

Leadership Matters

September 2017

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

IASA's Annual Conference Lineup

IASA
53RD
Annual Conference



Dr. Joe Sanfelippo



Dean Shareski



Dr. Sonya Whitaker

Plus: **Historic School Funding Reform**
MOMENTS OF CLARITY

This Month...



12 COVER STORY

IASA's 53rd Annual Conference is fast approaching. This year's conference is shaping up to be one of our best ever. We have an exciting lineup of keynote speakers, an outstanding array of professional development offerings and the unique opportunity to network with colleagues from throughout the state. Pages 12–21



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Leadership Matters

September 2017

Volume 5, Issue 9

17000-9

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Message From the Executive Director

Moments of Clarity

Dr. Brent Clark

Within the course of a single message, it would be impossible to adequately capture all that has transpired over the past 50 months (Vision 20/20 started in June 2013) to move Illinois from the least equitable funding system to possibly one of the best distribution systems in recent times. Suffice it to say, there are 10,000 fingerprints or more on this effort. SB 1947 just happened to be the final play. SB 1947 essentially was SB 1 plus some of the governor's demands that he placed on negotiations.

The political path that has twisted towards this day has been a steep grade, with many loose rocks, several rattlesnakes, and unpredictable turns always covered with a heavy fog. But, the determination to finish this task was never in question.

People from many walks of life have assisted with support and development. Some never could figure out a position. Others worked directly against us, some with professional reasons and some out of sheer personal spite. But what stuck out to me were a couple of small teams of superintendents and a few individuals that just never quit.

The moments of clarity for this effort are many, but some more strongly than others. For me, it was in May of 2016 when Mike Jacoby and I were preparing to testify on the EBM at an ISBE board meeting. That morning, I noticed four superintendents, who again were attending an ISBE meeting pleading that they do something for their kids of poverty. Those four represented large and small, rural and suburban districts, and they didn't really say much that day, but their expressions and countenance said everything.

They were there for the right reasons, for their kids and not for their own glorification. I remember the deep conviction that fell upon my conscience that day about the perverse inequities across our state, and mentioned to Mike after our testimony that we had to get this done because kids were truly suffering and the injustice had to be rectified. Being a man of great faith and someone that knows my thinking, Mike sensed the moment and locked on.

From that day, the diligence was ramped up to achieve resolution, but so did the opposition. It wasn't long after that



Fulfilling the Promise of Public Education

day that we were publicly dressed down for "educational malpractice" as we advocated for a change in the school funding formula. We experienced truth tortuously twisted in letters and mailers to superintendents and board members to try to persuade us to back off; we never even considered backing off. One elected official who was opposing the work even said "superintendents only care about money and more money." In fact, as the opposition grew greater, so did the resolve to finish the job.

A tactic that we knew was coming was the strategy to split the members and the message. Seeds of dissension were sown across Illinois trying to pit one sector against the other. Amazingly, and with utterly no coaching, our fellow superintendents started standing up for each other—particularly those that had plenty standing up for those with very little.

Our collective character was challenged, and I'm pretty certain we shocked them when we responded with unification. When a superintendent was questioned at a hearing in Chicago over why they didn't support a plan to take money away from certain kids, which ultimately would have given that superintendent more new state money, he rose to the occasion and said, "Sir, I believe in social justice for all kids and I'm not supporting a plan that doesn't recognize the value of all of our kids." That answer was another moment of clarity in the great discourse about Illinois school funding.

Where does this leave us? Is the school funding bill perfect? No. I haven't seen a perfect bill escape Springfield in the past 12 years and likely none before that. Does it start to help kids stuck in poverty? Yes, it does. Are there items that we didn't want in the bill? You bet, several. Was compromise necessary? In a divided government, it is necessary. Can things be worked on in the future to improve the bill? Without question; I'm planning on it.

But, of course, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the dedicated legislators from **both** parties that never gave up on fixing the formula. Their role was vital. This was never designed to become a partisan issue although at

continued next page...

times it certainly went that direction. But, in the end, a **bipartisan** agreement negotiated at the highest levels of state government finalized the deal. Political compromise emerged as still a viable option in Illinois and that should give all of us hope.

I'm sure that every person that played a role in moving Illinois forward has their own moments of clarity around this effort and all of those helped gain final resolution. In the end, our people never gave up on the mission to fix the formula, and we should never give up on Illinois.

Resurrecting our schools and rebuilding our brand is a vital key to restoring our awesome state's reputation. Illinois has been beaten down, sometimes by our own politicians. Newspaper editorial boards promote leaving Illinois, think

tanks make fun of Illinois, but I for one stand in opposition to all of that nonsense. My family came to Illinois when it was still a territory in 1810 and we haven't left and aren't leaving. I want to see Illinois thrive again and having healthy successful schools is the foundation to that renewal. Let's make sure we do our part to bring our state back to prominence and pride.

With this issue behind us, let's have one of the greatest school years we've had in a very long time all across Illinois. I look forward to seeing many of you at the annual IASA conference at the end of September.

Brent Clark



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3



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It's time to seize exciting moment of opportunity

By Tony Smith
State Superintendent

As you all know, the more than 2 million students in Illinois' public schools bring diverse backgrounds and experiences to their classrooms. Each student has unique strengths and dreams and faces unique challenges at home, at school, and in the community. Our unique work is to find ways to meet students where they are and get them ready for the world they live in today and the one they will encounter tomorrow.

As educators, we have a responsibility to ensure our students and families feel a deep connection to our schools. We know that children learn the most when they are safe and healthy. Every child in Illinois deserves to feel a sense of belonging and that they are well cared for at school.

We have reached an exciting moment of opportunity in Illinois—one that I hope we can seize to create the conditions for every school community to nurture the whole child, the whole school, and the whole community.

The new system of funding for our Illinois public schools, approved by the General Assembly and then signed into law by Governor Bruce Rauner on Aug. 31, takes a historic step toward more equitably distributing state resources. The new law acknowledges that where students live in the state impacts the resources they have access to. Students need different types of support to meet the same goal. The new system will differentiate resources, providing more for the students who need it. Schools will have more of what they need to ensure the academic excellence, emotional well-being, and postsecondary success we want for all of our students. The entire state benefits when the students in the greatest need receive the most support. I believe equity in education funding in Illinois is an important move toward guaranteeing our long-term economic and civic success.

Over the past 2 1/2 years, ISBE has moved the focus of our work with the aim of fortifying the health of Local Education

“ Our state will be strengthened when all of our children have access to caring adults and high-quality learning opportunities before kindergarten and up through their college and career. ”

Agencies. We believe healthy public school districts are the lattice work that will hold up a thriving Illinois. The long-term goals established by the Board in September

of 2015, the approval of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan, and our organizational changes inside the agency to align with the Board goals are key components to helping us better serve school districts.

The secretary of the U.S. Department of Education gave us final approval on our [ESSA State Plan](#) on Aug. 30. The approved plan incorporates the robust and ongoing stakeholder and practitioner feedback gathered through more than 3,500 online comments and 100 in-person forums and meetings. Our ESSA State Plan is grounded in the principle of equity; we hold the same high goals for all students and believe that different students need different support to get to those high goals.

The plan embraces the whole child approach, understanding that children come to us with multiple interconnected learning environments. We are committed to helping districts integrate supports for students’ cognitive growth, social and emotional development, and physical well-being in their schools. Collaboration—between the school, community, and home, and between ISBE, districts, schools, and partners—is key to helping all children thrive. It is a whole community responsibility to invest in, nurture, and maximize the potential of every child. Maximizing each child’s unique gifts is made more complex by deepening poverty and the impact of racism, growing diversity, increasing numbers of English Learners, and strained public infrastructure.

