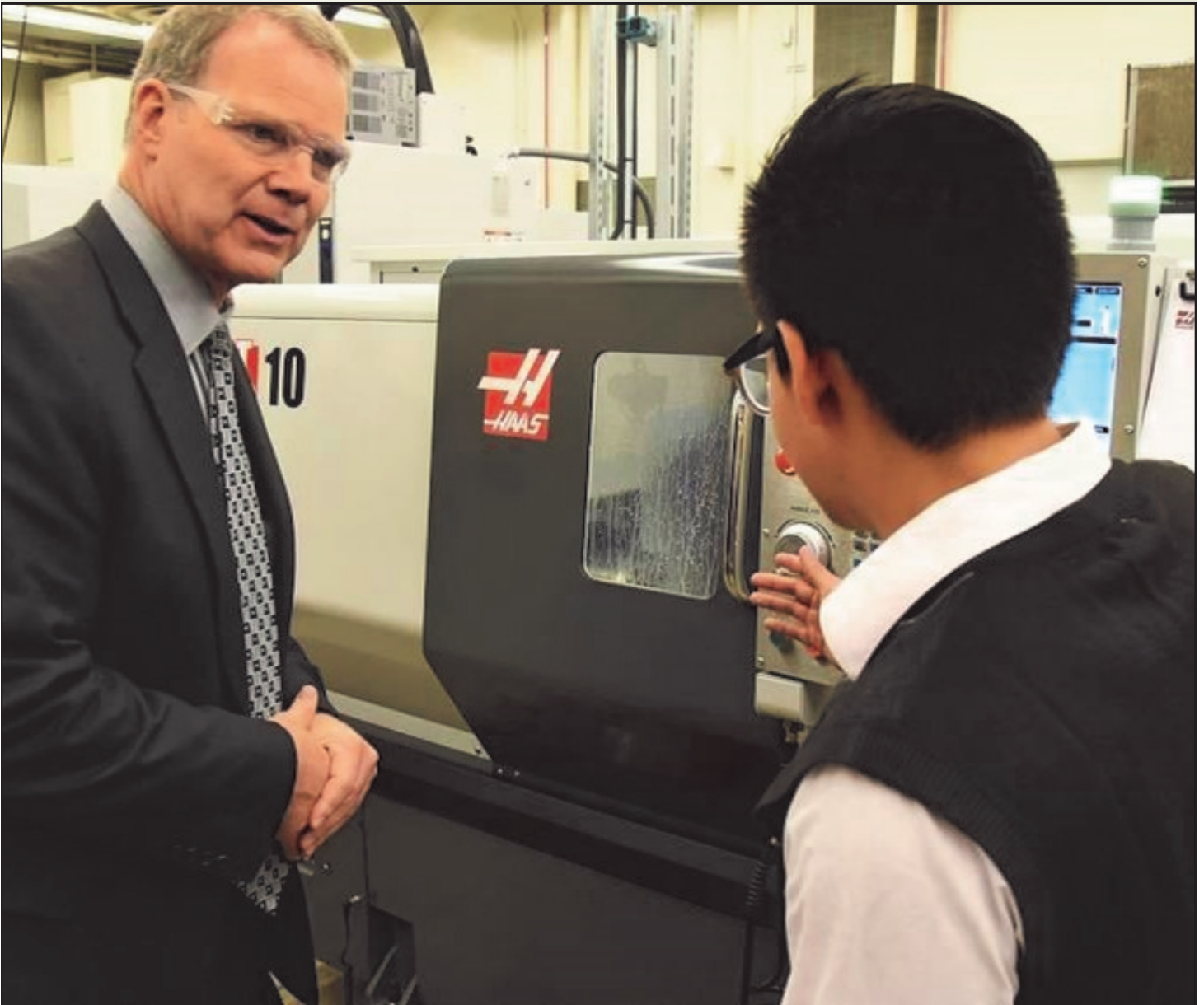


Leadership Matters

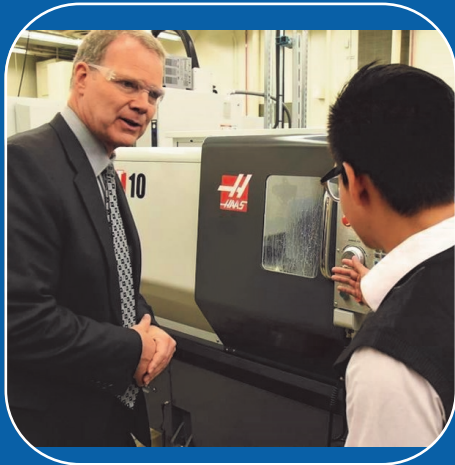


February 2016



State Superintendent looks back on first nine months, outlines public education vision going forward

