Barbara Byrd-Bennett after some four months as Chicago's “interim” chief education officer, has been tapped to replace Chicago Public Schools CEO Jean-Claude Brizard. A New York native, Byrd-Bennett has worn about every education hat, from teacher to principal and from CEO to coach of superintendents. Her appointment by Mayor Rahm Emanuel makes her the system's fourth CEO in less than two years.

**Rockford** (Oct. 1, *Register Star*) The Rockford School Board and administration denied a plan for a dropout recovery charter high school on Sep. 25. The reasons are explained in a 26-page document, not including attachments, that's on its way to the Illinois State Board of Education on the Green-Tek Career Academy Charter School plan. The alleged deficiencies include financial instability and the risk of mixing funds with an education program called YouthBuild Rockford.

**Statewide** (Oct 11, *Decatur Herald & Review*) School districts statewide have received \$39.2 million in school maintenance grants from the Illinois State Board of Education. And, unlike the construction grants that some districts have waited years to receive, these have been paid. “Most, if not all, should already have the funds,” said Amanda Simhauser, spokeswoman for the state board. “The money has shown up in the comptroller's system at this point. About half of the districts received the funds before the end of the fiscal year; the other half were processed in August and September.” The maintenance grant program funds can go toward improvement of facilities, including resealing parking lots, removing asbestos and upgrading heat and air equipment and are being awarded this year for the first time since 2001. Their boards had to approve the project specified on the

grant application and districts had to provide matching funds.

**Statewide** (Oct 2, *Chicago Tribune*) A controversial curriculum shake-up in the works for Illinois schools marks a pivotal change in thinking about what public school students should be reading to prepare for college and work. It seems the quantity of fiction will decline as more nonfiction is added to lessons across the curriculum. This will be true even in English classes. The emphasis on nonfiction is a key element of the new Common Core learning standards in English language arts and math that are reshaping curricula. Adopted by Illinois and 44 other states, they are considered more rigorous than previous benchmarks for what students should know and be able to do. Testing in Illinois on those standards is scheduled to begin in 2014-15.

**Williamson County** (Oct. 4, *The Southern Illinoisan*) Officials are reminding students who habitually skip school and the parents who let them get away with it that they will face legal consequences if they are continually truant. Williamson County State's Attorney Charles Garnati and Franklin-Williamson Regional Superintendent of Schools Matt Donkin held a news conference Oct. 3 in Marion to discuss the county's Abolish Chronic Truancy (ACT) NOW program. Although the program has been in place for 18 years, Garnati wanted to remind everyone about the truancy prosecutions he has pursued against truants' parents. He said truancy is a community issue not only affecting schools, but law enforcement, juvenile justice systems and mental health. “There is a known direct correlation between truancy and future juvenile delinquency, daytime crime rate and adolescence substance abuse,” Garnati said. Parents can face criminal charges, be fined up to \$1,500 and face a 30-day jail sentence, he added.

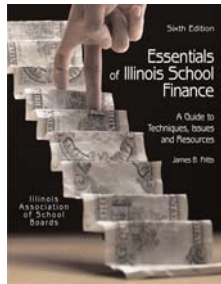
# Budgeting the focus of newly revised school finance manual and desk reference

The Illinois Association of School Boards has published an updated edition of its top-selling book, *Essentials of Illinois School Finance*.

Sub-titled “A Guide to Techniques, Issues and Resources,” the book was originally designed as a training manual and desk-top reference for school business managers and budget makers. While it still serves that role, the book also provides an effective reference for anyone who needs to understand “the essentials of Illinois school finance.”

From the peculiarities of Illinois property taxes and state funding to the formulas for projecting enrollments and staffing budgets, this book covers just about everything — and does it in plain English. Other features include a chapter on the role of school board policy in maintaining fiscal health (which is also addressed in the Foreword) and a detailed alphabetical index.

The author, James B. Fritts, is a retired public school business official who also has taught school finance to administrators and aspiring administrators at Northeastern Illinois Uni-



versity and Loyola University of Chicago. In addition to his own experiences and those of numerous students and colleagues, Fritts calls on a wide array of sources with expertise in state funding, property tax administration, and virtually all aspects of school business management.

The Sixth Edition is completely updated with revised laws through July 2012 and state funding data for fiscal year 2012. Author Fritts also attempts to help school budget managers deal with the nightmarish impact of the state's economic downturn and its impact on virtually all sources of school district income.

The first part of the book deals with revenue — where schools get it, how they maximize it, protect it, manage it and plan for it. The second half of the book addresses expenditures — how schools budget for them, reduce them, and make plans to deal with them. Together, the two sections provide a solid base for financial management and long-range planning.

The price remains unchanged from the previous edition. It is \$35 or just \$25 for IASB members, plus \$7 per order for shipping, regardless of how many books are ordered.

*Essentials of Illinois School Finance* may be ordered by calling IASB at 217/528-9688, ext. 1108, or online at: <http://iasb.com/shop/>.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**November 16-18 – IASB/IASA/IASBO Joint Annual Conference**, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago

**November 16 – Illinois Council of School Attorneys' 25th 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

**December 1 – Blackhawk Division Winter Governing Committee Meeting**, Factory Restaurant and Lounge, Orion

**December 5 – Central IL Valley Division Winter Governing Committee Meeting**, Weaver Ridge Golf Club, Peoria

**December 5 – Kaskaskia Division Winter Governing Committee Meeting**, Cunetto's, Greenville

**December 11 – Two Rivers Division Winter Governing Committee Meeting**, Lonzerotti's, Jacksonville

For more current information, see [www.iasb.com/calendar/](http://www.iasb.com/calendar/)

## Conference handouts, materials to be posted on Members-Only website beginning Nov. 9

Handouts of PowerPoint presentations or other pertinent materials shared at the 2012 Joint Annual Conference will be posted on the IASB Members-Only website, <http://members.iasb.com>.

Handouts from the presenters of panel sessions at this year's conference are posted as they are received, according to Jennifer Nelson, IASB director of information services. Materials will be posted beginning Friday,

Nov. 9.

Nelson noted that not all handouts will be available and that conference guests should not assume they will be posted. Last year, more than 111 handouts from 65 panels were posted online (not including additional Carousel of Panels and Board Secretaries' sessions).

Materials from the 2012 conference will remain online until Sep. 1, 2013, Nelson added.



“Log off? But, Mom, there's nothing to do in the real world.”