ISBE has taken these multiple pressures on

families and local systems into consideration and is intentionally shifting our role in an effort to deepen our relationship with districts. Our goal for the coming year is to know the

strengths and challenges of each of Illinois’ school districts, so we can cultivate capacity building at the school and district level across the state. We have to improve how we facilitate connections and promote a culture of learning.

I want to create an environment where districts share successful practices and learn from and help each other. Illinois can foster a “leadership from the middle” approach that researcher Michael Fullan has shown makes a difference for students. Our state will be strengthened when all of our children have access to caring adults and high-quality learning opportunities before kindergarten and up through their college and career.

As we celebrate progress, I want to thank you for your partnership. Illinois’ educators and local educational leaders have shown remarkable resourcefulness and dedication to their students and communities throughout this process of creating our state plan and changing how schools are funded. My deepest appreciation to you for your unwavering support for the children of our state.

Our ultimate goal is to help every student graduate prepared for a successful future. I believe we get the world we work for. By strengthening relationships and fully realizing our role

as a service agency, we can achieve a transformed future in Illinois—a state of whole healthy children nested in whole communities wherein all community members are socially and economically secure.

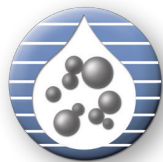
“ I want to create an environment where districts share successful practices and learn from and help each other. Illinois can foster a “leadership from the middle” approach that researcher Michael Fullan has shown makes a difference for students. ”

Get the **Lead** Out... *It's the Law!*

In the wake of the Flint lead crisis, **Gov. Bruce Rauner signed into law SB550** making Illinois the latest state to require lead testing in school drinking water. Schools that are occupied by 10 or more students pre-kindergarten through grade five and constructed before the year 2000 must test all drinking water points of use for lead with results being submitted to the Illinois Department of Public Health.

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Budget, finance & other for superintendents

TIP\$

by Dr. William H. Phillips
IASA Field Services Director

The annual budget process is being completed now. The Board must estimate the income and expenses for the year. Keep in mind that these are estimates. If the budget is not “balanced,” the district must file with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) a “deficit reduction plan” that lists the measures the district will take to balance their budget within three years.

The requirements for the budget preparation include that a “tentative budget” be prepared by a district officer and placed on public display for 30 calendar days. After 30 calendar days, the budget plan can be approved by the Board after a public hearing is held during which the public may ask questions about the budget. This process needs to be completed by Sept. 30 and needs to be included on your internet website with copies given to your County Clerk within 30 days. Failure to file the required documents with the County Clerk authorizes the County Clerk to refuse to extend the levy imposed by the governing authority.

Your district auditor will schedule a visit, usually sometime in August, to your district in which they will request a random selection of financial information that will be necessary to complete your Annual Financial Report (AFR). This report reflects the “actual” revenues and expenditures from the previous fiscal year and provides the most important and accurate financial picture of a district’s financial condition.

Superintendents should review each year their new AFR with the auditor and prepare a report on the results of the AFR to the Board. The AFR is also due on Sept. 30 and, in some cases, the superintendent allows the auditors to give the results of the AFR to the Board directly or the superintendent or fiscal officer may give the results to the board. This discussion of the current financial picture of the district provides the superintendent a valuable opportunity to analyze and discuss the current and projected financial position of the district.

Some of the other issues that may arise at the beginning of the year, especially for newer superintendents, are the

perusal of the risk management plan for the district. This important document will provide the basis for expenditures from the tort fund during the levy process in the fall. In addition, while it might be daunting, it will be necessary for superintendents to become familiar with board policy and any accompanying administrative procedures that are adopted with Board policies. Most districts in Illinois utilize the PRESS service of

board policy renewals from the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB). These valuable and relatively cheap board policy updates will keep the policy manual current in terms of statute changes or decisions affecting schools in court cases.

Keeping up with current statutory law and case law is an annual issue that is important to superintendent and other central office administrators. There

are summaries of recently enacted statutory law from IASB and I highly recommend attending at least one or more of the free legal seminars that leading law firms regularly provide for superintendents to keep current for changes in requirements from various sources. These seminars allow superintendents to directly question attorneys about these new changes in statutes or court cases and written summaries and recommendations for compliance are usually provided.

In addition, superintendents should attend regional and state level IASA meetings and network with colleagues. Being a superintendent can be a rather solitary position and it can be difficult for some superintendents to discuss the questions and issues that may arise during the normal course of a school year. Your IASA Field Service Directors are provided as a resource for superintendents to utilize as necessary. These veteran former superintendents provide a welcome private sounding board for the myriad of issues that will invariably arise during the school year.

While there will be an unending and chronologically recurrent list of issues that will arise, keep in mind that you are not alone in your district and your colleagues are usually experiencing similar issues and concerns. Maintaining a cordial and confidential relationship with your colleagues will be invaluable for a successful superintendent.

**📖 Your IASA
Field Service Directors
are provided as a resource
for superintendents to
utilize as necessary. 📖**

Get Illinois Reading partnership with myON Helps Students Avoid ‘Summer Slide’

By Michael Chamness
IASA Director of Communications

The overarching goal of the Get Illinois Reading partnership between IASA and myON is to help students avoid the “Summer Slide” that often occurs when students are out of school for the summer break. That phenomenon of students backsliding, especially in reading, has been the object of research.

MetaMetrics produced a white paper titled “Stop Summer Academic Loss: An Education Policy Priority.” In it, the authors wrote: *“...we must ensure that all students have access to learning opportunities in and out of school. However, when they return to school after summer break, some students are showing as much as a two-month loss in reading ability from the previous school year—simply because they don’t have opportunities to practice their skills. By working as communities to keep the educational faucet turned on and ensure students have access to level-appropriate reading materials year-round, we can mitigate summer reading loss for all students, regardless of their socio-economic status.”*

The numbers are coming in from the second year of the Get Illinois Reading program and the results are encouraging in school districts that utilized myON to support their summer reading program.

Anna Hoyou, the principal of the K-2 Mackeben Elementary School in Huntley School District 158, is a believer in the program and uses it year-round to support literacy.

“We kept more than 200 kids reading this summer. Seriously *awesome!!!*” said Hoyou, noting that represented about 40 percent of the students in the school. “If a K-2 school can do it, anyone can do it!”

Dr. Scott Goselin, superintendent of Bradley School District 61, said his district also had great results despite not signing up for the program until late in the spring. The Bradley program was given a significant boost by developing a community partnership with the Bradley Bourbonnais Rotary Club.

“We didn’t know what to expect. We were amazed how successful the program went for our students. More than 60 percent of our students participated in the program, a number we never expected. We look forward to next summer,” said Goselin.

Zion School District 6 uses myON year-round because teachers and administrators like the flexibility of the platform and the fact that it is student-centered.

“As a district on the move, we recognize that traditional approaches to both literacy instruction and to fostering children’s love of reading will not work,” said Zion Superintendent Dr. Keely Roberts. “The flexibility, reliability and usability of myON, for both learners and instructors, have been unlike anything we’ve seen before. We have used myON to provide free summer reading opportunities for students and families as a way to supplement our regular summer school program. The more we can provide at-home, fingertip access to engaging literature that students want to interact with, the better served our students and community are.”

Hutsonville, a rural central Illinois district with 305 students, implemented its summer reading program just a few weeks before summer break. Nevertheless, Superintendent Julie Kraemer said more than 100 students participated and read more than 1,200 books.

“During our implementation, we had an assistant professor from Northwestern State University visiting. She said she was so impressed with our third-graders’ excitement when she observed them gaining access to myON’s online library for the first time,” Kraemer said.

Joliet Public Schools District 86 has incorporated myON into its extended year summer school program, requiring each student to read 20 minutes a day. The students’ reactions?

- “myON was my favorite part of summer school every day.”
- “I like picking my own books to read.”
- “myON helps me become a better reader.”