In this month's issue



State superintendent focuses on innovation, makeover for Illinois schools P. 6



K12 Insight monthly poll question: SAT vs. ACT P. 13



Finding opportunity in challenging circumstances P. 16



In order to succeed the superintendent must train the board to lead P. 17

Additional Items

- ◆ Phoenix Program part of effort to customize learning in Danville P. 8
- ◆ Oregon High program emphasizes skill mastery P. 9
- ◆ Freshman Mentoring Program pays long-term dividends at Normal West High P. 10
- ◆ IASA News in Brief P. 20
- ◆ IASA Calendar of Events P. 22



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State of the State: Poetry or Prose?



Message from the Executive Director Dr. Brent Clark

My reaction to Governor Rauner's State of the State speech in which he outlined a 10-point plan for education could be summed up as being impressed with the "What" but wondering about the "How." Parts of the plan certainly seem to align with our Vision 20/20 blueprint for the future of public education in Illinois. But, as many people have wondered, are we campaigning or

governing?

The first point in Rauner's plan is to work with Senate President John Cullerton on a new school funding formula. I don't think it is a coincidence that this goal is listed first. Not only is it vitally important to revamp the formula, this proposal, along with Rauner embracing Cullerton's pension reform plan, may be the first signs of thawing in the budget Cold War – at least where Cullerton is concerned. House Speaker Michael Madigan adopted a wait-and-see stance after the speech and no budget deal gets done without his stamp of approval.

Cullerton has characterized school funding reform as his "Turnaround Agenda."

While the Senate President supports the formula fix proposed by his former chief of staff, Senator Andy Manar, Governor Rauner's goal included the caveat that state support for low-income and rural districts would be increased "without taking money away from any other districts." That hold-harmless clause would remove many of the political obstacles that have prevented fixing the formula that was last revised 19 years ago. It's the approach that appears to be politically doable.

Of course, that's where the "How" becomes critical because that goal cannot be accomplished without investing additional dollars in the public school formula, a fact Cullerton acknowledged,

saying "it's something we can work on." The timing would appear to be perfect to include the evidence-based funding model that was part of Vision 20/20 and was co-sponsored last year by Republican Senator Jason Barickman and Democrat Senator Manar. Perhaps a blended approach combining the best elements of both plans could emerge and resolve this issue.

The impact of Vision 20/20 also seems evident in another of Rauner's goals that calls for developing a "comprehensive, consistent, objective student growth measure, not necessarily based on the PARCC system, so we can track our students' progress in each grade towards college or career, holding our schools accountable for results while eliminating unnecessary testing and bureaucratic mandates."