Said Joliet Assistant Superintendent Ankhe Bradley: “Our district was looking for a program that would encourage the enjoyment of reading for all grade levels and provide text in English and Spanish. We also wanted a program that students could access over weekends and holidays at home to share the joy of reading with their families.”

Joliet awards a traveling trophy to schools that read the most minutes each trimester and this year has added myON news, a new feature that includes news stories written specifically for a child’s grade level.

“The myON program has helped us promote literature throughout the community and has sparked the interest of reading for all of our students,” Bradley said.

GET ILLINOIS READING HAVE YOU SEEN THE RESULTS?



**Congratulations
to the 2017
participants—
Together
we beat the
summer slide!**

**Stay tuned
for details of
Get Illinois
Reading 2018
coming in the
November issue
of Leadership
Matters**

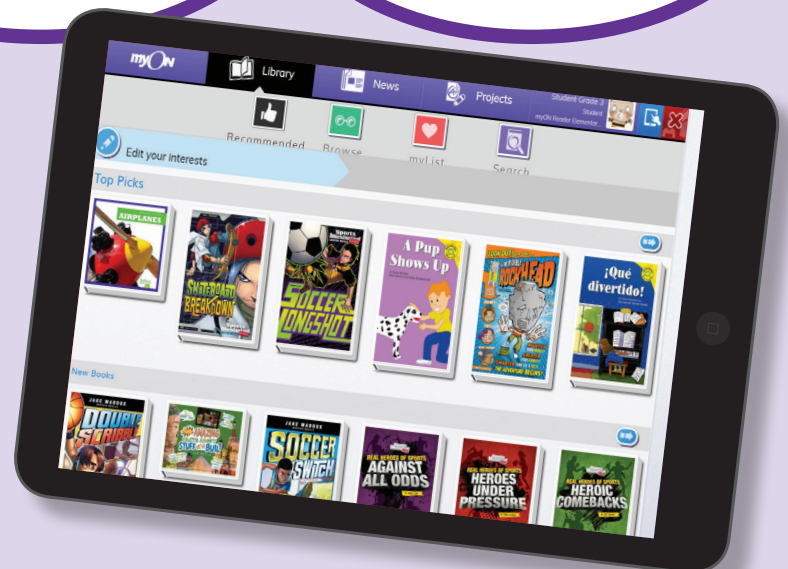


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COMING SOON!

**click on the screen below
for conference preview**

IASA's 53rd Annual Conference is fast approaching. This year's conference is shaping up to be one of our best ever. We have an exciting lineup of keynote speakers, an outstanding array of professional development offerings and the unique opportunity to network with colleagues from throughout the state. The following few pages contain profile stories about our general session speakers as well as a complete schedule of events. There still is time to register. Please click on the green screen below to view a short movie trailer about the conference. We look forward to seeing you the end of this month!

THE FOLLOWING **PREVIEW** HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR
APPROPRIATE AUDIENCES
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THE CONFERENCE ADVERTISED HAS BEEN RATED

E

Excitement

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Tentative Conference Schedule

Wednesday, September 27

8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.	Early Bird Academies School of Professional Development—Administrators' Academy Credit Courses
10 a.m.–7 p.m.	Registration Open
Noon–2 p.m.	School Safety: A Parent's Perspective (special pre-conference session)
1:30–2:30 p.m.	New Superintendent Mentoring Meetings
3:15–4:15 p.m.	High School District Organization Meeting (HSDO)
4:30–5:45 p.m.	Opening Ceremony/First General Session Keynote Speaker: Dr. Joe Sanfelippo, Superintendent, Fall Creek, WI <i>Who is Telling Your Story?</i>
6–7:30 p.m.	IASA Welcoming Reception

Thursday, September 28

6:45 a.m.	IASA Fifth Annual 'Super' 5K Fun Run/Walk
7 a.m.–5 p.m.	Registration Open
7:30–9 a.m.	Continental Breakfast for all Conference Attendees (complimentary)
7:30–9 a.m.	New Superintendents' Roundtable Breakout Sessions
9 a.m.–2 p.m.	Exhibit Hall Open Social Media Lounge Open 11 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
9:15–11 a.m.	Second General Session <i>Ignite! Session</i>
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch available inside the Exhibit Hall for all conference attendees (complimentary)
12:30–1:30 p.m.	Reflections and Suggestions for a Successful First Year (new supers strand) Breakout Sessions
1:45–2:45 p.m.	Third General Session Keynote Speaker: Dr. Sonya Whitaker, Harvey School District 152 <i>Six Core Culturally Responsive Leadership Competencies</i>
3–4 p.m.	Breakout Sessions
4:30–6 p.m.	IASA School for Advanced Leadership Alumni Reception Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools Meeting (AIRSS)
5–7 p.m.	Southern Illinois University Reception
6 p.m.	Hospitality Suites Open
9–11 p.m.	Members Reception

Friday, September 29

7–11:30 a.m.	Registration Open
7:30–8:30 a.m.	Fellowship Breakfast (coffee and rolls)
8:30–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions IASA Past Presidents Meeting
9:30–11:45 a.m.	Closing General Session and IASA Annual Meeting Keynote Speaker: Dean Shareski, Discovery Education Canada <i>When the Answer is Both...Maybe It's Not About Balance, But About Intention</i>
11:45 a.m.	Adjournment

Join Us!
Click here to register today!

Sanfelippo strives to make sure people hear more than ****crickets**** about his schools

#GoCricket

IASA
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Dr. Joe Sanfelippo exudes passion and energy when he spreads the good news about the Fall Creek Crickets. Here he tosses Cricket shirts to attendees.

By Michael Chamness
IASA Director of Communications

The Fall Creek School District in rural northwest Wisconsin has fewer than 850 students. The team's nickname may be Crickets, but the sound they make is anything but ****crickets****. The district's reputation has spread far and wide, thanks in large part to the seemingly boundless energy and passion of Superintendent Dr. Joe Sanfelippo.

Sanfelippo spends much of his summers traveling through the Midwest and beyond, talking about the great things happening in his school district—not to brag, but to spread the example of how powerful it is for superintendents to share the great things that are happening in their districts. Sanfelippo will kick



Jon Carrino
@obijoncarrino

What an **#awesome** and **#hilarious** opening keynote by **@Joesanfelippofc** **#lead3** **#tellyourstory** **#gocrickets**

off IASA's 53rd Annual Conference as the keynote speaker on the afternoon of Wednesday, September 27.

"Talking about the great things happening in a school district builds social capital," Sanfelippo says. "At some point, things are going to go south and if those are the only times people hear about their school district, then that is all they are going to talk about. Eighty percent of the voting public doesn't have kids in school. The best way to build trust is through visibility, sharing and living your school experience with them."

Sanfelippo's path to the superintendency included being an elementary school teacher, coach, counselor and elementary



Kendall Lawson
 @KLawson305

Possibly my favorite keynote ever.. so much energy and passion. Stoked for the rest of the day. @Joesanfelippofc #ICE17

school principal before becoming superintendent in Fall Creek in 2011. His district was named an Innovative District in 2016 and 2017 by the International Center for Leadership and Education. He has received national honors from the U.S. Department of Education as one of 117 Future Ready Superintendents in 2014 and one of 50 Personalized Learning Leaders in 2016.

“I’m not doing anything better than 90 percent of the superintendents out there, but my board and my community never have to wonder about what I’m doing,” says Sanfelippo, a prolific tweeter who also co-hosts the *Successful Schools Podcasts* as well as co-authoring three books, including *The Power of Branding—Telling Your School’s Story*. “If I make an hour-long presentation it actually is one hour and 30 seconds because I tweet about it.

“We live in a world where kids don’t believe it happened if it’s not on Instagram. I think it’s really important for superintendents to tell their stories, to let people know what they are doing. If people don’t know what you do, if they never see or hear from you, then they just make up what they think you do. By tweeting, I have a thousand data points to show what I do.”

Sanfelippo’s interest in becoming an educator can be traced back to his days as a high school basketball player, when he helped work summer camps for younger kids.

“That was my favorite time of the year, working with those kids and seeing them smile,” he recalls. “I thought teaching and coaching was the one way I could keep doing that.”

He attained his doctorate in Leadership, Learning and Service from Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee. In the “It’s-A-Small-World” category, it was there that he heard Dr. Nancy Blair—who also serves as facilitator for IASA’s School for Advanced Leadership—say something that had a profound impact on him.

“She said ‘The greatest gift of service you can give to another human being is for the time they are with you, they are the center of your universe.’ That has been imbedded in me to this day. Without being intentional, without being present and engaged, you cannot accomplish anything.”

While Sanfelippo’s extensive travels mean he may not always be physically present in Fall Creek, he certainly remains engaged.



“First, I have a great team of people who are all pulling in the same direction. When you have that, it doesn’t matter who’s out in front. I also have a very supportive board that understands the impact connections can make. The board and our teachers love to see our stuff all over the place.”

But the reason Sanfelippo spends so much time cruising the Interstate highway system and racking up frequent flyer miles is not merely to spread the Cricket name.

“In the absence of knowledge, people make up their own stories about you. What really inspires me to tell our story is that I’m sick and tired of people who have no affiliation with our schools telling us who we are and making judgments about our schools even though they haven’t been in one of them in 20 years” he says. “It’s not fair to let other people tell our story. I am unapologetically, unequivocally an optimist. We still have conventional thinking in pockets of our buildings, but our teachers are continuing to stretch their boundaries. Our teachers are crushing it, and that’s a story I want to tell.”

It’s a message he thinks is worth sharing. After the IASA Conference, Sanfelippo has events in New York, the state of Washington, Texas, Tennessee, California and even Alaska.

“There’s no way people should be talking about a school district of 800 kids in northwest Wisconsin. That’s branding beyond our borders, and it makes our work better. Branding is what people say about you when you’re not there. We have a good story to tell, but so do many school districts.”



Jeff Kubiak
 @jeffreykubiak

Best.
 Keynote.
 Ever.
 @Joesanfelippofc #lead3 #honored



Whitaker's Dream of Culturally Responsive Classrooms Driven by Plea of a Fourth Grader and Encouragement of a Teacher Who Cared

By Michael Chamness
 IASA Director of Communications

Dr. Sonya Whitaker was in her first year as an elementary school principal when she was approached by a teacher requesting to send one of her fourth-graders to the office because he was kicking and screaming and disrupting the class.

"Upon him making it to the school office I told him to have a seat, that his mom was on her way," Whitaker recalls. "I noticed he got up and was talking to the secretary. I asked him to have a seat, please. Then he did it again."

At the end of the day, the secretary asked Whitaker if she wanted to know what the boy was saying.

"The answer," Whitaker says, "changed my life." The answer to the question that the secretary posed to Whitaker is what she will reveal during the opening of her keynote presentation on Thursday afternoon (September 28) at the IASA 53rd Annual Conference. She will talk about the importance of having culturally responsive classrooms and how to achieve that goal.

"I cannot get that boy's question out of my mind. It's why I have traveled the country speaking about it and why I wrote about it," says Whitaker, who wrote a book by the title of "Is There Anyone That Can Teach Me How To Read?"

Whitaker says that in studying the data used to determine students' competency levels in Illinois and across the country, students not making gains mostly fall

into two categories: economically disadvantaged students and/or children of color. She says developing cultural competency is a big key to bridging those achievement gaps.

"That means not only seeing but acknowledging the cultural background and experiences of your students and also your principals and teachers," she says. "If I know enough about students' experiences and background, and if I use that knowledge in a way that demonstrates an appreciation of those experiences in the curriculum, it will help to engage students in learning."

Being of the same ethnicity alone is not a solution, Whitaker says, noting her own experience as a first-year African American woman teaching at an all-black school.

"I assumed I would be a good teacher of black students because I was black. It didn't happen," she says. "Culture is the air you breathe; who you are is impacted by your childhood and adult experiences. The first competency I talk about is knowledge of self-culture. I don't care what color you are, if you want to know if your child's teacher is culturally responsive, sit in the back of the class and observe whether



“Dr. Sonya Whitaker is a high energy and fully engaging keynote speaker. Her combination of passion and in-depth knowledge relevant to the development of culturally responsive learning environments nation-wide, make her a must see presenter. Because she has experience serving as Superintendent of Schools, as a central office administrator, principal, assistant principal and teacher she is able to deliver her content knowledge to a wide variety of audiences. Her focus always remains on producing results at every level of the system.”

Dr. Donna Leak

*Superintendent of Schools, CCSD 168 Sauk Village
Membership Chair IASA South Cook*



“Dr. Sonya Whitaker is a gifted and talented speaker with a wealth of knowledge. She is successful in engaging administrators and teachers in the process of learning the most effective strategies for best meeting the needs of students from diverse backgrounds and students experiencing the affects of poverty.”

Dr. Kimako Patterson

*Superintendent of Schools, Prairie Hills School District 144
President IASA South Cook*

the teacher says anything about those things that you and your family value.”

Studies have indicated that the students of today bring more social-emotional baggage to school than perhaps ever before. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs begins with the basics of food, water, warmth, rest, safety and security.

“When those basic needs are not met, it’s hard to do anything,” Whitaker says. “As a culturally responsive leader, I need to know if a high percentage of my students’ parents have lost their jobs. In those cases, test scores don’t tell the whole story. Wrap-around services are needed.”

Whitaker is an example of just how much impact a caring teacher can have. A lunchroom exchange changed the course of her life. She was a junior at Bartlett High School in Anchorage, Alaska, where her father was assigned by the Air Force. She was struggling in math. She approached her math teacher in that lunchroom and told her she wanted to be a teacher.

“She could have looked at me and said ‘Maybe you should try something else.’ Instead, she said ‘Not only do I think you can be a teacher, I think you would be amazing at it.’ She breathed life in me at my most vulnerable time,” recalls Whitaker, adding, “I would pay \$1 million to find

Miss Westover. She needs to know that I am an educator because of her.”

Whitaker also is founder of Achieving the Dream, Inc., a company whose mission is “The restoration of hope in our schools and communities” by assisting educators in being culturally responsive to children who come from poverty and/or are children of color.

She says one of her favorite songs is “Closer to My Dream” by Goapele. The lyrics begin:

*“Closer to my dreams
It’s coming over me
I’m getting higher
Closer to my dreams
I’m getting higher and higher
Felt it in my sleep...”*

Says Whitaker: “The minute we lose hope, we are unable to accomplish the dreams of a child. I know that often we don’t have appropriate state funding and that part of our jobs is to keep advocating for adequate funding and equity. But we need to make sure we don’t lose focus on why we got into this profession. I still see that little fourth-grader boy’s eyes.”

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**BE GREAT. BE INSPIRING.
BE A LEADER.
BE A SUPPORTER.
BE INVOLVED.
BE A GOOD EXAMPLE.
BE A CHANGE-MAKER.
BE FOR THE KIDS.**

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“I am a big fan of Dean’s presentations, all of which help to put Canada on the map for innovative approaches to education and learning.”

Melanie McBride

Shareski: Culture of joy hard to measure, but it’s important

By Michael Chamness
IASA Director of Communications

Culture can be a powerful force to help shape successful businesses, create championship programs and foster great learning environments.

No less an expert at developing a winning culture than Alabama football coach Nick Saban, who has led the Crimson Tide to four national championships in the past decade, describes it this way: “It’s not the end result. Don’t think about winning the SEC Championship. Don’t think about

the national championship. Think about what you needed to do in this drill, on this play, in this moment...If you don’t get result-oriented with the kids, you can focus on the things in the process that are important to them being successful.”