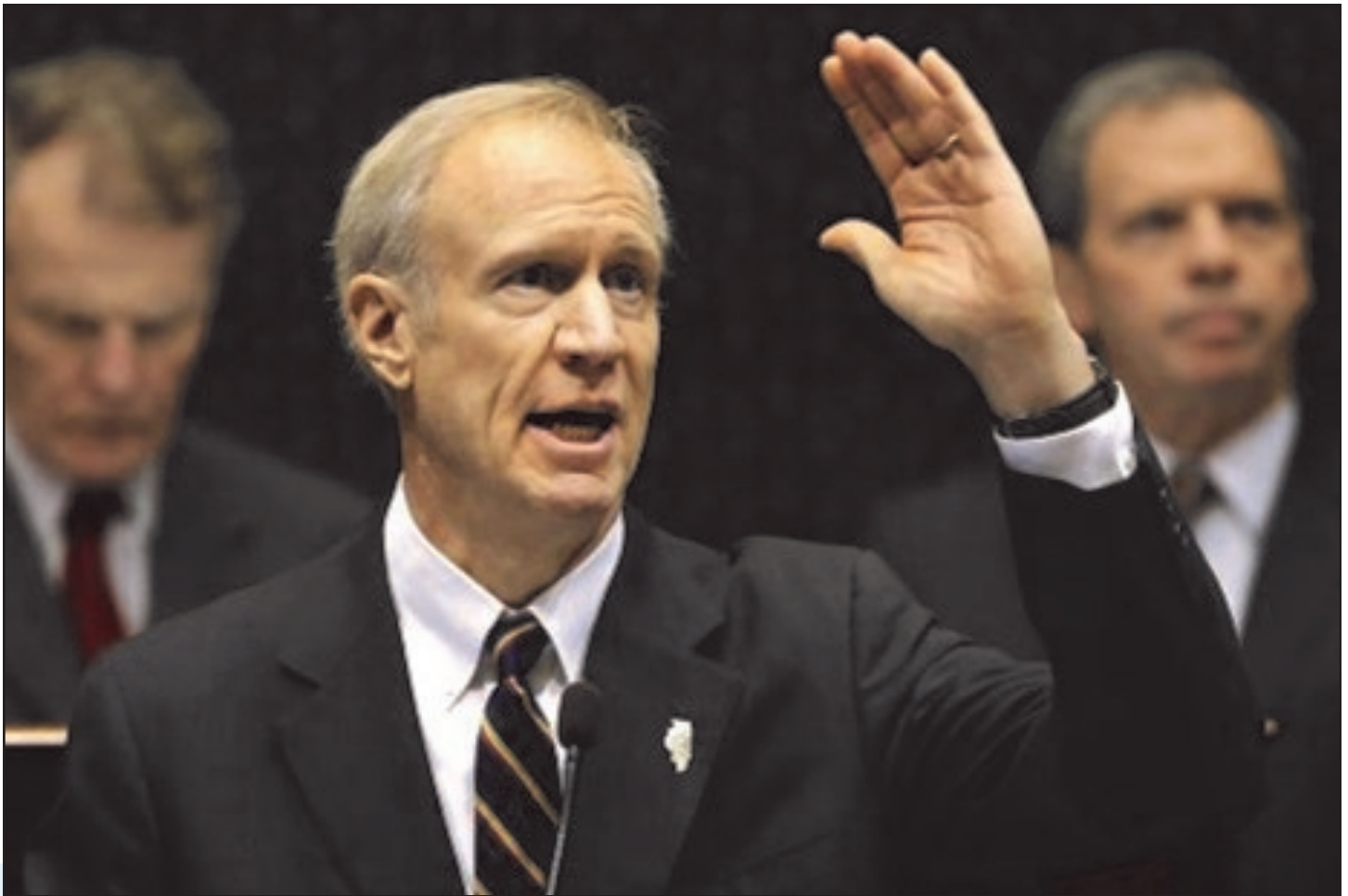
Vision 20/20 promotes educating the whole child, less emphasis on standardized tests, the importance of vocational education and a new way in which to evaluate the effectiveness of schools called the Illinois Balanced Accountability Measure (IBAM). IBAM, which was designed to reduce the weight given to standardized tests and compliance checks, was signed into law by the governor last summer. It would give schools the flexibility to also include in their assessment unique programs and characteristics -- such as excellent agriculture, vocational or

entrepreneurial programs – that are important to their students and communities.

The recent passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) likely will require some fine-tuning of IBAM to make certain that Illinois is in full compliance with federal regulations. Our Legal Counsel Sara Boucek already is working with ISBE and the U.S. Department of Education and we are confident that those things will be resolved.

Other parts of the Governor's 10-point plan that would be hard for anyone to argue with are to provide proper funding for early childhood education and supporting partnerships between high schools and community colleges with local employers to provide

Still, there were a few sound bites and intangibles that left me with some optimism. The "How" was not explained in detail (the governor's Budget Address is scheduled for February 17 one week after President Obama will have addressed the General Assembly), but the fact that education was front and center in Governor Rauner's address was encouraging and many of the points listed above certainly seem to be items we can work with going forward.



Governor Bruce Rauner delivers his second State of the State address with House Speaker Michael Madigan (left) and Senate President John Cullerton in the background.

internships and training for students heading to careers rather than universities.