Dean Shareski believes that the process should include some fun. The keynote speaker who will cap the IASA 53rd Annual Conference on Friday (September 29), Shareski last year wrote the book “Embracing a Culture of Joy: How Educators Can Bring Joy to Their Classrooms Each Day.”

In the introduction of his book, Shareski recalls participating with about 40 other educators in a 2011 retreat at a lake in northern Ontario. The primary topic of discussion for the weekend was what really matters in education. He writes: “As a student, I didn’t really like school, but I loved learning. I didn’t hate school; it was merely a rite of passage to adulthood. The idea that school should be a pleasurable experience was nonexistent. That’s not to say it was never fun—fun just wasn’t a priority. In some cases fun was seen as the antithesis to real learning.



“ If you don’t get result-oriented with the kids, you can focus on the things in the process that are important to them being successful. ”

—Alabama football coach Nick Saban

“Sitting at that remote lake, I realized that learning and joy are inseparable...as I considered what I believed mattered most, I could not escape the word *joy*.”

Joy will be one of the themes of Shareski’s presentation at the conference. He says a common challenge for educators, given the monumental tasks facing them, is being intentional about choices they have to make.

“Is it more important to have a love of reading or to know how to read? A lot of people will answer ‘both.’ But it does really matter what you start with. We want kids to love to learn,” Shareski says. “In essence, that’s what culture is. It is what dominates, what is emphasized.”

Shareski taught grades 1–8 for 14 years and was a digital learning consultant for nine years in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. He currently is Community Manager for Discovery Education Canada. He also is a prolific blogger. He thinks blogging can be a great communications tool for educational leaders.

“First and foremost, blogging can be a powerfully reflective tool, and it can help clarify my own thinking,” he says. “Inviting others to comment can be very, very helpful to clear up what sometimes are half-baked thoughts. You cannot do that in Twitter, where you are limited to 140 characters.

“Some political leaders use (social media) for different purposes, but there is no question the tools of communications need to be leveraged. There is a definite advantage speaking more directly to our constituents. You can gain trust and support. I think blogging can be a powerful tool to have a more casual, conversational forum with people.”

Shareski is a firm believer in educating the whole child.

“Learning takes place beyond the five or six hours in the school day,” he says, adding that some of the best learning sometimes takes place in extracurricular activities or programs outside of the core academic programs. “If you limit learning to just the academics, you ‘schoolify’ so much of learning.”

He endorses the “180 Days of Learning” project some school districts have used, where students, teachers, principals and even parents sign up to take a specific day and write a short blog answering the question “What did you learn today?”

Shareski was named Outstanding Leader of the Year in 2010 by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). Similar to his stance regarding the use of social media, Shareski believes technology should be leveraged by schools, but that it is not an end unto itself.

“In some cases, I think technology is under-emphasized, but in other cases it can be over-emphasized. Learning



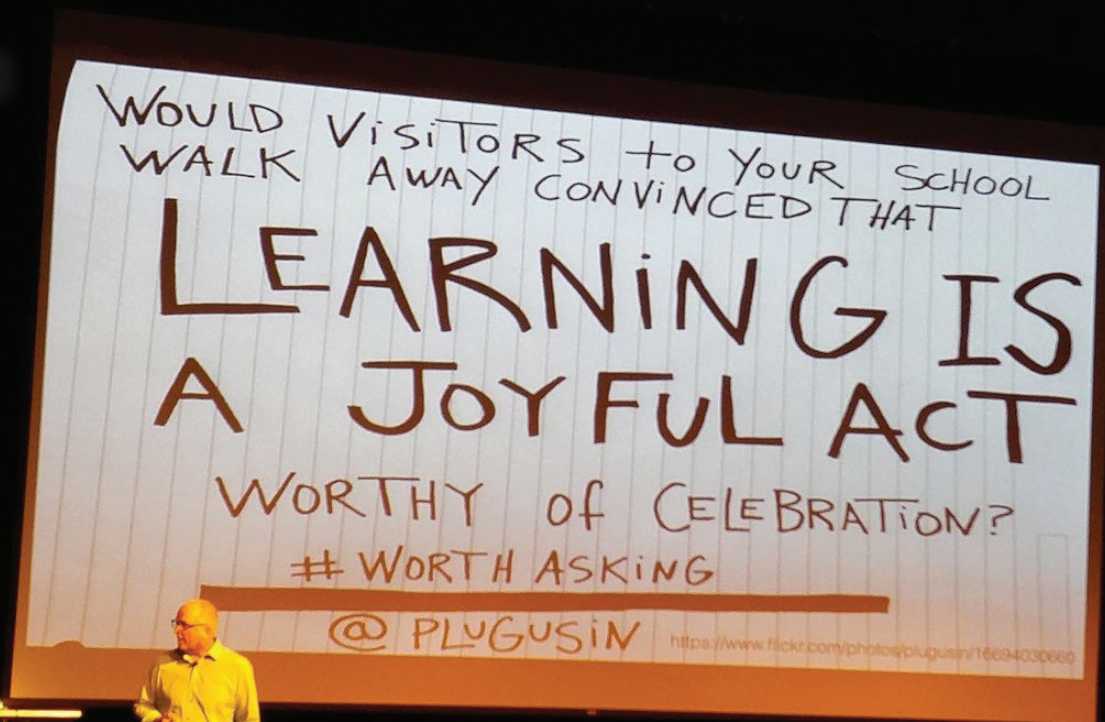
“I wanted to let you know the kinds of comments I’ve received about Dean’s presentation to communicators in Yorkton on Friday. The words “phenomenol”, “awesome” and “superstar” came up—and one of those came from a fellow who’s usually quite “unimpressable”. If you believe actions speak louder than words, the Sask School Boards Assoc just set up a Facebook and Twitter page!”

Dawn Blaus

Prairie South Communications Coordinator



continued next page...



Shareski...cont'd.

can happen without technology, but with it we can go to a different level. There are so many things we can do now that we couldn't," he says. "Through Skype, we can bring into our classrooms experts from around the world. We were able to live-stream the eclipse. We have 3D printers and movie-making capabilities we didn't use to have.

"All of that is very exciting, but if kids sit in front of a computer all day and learn from that screen, then why have school? The answer is that we are human beings and, at the core of it, relationships should prevail."

Shareski says humor and humility can be effective assets in developing those important connections with students, teachers, other administrators and with your community.

"Most of us connect with people we can relate to. Authority and expertise are part of that equation, but people also like to connect with people who fail just like they do," Shareski says. "Having those connections requires us to be a little vulnerable to others. It can be compelling to acknowledge our deficits and gaps and it does not diminish us if it is done in the right way."

It all is about creating the culture of joy Shareski writes about in his book. He received some examples from educators around the world. One teacher from British Columbia wrote that every day she has the students gather around her and she reads to them in front of a video fireplace. A teacher from Indiana uses her guitar to do announcements and instructions. The examples included dance parties, weekly themed dress days, and a principal from Delaware who wears crazy socks to make himself more approachable. He also used his sock obsession to raise funds for Downs Syndrome Awareness and his students collected more than 1500 pairs of socks for a local shelter during "Socktober."

They are ideas and activities that Shareski describes as "so simple yet so powerful." He admits that in an education environment obsessed with data, they might seem difficult to justify because they don't necessarily result in hard data, but he adds "just because something is hard to measure doesn't mean it is unimportant."

In his book, Shareski concludes: "There is no recipe for joy... Learning should be about beauty, wonder and curiosity. Learning is a social, participatory experience. Those two sentences alone can't help but conjure up images of joy."



Back by popular demand...Ignite!

Even the guy who organized the Ignite session for the 2016 IASA Annual Conference was shocked by the reviews.

"It was the highest-rated session we have ever had in my 10 years at IASA," said Associate Director for Professional Development Dr. Richard Voltz. "We knew it was going to be different and we had hoped it would be well received, but I don't think anybody thought it would be *that* popular."

The main reasons cited by attendees in their critiques included the facts that the Ignite session offered a wide

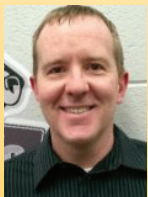
menu of interesting topics and was so fast-paced that it held everyone's attention. Blink and you miss something.

The Ignite format remains the same: Each topic will be covered in five minutes or less, with slides automatically advancing every 15 seconds, ready or not.

"We anticipate this year's Ignite session will be every bit as dynamic as last year's," Voltz said.

The lineup for this year's Ignite session looks equally wide-ranging and impressive.

The presenters and topics include:



Using Innovation to Disrupt Inequity

Presented by Superintendent Todd Dugan, New Holland-Middletown Elementary District 88



Fast Fridays—A Zero Cost/Zero Resource Initiative to Academic Performance, Attendance & Behavior

Presented by Superintendent Dr. Scott Dearman, Deer Creek-Mackinaw District 701



Redesigning Schools to Support Economic Development

Presented by Superintendent Dr. Geneva Walters, Kankakee District 111



Deep Learning Tasks Via AP Capstone Seminar & Research

Presented by Superintendent Dr. David Larson, Glenbard Township HS District 87



Developing Future-Ready Learners

Presented by Superintendent Dr. Brian Harris, Barrington District 220



A Dog's Purpose—Bonding a District & Community with a Superintendent

Presented by Superintendent Dr. Lynette Zimmer, Lake Villa District 41



Competency Based Learning Pilot at Ridgewood HS—Transforming the Way Students Learn

Presented by Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Kelsall, Ridgewood HS District 234

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Required: Teacher/Principal Evaluation Academies

Illinois law requires all educators who evaluate teachers and principals to complete retraining every five years. IASA offers academies to strengthen evaluation skills and processes. Done properly, good, professional evaluations offer the best chance for growth and improvement of those being evaluated. Having your evaluators receive the same training and hear the same message at the same time is not only efficient, but it also helps ensure consistency in evaluation processes. IASA has assembled a cadre of veteran educators ready to provide top-notch training.



"The training provided by IASA around teacher evaluation has been nothing short of exceptional. The training has been relevant, timely, and actionable for my staff. I would highly recommend

this training for any district looking to improve evaluation practices to better serve teachers."

Dr. P.J. Caposey
Superintendent
Meridian CUSD 223



"Coaching Teacher Evaluators to Effectively Rate Teachers is an outstanding program for teacher evaluators at all levels! Danielson Framework was used to support professional dialogue

between evaluators and teachers to promote effective teaching in a comfortable environment for our team to take risks and improve their practice. The day provided our team with the skills and the confidence they need to promote teaching and learning in their departments as well as the added benefit of having all administrator hearing the same message on the same day. I would encourage all administrative evaluators to participate in this program—you will leave feeling energized by the work!"

Renee Zoladz, Ed. D.
Associate Superintendent of Instructional
and Personnel Services
Grayslake CHSD 127



"PBL has taken advantage of hosting various administrator academies on the topic of teacher evaluation. IASA presenters are well prepared,

experienced former practitioners, who are adaptable to district needs. It's imperative to the integrity of our evaluation process that all of our administrative staff receives the same high quality training. This allows us to reflect as a group and feel confident that we can insure a high degree of inter-rater reliability."

Cliff McClure
Superintendent
Paxton-Buckley-Loda CUSD 10

Required for **teacher evaluators AND principal evaluators**:

Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining: Student Growth (#3000, 3001, 3002)

Any ONE of the following is required for **teacher evaluators** only:

Teacher Evaluator Competency Skill Building for Pre-Qualified Teacher Evaluators (Domains 2 & 3) (#1448)

Teacher Evaluator Competency Skill Building for Pre-Qualified Teacher Evaluators (Domains 1 & 4) (#1451)

Teacher Evaluator Competency Skill Building for Pre-Qualified Teacher Evaluators (Competencies 3 & 4) (#1452)

Gathering Evidence During Observations and Conferencing Using The Danielson Model (#1801)

Required for **principal evaluators** only:

Principal Evaluator Competency Skill Building for Pre-Qualified Principal Evaluators (#1865)

For more information or to schedule an academy, contact Dr. Richard Voltz (rvoltz@iasaedu.org)
or Deana Crenshaw (dcrenshaw@iasaedu.org) 217-753-2213



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2017-2018 Moon Scholarship Program

Are you a superintendent or an aspiring superintendent?

Are you pursuing graduate study to become the best superintendent you can be?

Do you know there are scholarships available through the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) to help offset the costs of your coursework?

Established in 1993 in memory of Dr. James V. Moon, a former superintendent at Morton High School District, the James V. and Dorothy B. Moon Scholarship program is committed to improving the education and qualifications of school administrators. Since its inception, 104 scholarships totaling over \$232,000 have been awarded to current or aspiring superintendents.

Practicing school administrators in Illinois qualify if they are college graduates pursuing an advanced degree in educational administration at an accredited college or university. Several scholarships (\$2,500 minimum each) are awarded each year and are paid directly to the college or university to cover tuition, fees and/or textbook expenses.

To obtain more information on the application and awards process, [click here](#) or contact Cherry Middleton, IASA Executive Secretary/Office Manager, at 217/753-2213 or email at cmiddleton@iasaedu.org.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, January 2, 2018



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MONTH



OCTOBER 2017

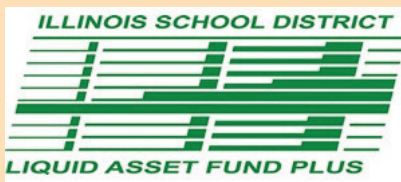
National Principals Month coming up in October

October is National Principals Month, which includes Principals Week (October 15–21) and Principals Day (October 20). These designations are used to recognize the essential role of principals in creating great schools.

National and state resolutions are made supporting the events, and top government officials often make public acknowledgements about the importance of principals. However, the most significant celebrations and recognitions are the ones that take place in schools and communities. Here are some ways you can celebrate the principals in your district.

- Write a note of encouragement and thanks to your principals.
- Write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper highlighting what your principals do for your district (and make sure to mention it's National Principals Month).
- Use social media ([here are some sample social media posts](#)) to highlight the hard work your principals do.
- Recognize your principals at a school board meeting.

Do you have your own idea of how to celebrate principals in your district? Let the Illinois Principals Association know so they can acknowledge your idea and share it with others! Email Drew Thomason, Communication and Marketing Director at IPA, at drew@ilprincipals.org, with ideas and any pictures of celebrations.



ISDLAF+ September 2017 Monthly Update

Click [here](#) to view the June/July 2017 ISDLAF+ rates, economic indicators and general economic news brief. To obtain additional information regarding this IASA sponsored service, contact Donald E. Weber, Senior Vice President, Corporate Relations/ISDLAF+ at 630.657.6435. To check daily rates, visit the ISDLAF+ website at www.isdlafplus.com.

Westrick new superintendent in Donovan School District

Steve Westrick has been named superintendent of Donovan CUSD 3 in Iroquois County. Westrick previously served as superintendent in Odin and Cherry Grade School in Bureau County.

Click [here](#) to view the IASA interactive Calendar of Events online.