While Rauner's tone was more conciliatory during the State of the State, some of his education goals reflect his core "Turnaround Agenda," such as eliminating collective bargaining for teachers and other public employees. His speech also contained reference again to a property tax freeze that could be financially draining for many school districts and municipalities. Other references included unfunded mandate relief, specifically allowing for third-party contracting.

I am well aware that the reaction of some school administrators to the governor's remarks was lukewarm and we all want to see some results. After all, the state of this state is not something to be generally applauded. While we are fortunate enough to have a budget for K-12, most other agencies do not and the state still is spending more than it is taking in thanks to the rollback of the state income tax to 3.75 percent and court orders requiring payment of many social services. As far as when a budget agreement might finally happen, at least one legislative leader, Senate Republican Leader

Christine Radogno, was quoted as saying it might be "years" (yes, years plural).

Still, there were a few sound bites and intangibles that left me with some optimism. The "How" was not explained in detail (the Governor's Budget Address is scheduled for February 17 one week after President Obama will have addressed the General Assembly), but the fact that education was front and center in Governor Rauner's address was encouraging and many of the points listed above certainly seem to be items we can work with going forward.

The fact that Rauner and Cullerton appear to be playing nice and closing in on forming a partnership on a couple of fronts, along with Madigan indicating that he looks forward to reviewing the proposals, leaves me cautiously hopeful that a larger budget deal may eventually be forthcoming. Of course, based on recent history, this uneasy alliance could turn chaotic at any moment.

I've always heard that you campaign in poetry and you govern in prose. It's time for more prose.

Brent Clark



IASA will be offering an Aspiring Superintendent Academy (ASA) for those school leaders considering the superintendency. This five day summer learning academy will sharpen participants' leadership knowledge and skills and give them a view of the modern superintendency. Aligned with the ISLLC Standards, the program will be a fast-paced, authentic *Learning Academy* where attendees will participate in simulations and produce meaningful activities that reflect the current expectations of superintendents.

Dates: July 11-15, 2016

Location: IASA office in Springfield

Class Topics include:

- School district leadership
- Communication strategies
- School district operations
- Community engagement
- Action planning and next steps

For additional information and application [click here.](#)

Despite distractions, state superintendent focuses on innovation, makeover for Illinois schools

By Michael Chamness
IASA Director of Communications

As he approaches his one year anniversary, State Superintendent Dr. Tony Smith remains undeterred about the future of public schools in Illinois. He's not oblivious to the political and budgetary quagmire that is holding the state hostage, but in a recent interview he reiterated his confidence in the ability of local school districts to accomplish great things in the face of long odds. He also doubled down on transformational leadership.

"There is so much really good work going on in districts across the state. We want to talk about what good looks like and give districts the flexibility to achieve those things," said Smith, who was sworn in as state superintendent April 15, 2015. "I have spent this first year working to connect with districts and build relationships that are grounded in what's good and right for kids.

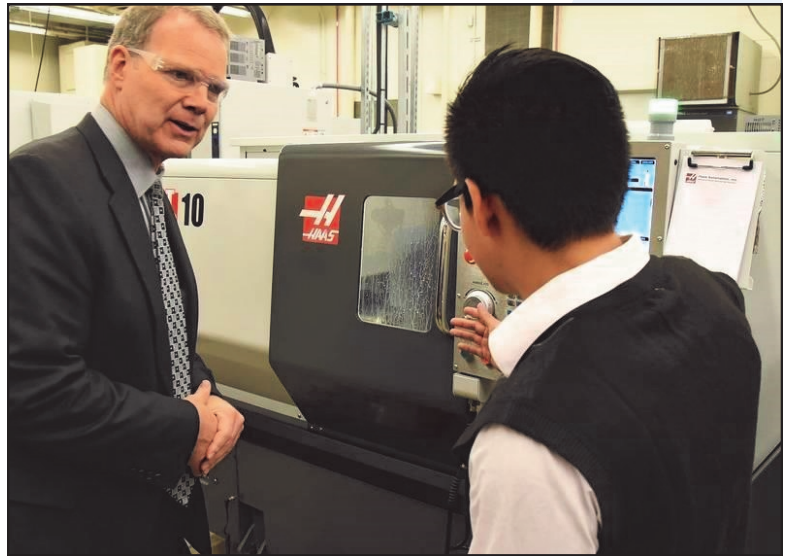
"I want ISBE to be an agency that knows, understands and supports local districts. I want us to be more purpose driven and understand what service means. Part of the accountability equation is asking how we can help. Districts need help, not punishment. I think that discourse is more alive than it used to be, but trust is hard to get and easy to lose."