- IASA Event
- Professional Development Event
- Legislative Event
- Region Meeting
(Contact your Region President for details)

September 2017

October 2017

Tues. Sept. 5	(CLOSED) Gathering Evidence During... Shawnee
Wed. Sept. 6	(CLOSED) Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth Northwest
Thurs. Sept. 7	(CLOSED) Principal Evaluator Competency... Cornbelt Region Presidents Meeting
Fri. Sept. 8	(CLOSED) Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth
Mon. Sept. 11	Principal Evaluator Competency... Blackhawk
Tues. Sept. 12	Principal Evaluator Competency... Two Rivers
Wed. Sept. 13	DuPage, Illini, Wabash Valley IASA Professional Development Meeting IASA Gov. Relations & Advocacy Meeting
Thurs. Sept. 14	Cook South, Kishwaukee, Central IL Valley (CLOSED) Gathering Evidence During... Seeking the Superintendency
Fri. Sept. 15	Gathering Evidence During...
Mon. Sept. 18	Abe Lincoln
Tues. Sept. 19	(CLOSED) Gathering Evidence During... IASA Membership & Communications Meeting
Wed. Sept. 20	(CLOSED) Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth Seeking the Superintendency
Thurs. Sept. 21	(CLOSED) Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth
Mon. Sept. 25	(CLOSED) Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth
Tues. Sept. 26	Board of Directors
Wed. Sept. 27	Conference Early Bird Academies
Wed.–Fri. Sept. 27–29	53RD ANNUAL IASA CONFERENCE

Mon. Oct. 2	(CLOSED) Principal Evaluator Competency...
Tues. Oct. 3	Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth Shawnee
Fri. Oct. 6	(CLOSED) Danielson 1/2 day In-Service
Tues. Oct. 10	(CLOSED) Gathering Evidence During...
Wed. Oct. 11	(CLOSED) Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth DuPage, Illini
Thurs. Oct. 12	The Year in Review: The Highlights and Lowlights of Illinois School Law
Fri. Oct. 13	(CLOSED) Gathering Evidence During... Southwestern
Tues. Oct. 17	(CLOSED) Gathering Evidence During...
Wed. Oct. 18	(CLOSED) Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth
Thurs. Oct. 19	Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth
Tues. Oct. 24	The Year in Review: The Highlights and Lowlights of Illinois School Law Principal Evaluator Competency...
Wed. Oct. 25	Wabash Valley
Thurs. Oct. 26	The Year in Review: The Highlights and Lowlights of Illinois School Law Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining—Student Growth Central IL Valley
Fri. Oct. 27	(CLOSED) Moving from Vision to Action... Become an Essentialist





ISEBC
Illinois Schools Employee Benefits Consortium



IASA, IASB, IASBO Offers Members Comprehensive Health Insurance

The Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA), the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) and the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO) have developed the Illinois Schools Employee Benefits Consortium (ISEBC). This program includes a proprietary fully insured, comprehensive group health insurance plan that will offer member school districts the opportunity to provide employees health benefits at discounted prices.

- **Large Group Purchasing Power**
- **Discounted Health Insurance Premiums**
- **Premium Stability**
- **Discounted Ancillary Premiums**
- **Free HR Consulting**
- **Customizable Benefit Designs**
- **ACA Compliance, Reporting and Filing**
- **Online Benefit Enrollment System**

The ISEBC is able to evaluate Blue Cross Blue Shield, Health Alliance, United Healthcare, Aetna, and HealthLink as network options.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact:

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sstewart@iasaedu.org



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Why should I join IPAC?

What is IPAC?

IPAC is a statewide, non-partisan Political Action Committee (PAC) organized by members of the Illinois Association of School Administrators to benefit school leaders in the pursuit of educational excellence through continued school improvement.

What is the money used for?

All IPAC membership monies are used for IPAC endeavors, which include, but are not limited to, contributions to the four legislative leaders in the General Assembly and fundraisers for individual legislators who support our educational mission.

Why should I join?

School administrators need a strong PAC to provide funds to legislators and candidates who will stand up for public education. Our strength comes from providing legislators with timely and accurate information on legislative matters affecting public education. Victories and successes do not happen overnight but after years of laying the foundation for political change, and a strong IPAC helps us get a seat at the table. We must be proactive rather than reactive and one way to do this is membership in IPAC. Membership in IPAC is a long-term investment that helps lay the foundation for continued change in the legislative process.

IPAC Annual Membership Dues

Our goal is to have every IASA member become a member of IPAC as well. IPAC membership dues are \$100 and 100% of that goes to support the members of the General Assembly who support us.

A copy of our report is filed with the State Board of Elections and is or will be available for purchase from the State Board of Elections, Springfield, Illinois 62704. Membership dues in IPAC are not deductible as charitable or political contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Personal checks (made out to IPAC) or personal credit cards only.

Click [HERE](#) to make an online payment.

Name: _____ Employer:* _____

Home Email Address:* _____ Occupation:* _____
For IPAC updates (both financial and informational)

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*State law requires this information.

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Charge \$ _____ to my (check one): Visa Master Card Discover Card

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Card Verification No.: _____

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Return this form along with your IPAC membership dues to: IPAC, 2648 Beechler Court, Springfield, IL 62703-7305
 If you have questions please contact Ashleigh Knudson at 217-753-2213 or aknudson@iasaedu.org

How can you keep up with what's going on at IASA?

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The IASA App gives you mobile access from anywhere to what is happening at IASA!

2

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Follow IASA @IllinoisASA or follow Executive Director Dr. Brent Clark @docclark05, the Director of Governmental Relations @IllinoisASAGR, the Director of Professional Development @rvoltz, and Legal Counsel @sboucek.

THE IASA WEBSITE (www.iasaedu.org)



From the President of the United States to a school superintendent in Illinois, situational awareness is the best way to start the day. The IASA website can be the source of a quick intel briefing for educational leaders. The IASA website contains the educational topics and news of the day, including News in Brief, a live Twitter feed, an interactive calendar of events and access to all IASA publications.

5

IASA PUBLICATIONS

Capitol Watch, Leadership Matters, Ed Leadership Thoughts and other publications are emailed to IASA members and they also can be found on the IASA App and on the website.



www.iasaedu.org

inform consult involve collaborate



Dr. Patrick Rice
Director of Field Services
Illinois Association of School Boards



Dr. David Bartz
Professor Emeritus
Department of Educational Leadership
Eastern Illinois University

How Superintendents and School Boards Can Transform School Culture by Connecting with the Community

Effective school boards know and understand the importance of keeping the public in public schools by engaging in two-way conversations with the community. As elected trustees of the community, boards should establish systems of two-way conversations to ensure local community representation in school governance. These systems enable the board to actively engage stakeholders in dialogue and other discourses about the district's mission and other common interests regarding the schools in order to improve overall district performance and school climate and, more importantly, to advance student achievement.

Periodically exchanging information and ideas between various stakeholders and the school board is a primary work of school boards and is often referred to as community engagement and/or public or civic engagement. Community engagement is a step beyond public relations, in which the focus is establishing or maintaining a favorable public image.

Boards with the best of intentions confuse public relations with that of community engagement (CE). As a result,

districts communicate with community stakeholders in a one-way fashion which primarily entails sharing positive district news. Public relations efforts are important and should be a part of a community engagement plan, but systems must be in place to allow for two-way communication exchanges. Without these exchanges, stakeholders will be limited in their contributions and feel as though they have no real ownership in the direction of their schools.

Boards should be strategic and thoughtful in developing a community engagement plan. Attempting to engage the public in a haphazard or ad hoc manner will be unsuccessful. The plan should begin with framing the question or having a clear understanding as to why the board is engaging the community. And, how will this process inform and/or support district ends (mission, vision, goals)? In other words, how does the board intend to use the results of the CE process to inform their work?

Boards with the best of intentions confuse public relations with that of community engagement (CE). As a result, districts communicate with community stakeholders in a one-way fashion...

public
relations



Community Engagement

Equally important, a community engagement plan should detail the appropriate level at which the board would like to engage its community. For instance, is the governance team seeking to inform, consult, involve, or collaborate with stakeholders? Community involvement gradually increases through these four stages from informing to collaborating. For example, there may be areas of the CE plan where the board agrees to continuously keep the community informed—something such as student achievement data.

Other aspects of the plan may call for greater collaboration, such as seeking to involve stakeholders in the district strategic planning process. Remember, a good community engagement plan encompasses two-way exchanges. Regardless of the method the board chooses to engage its community and the expectations it has from its stakeholders, the effort should be written in the plan as a “Promise to the Public” that highlights these agreements.

A good community engagement plan not only benefits the board, it moreover provides several advantages for the superintendent, especially regarding board/superintendent relations. As supported by the “Dissatisfaction Theory” of school governance, when the community is displeased with the board it adversely impacts the relationship with the superintendent, often resulting in superintendent turnover. This is in part because superintendents are often viewed as the face of the district.

When the community is satisfied with the governance work of the board, it increases the longevity of board members as well as the tenure of the superintendent. When longevity is increased, the governance team is in an optimal position to properly establish, monitor, and sustain district ends. As the superintendent is evaluated in part based on implementing district goals, community satisfaction of the district provides the superintendent with a healthy opportunity to transform school culture by aligning board goals across the district with the support of community stakeholders.

By consistently engaging the public, the superintendent is in a better position to understand the issues of the community and to be proactive in solving future issues. By understanding community issues, the superintendent can proactively inform the board of pending issues, thus minimizing the chances of the board being “surprised” or “caught off-guard” regarding community issues.

Because of the advantages a good community engagement plan provides for both the board and superintendent, it is vital that the superintendent assist in planning and implementing the district’s community engagement plan with fidelity. Thus, good superintendents know that community engagement is not easy work, nor can it be done quickly. It must be planned, developed, and nurtured over an extended period of time.

There are several components to establishing an effective community engagement plan and some governance teams may or may not have the acumen to connect with the community successfully without assistance. Due to this need, the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) has extensively researched and prepared a report entitled, “Connecting with the Community.” This report grew out of the need for local districts to recapture the conversation regarding what

“...but systems must be in place to allow for two-way communication exchanges [or] stakeholders will be limited in their contributions and feel as though they have no real ownership in the direction of their schools.”

is needed in educating today’s public by engaging stakeholders in long-term and mutually-beneficial, but sometimes difficult, conversations.

IASB’s Field Services Directors have been successful in working with several districts in developing a community engagement plan, as well as reviewing the role of the superintendent and school board. One thing is clear: Community engagement is a process and, once in place, a good community engagement plan provides benefits for the entire governance team.



2017–2018 Senate Bill 7 Performance Rankings Tool software available for purchase

All Illinois School Districts are working to comply with the requirements of education reforms. The Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) has worked to provide support via the [Senate Bill 7 Performance Rankings File](#). This program gives districts a method of managing district positions aligned to local qualifications, teacher's credentials, and performance ratings. The program compiles this local data and creates reports needed to comply with Senate Bill 7. The 2017–2018 file has been enhanced with updates in response to user ideas. Recent updates include:

- Four podcasts—overview, transition data, sorting data within the program, and optional merge letter process.
- Method to filter teachers on or off evaluation cycle.
- Tracking of the evaluator name and evaluator's IEIN.
- Ability to sort lists of data within the program.
- Expanded license endorsements and content specific endorsements.
- Only one notification letter per teacher (rather than one for current and more for other eligible positions).
- New report for creating your own merge letters or exporting data for other purposes.

This software was originally reviewed by the Senate Bill 7 teams from the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) and the Illinois Education Association (IEA). The 2017–2018 version of this software builds on the knowledge gained from hundreds of users.

The 2017–2018 IASA Senate Bill 7 Performance Rankings File is ready for you to purchase and download. The access request form can be completed by visiting <http://www.iasasurveys.org>. The cost of using this software has never increased and the annual licensing fee is \$275 for members and \$550 for non-members.

Please note that previous versions of the IASA Senate Bill 7 Performance Rankings File are no longer supported. Also, the service method for the 2017–2018 software will be via email only.

IASA offers an array of Academies on topics such as Danielson Evaluation Model, Coaching Employees, Communications, Board/Superintendent Relationships, Adaptive Leadership, Strategic Communications, and Essentialism, just to name a few! The following list includes open Academies through April 2018.

The list is growing so check out the PD [Calendar of Events](#) on the IASA website and IASA app for all your needs. If you'd like to schedule an Academy or training session in your area or school district, contact Deana Crenshaw at 217-753-2213 or dcrenshaw@iasaedu.org

Click on date to register:

IASA 53rd Annual Conference & Early Bird Academies

September 27, 2017	Basic Collective Bargaining—Revised 2012 (AA #1045)
September 27, 2017	Principal Evaluator Competency Skill Building for Pre-Qualified Principal Evaluators (AA #1865)
September 27, 2017	The Board and Its Superintendent: Building Relationships (AA #1833)



IASA
53RD
Annual Conference

Gathering Evidence During Observations & Conferencing Using the Danielson Model (AA #1801)

September 15, 2017	Wilco Area Career Center, (Multi-Purpose Room), 500 Wilco Blvd, Romeoville, IL 60446
January 24, 2018	Elwood CCSD #203, 409 N. Chicago, Elwood, IL 60421

Teacher/Administrator Evaluator Retraining Student Growth (AA #3000/3001/3002)

October 3, 2017	Wilco Area Career Center (Multi-Purpose Room), 500 Wilco Blvd., Romeoville, Illinois 60048
October 19, 2017	Elwood CCSD #203, 409 N. Chicago, Elwood, Illinois 60421
October 26, 2017	McElvain School, 593 Ava Rd., Murphysboro, Illinois 62966

Principal Evaluator Competency Skill Building for Pre-Qualified Principal Evaluators (AA #1865)

September 11, 2017	Crystal Lake #47, 300 Commerce Drive, Crystal Lake, IL 60014
September 12, 2017	Community HS #155, 1 South Virginia Road, Crystal Lake, IL 60014
September 12, 2017	Meadowview School, 291 Lexington Lane, Grayslake, IL 60030
October 24, 2017	ROE #40, 225 E. Nicholas, Carlinville, IL 62626,
November 6, 2017	Deerfield Public Schools District #109, 517 Deerfield Road, Deerfield, IL 60015
November 13, 2017	East Leyden High School, 3400 Rose Street, Franklin Park, IL 60131
April 18, 2018	Elwood CCSD #203, 409 N. Chicago, Elwood, IL 60421

Moving from Vision to Action: Learn How to Become an Essentialist (AA #1820)

November 30, 2017	Mahomet-Seymour High School, 302 West State Street, Mahomet, IL 61853
December 7, 2017	Oak Lawn—Hometown SD #123, 5345 W. 99th Street, Oak Lawn, IL 60453

The Year in Review: The Highlights and Lowlights of Illinois School Law 2017

October 12, 2017	Marriott Pere Marquette, 501 Main Street, Peoria, Illinois 61602
October 24, 2017	Hamburger University at Hyatt Lodge, 2715 Jorie Boulevard, Oak Brook, IL 60523
October 26, 2017	Doubletree by Hilton, 1000 Eastport Plaza Drive, Collinsville, IL 62234





We're looking to tell the stories of how Illinois schools pitched in to help with Hurricane Harvey relief efforts

Newspapers across the state have carried photos and stories about how Illinois schools have joined in the efforts to provide relief from the devastating damage in Texas caused by Hurricane Harvey. Stories have ranged from schools “adopting” schools in Texas to various forms of fundraisers being carried out by students and staff in school districts across Illinois.

We would like to gather photos and information from Illinois school districts to run in the **October issue of Leadership Matters** to try and illustrate how Illinois schools and school groups have pitched in to assist with the Hurricane Harvey relief efforts.

If you would like your school district to be included in this special section, please submit a photo and/or a short item (two or three paragraphs) to IASA Director of Communications Mike Chamness at mchamness@iasaedu.org by **September 20**. Please include Hurricane Harvey in the subject line of the email. Thanks!

Leadership Matters



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