Smith lists a couple of items as being part of laying a good foundation for the changes he would like to implement. One was the State Board adopting a new set of goals as part of its strategic plan. The other was adoption of a budget proposal for the 2016-17 school year that attempts to more equitably fund poorer school districts.

The goals include:

- ◆ All kindergarteners assessed for readiness
- ◆ 90 percent or more third-grade students reading at or above grade level
- ◆ 90 percent or more fifth-grade students meeting or exceeding expectations in math
- ◆ 90 percent or more students on track to graduate with their cohort at the end of ninth grade
- ◆ 90 percent or more students graduate from high school ready for college and careers

The bar has been set quite high, Smith acknowledged, but he characterized the goals as being "clear and personalized."



Junior Luis Miranda demonstrates a CNC Lathe in his Advanced Manufacturing Technology class to State Superintendent Dr. Tony Smith during a tour of District 211's STEM program at Palatine High School.

"Different kids need different kinds of support and these concrete goals will help us pinpoint what specific, targeted supports and resources are needed to close gaps and help every student reach these levels of success."

Senate President John Cullerton has labeled school funding reform the top legislative priority for 2016, but Smith is not banking on a political fix that has proven to be quite elusive, not to mention the current legislative gridlock. The FY2017 budget that Smith proposed and the State Board adopted has yet to go through that legislative process, but it reflects Smith's commitment to move away from a school funding formula that most everyone agrees is archaic and inequitable. Simply put, the proposal pretty much holds wealthier districts harmless (the biggest state funding loss being less than 1 percent) while sending new money to poorer districts, resulting in increases ranging from 2 percent to 5 percent. Smith said estimates show that 77 percent of the highest-need kids would benefit from the proposed budget.

The sticking points are that Smith's proposal requires shifting some \$300 million from one of the special education line items into General State Aid and also adding another \$300 million in new revenue. Discussing the transfer of any special ed funding can be a touchy subject politically, and no one knows where additional revenue might come from given the state's dismal fiscal condition.

“One of our missions is to take a stand and be an advocate for public education,” said Smith, noting that since FY 2010 Illinois schools have lost roughly \$3.8 billion in education funding. “The budget we proposed is grounded in the principles and values that should be a precursor for the General Assembly.

“This years budget recommendation is groundbreaking as our staff worked to find innovative ways within statutory constraints to prioritize dollars.... We realize that the GSA formula is not ideal; however, by funneling as many funds as possible through this formula, the state will be closer to achieving the goal of equitable funding while awaiting major statutory change necessary to fully and finally accomplish this landmark goal.”

In addition to addressing the school funding issue, Smith laid out two other major goals: creating “Districts of Innovation” and a redesign of high schools in the state.

The notion behind “Districts of Innovation” is to give school districts flexibility and to “encourage behavior that gets great results.” Smith said the plan is to use the Regional Offices of Education (ROEs) around the state to monitor the programs and make sure that outcomes are aligned to the main goals adopted by the State Board.

“The regional superintendents are in a better position to know what’s really going on at the local level and to make sure the programs are authentic,” Smith said.

The makeover of high schools in Illinois is at the center of the transformation Smith envisions for the state. It is based on some simple but hard to achieve, concepts such as the ability to demonstrate mastery of a subject rather than the amount of time spent on a subject, and creating new pathways to college and careers.

“What does being ready for the world look like today? It involves rethinking some approaches. The ability to demonstrated mastery should count more than the amount of time spent in class,” Smith said.



Normal West High School was cited by State Superintendent Dr. Tony Smith as an example because of its Freshman Mentoring program.

In his travels around the state, Smith said he has gotten glimpses of the future in places like Normal, Danville and Oregon (Illinois), which have high school programs he described as being on the cutting edge (see Pages 8 - 11 for closer looks at these programs).

“I have seen so many exciting things going on in districts throughout the state. I’m talking about entrepreneurship, kids designing their own curriculum and coursework, demand planning with an eye on available jobs in a 50-mile radius, internships and programs focusing on agriculture, science, engineering, and computer coding. One student developed an app that prevents texting while driving.

“These things are alive in pieces, but many of them are under the radar. We’re dealing with a different landscape politically and we’re talking about creating programs that are assets for their communities. We must meet our students where they are. This could really be big if it is the kind of engagement kids want, if they know it counts and that it will help them find a good job in this economy.”

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-- Illinois State Superintendent Dr. Tony Smith

Phoenix Program part of effort to customize learning in Danville



Dr. Alicia Geddis,
superintendent,
Danville 118

Danville District 118 prides itself in the award winning musical talents, athletics, and the academic readiness of its students as they approach higher education. However, this is not enough when we seek to reach all of our students and to differentiate our instructional programming to accommodate their needs. A “one-size-fits-all approach” may not meet the needs of all of our high school students in helping them to prepare for

college and career readiness.

Currently, Danville High School has partnership programs with Danville Area Community College (DACC) to help students pursue their interests in college and careers as they offer dual credit courses in core curriculum areas and the College Express Program, which affords students career courses in career and technical education. Additionally, Danville High School collaborates with Vermillion Advantage, a community-based business organization, to provide resources for curriculum planning for career and technical education courses at the high school, as well as the opportunity to access an online interactive career guide called Career Cruising.

While these programs and resources are essential staples in helping most students realize their dream of either a college or career path, as a new superintendent in Danville, I recognized that there was a piece missing when I began to meet with high school students who withdrew or were not successful in the traditional high school setting for a variety of reasons.

The Customized Adult Education Training or “Phoenix Program” was a collaborative effort between the Danville Area Community College (DACC) and Danville District 118 and sought to

provide alternative paths for career readiness for students and strengthen the local community with qualified and motivated individuals in the workforce. This program provides students who are 17 years or older, withdrew from high school, and were significantly deficient in educational credits towards high school graduation diploma requirements. Those who enroll in this program are provided with an opportunity to complete a GED and to have training in skills to prepare for a career. Each individual is interviewed personally by the district administrative team and monitored personally by them while they are in the program to provide encouragement and support.

The pilot program cost approximately \$60,000 for 20 students and the district is responsible for paying half of the cost for the program. After completion of the program, the students will obtain a GED and 11 college credit hours, earn a shop safety certificate,

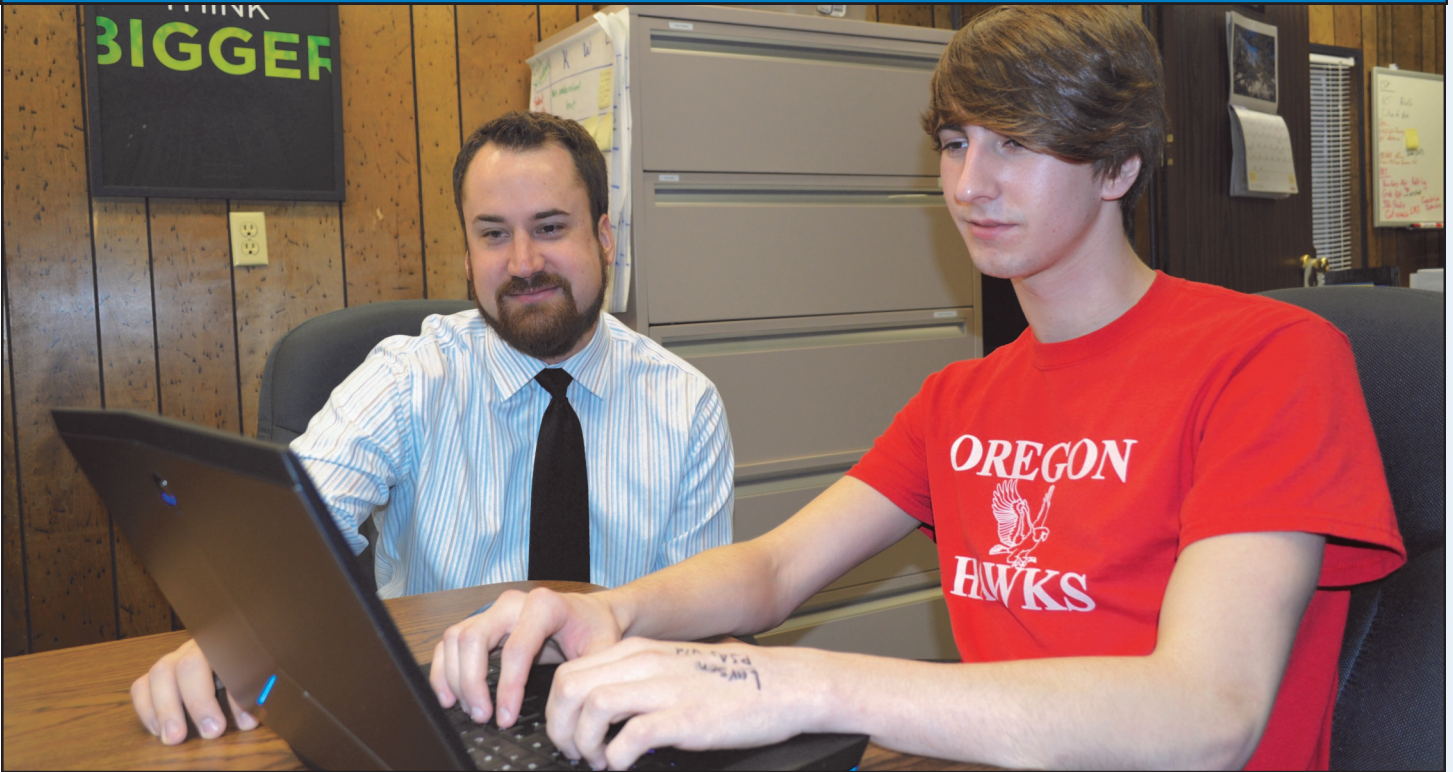
are prepared to take a certified production technician test through the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council and obtain a prepared resume. The courses offered in the Phoenix program provide the springboard into many current career openings in the community, particularly in logistics and manufacturing. Students can serve in internships, which in turn can provide opportunities for further education and full-time employment opportunities.

In addition to the Phoenix Program for students who have dropped out, we also have an

academic support program for students between the ages of 17-20 who are credit deficient and the traditional school setting is not successful for them. This program is located at our alternative school Kenneth D. Bailey Academy to help former students focus on successfully passing with a GED and seeking to go on to a 2 or 4 year higher learning facility to be workforce ready.

Danville District 118 continues to look to find ways to enhance, engage, support and celebrate *all* students. They are valued, recognized, and encouraged as they continue to embark on their educational journey.

“While these programs and resources are essential staples in helping most students realize their dream of either a college or career path, as a new superintendent in Danville, I recognized that there was a piece missing when I began to meet with high school students who withdrew or were not successful in the traditional high school setting for a variety of reasons.”



Oregon (IL) Assistant Superintendent Adam Larsen works with OHS junior Chance Merrill on computer coding. Oregon Superintendent Thomas Mahoney helped implement an Open Program that is in its second year.

Oregon High program emphasizes skill mastery

By Allyse Ketter, Ashley Throw and Chance Merrill of the Class of 2017

On an average day at Oregon High School, one can venture into a classroom and see 15- and 16-year-old students completing non-traditional tasks. A kid is coding computer software in the corner, and opposite him there's a girl designing clothes out of unwanted tee shirts. There's also a group of students designing a summer camp, someone writing a book, and a student organizing a school wide talent show. They have this opportunity to expand their educational experiences through the Open Program (OP), currently in its second year at Oregon High School.

Open Program is a different approach to education catering to those that want to learn through skill mastery and experience rather than traditional letter grades and instruction. Open Program is a year-long program that contains three classes: Algebra II, English II, and a class called Open Lab. The first semester of the program follows traditional instruction in Algebra and English, while in Open Lab, students learn the program's fundamentals in the Four Tenets: Independence, Collaboration, Cross-Circular Knowledge, and Creative Problem-Solving. The Four Tenets are also the foundation for the program's mission statement: *"Create independent problem solvers who do not fear failure but use it as an*

opportunity for growth." Open Program students seek to learn from their failure and grow from both positive and negative experiences, essentially embracing a growth mindset.

One way growth mindset and the Four Tenets are addressed is through standards-based learning starting second semester. Students receive a "Low," "Medium," or "High" score on Common Core standards in both English and math. Standards are assessed through a variety of student-designed tasks such as a letter to the community for English or a typical test for math. After being assessed on a standard, students then have the opportunity to improve and refine their work, helping instill a growth mindset for students. For students, this type of learning is empowering, as they are driven to constantly improve on their learning, directly impacting performance in non-OP courses.

The culminating experience for OP students is the student-created second semester community project tied to the math and English Common Core Standards. Last year these projects ranged from creating a stoichiometry calculator to outlining the second year of study in OP. These projects saw students take true responsibility for the learning, but most importantly, they achieved a self-awareness not often seen in many adults.

Freshman Mentoring Program pays long-term dividends at Normal West High

By Dayna Brown
Director of Communications
and Community Relations
McLean County Unit District 5

McLean County Unit District 5 was looking for ways to help ease the often difficult transition from junior high to high school.

So, a team of teachers traveled north and came back with an idea they thought they could make impact on student success – the Freshman Mentoring Program (FMP).

“We were looking for programs that could provide support for the ‘whole’ student. We discovered the FMP program ... and realized that we had a similar school schedule in which we could relatively easily adapt the FMP program to the unique circumstances at Normal West,” said retired principal Tom Eder.

They took the program they found at Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire and made it their own. Ten years later it has more than exceeded expectations. It has been designed to specifically meet the needs of Normal West students, and is truly part of the fabric of the school’s culture.

“I feel the FMP program not only delivered improved academic achievement among freshman students, but also significant social support resulting



Team building exercises are part of the Freshman Mentoring Program at Normal West High School in McLean County District 5, where Dr. Mark Daniel is superintendent.

in fewer student conflicts, dropouts, a more positive school environment, and tremendous leadership opportunities for upperclassmen. My perspective is that it has been an amazing success,” Eder said.

Normal West has almost 1,700 students and is located in the heart of central Illinois. Its students come from suburban, urban and rural neighborhoods, and the low-income population is about 28 percent.

The purpose of FMP is to encourage the growth



“The academic data we have collected shows that since implementing FMP the number of students failing has decreased. If a high school student gets off to a good start there is a greater chance they are going to finish high school. We see that in our graduation rate.”

--Normal West High School Principal David Johnson

of all students through the efforts of upperclassmen as role models, with the support of faculty advisors. There are a variety of goals they hoped would come out of the program, including encouraging personal responsibility; improving organizational skills; Improving critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making; and most importantly, a commitment to graduate. Evidence of the success can be seen in the school climate, as well as in the school's graduation rate, which is 93 percent.

"The academic data we have collected shows that since implementing FMP the number of students failing has decreased," said Principal David Johnson. "If a high school student gets off to a good start there is a greater chance they are going to finish high school. We see that in our graduation rate."

The week is divided into different activities – speakers, study tables, group discussions and team building, to name a few. Staff members even developed a program "On the Right Track," to help students set goals, and stay academically strong and graduate. Each week in FMP they review goals and progress to make sure they are "on the right track." Students also spend a significant amount of time focusing on college and career readiness, discussing the college process, getting recommendation letters, how to apply for schools, what to do to make a transcript appeal to a college, etc.

There are 435 freshman and 93 mentors in the program this school year. Each mentor is paired with between three and six freshmen.

Freshman Mara Smith enjoys the program and said she benefits from the activities and the ability to build relationships with upper classmen.

"It is a fun program and I like that they (mentors) are there if I have a question or problem in schools," Smith said.

The freshmen contact their mentors before the start of school, so walking in the door they have a relationship with someone.

"It acclimates to the building in a way that the teacher is not going to be able to," said FMP Lead Director Jason Klokkenga. "It gives them a go-to person to talk about things that kids are concerned about, 'Where do I sit in the cafeteria?' 'What do people wear to homecoming?' 'How do you prepare for finals?'"



Study tables and group discussions are also part of the Freshman Mentoring Program at Normal West.

Senior Mitch Fairfield is in his second year as an FMP mentor, and he knew after his great experience in the program as a freshman that he wanted to take on this leadership role.

"I really enjoyed what we did my freshman year. I liked the relationships I built with kids my age, as well as with the upper classmen," said Fairfield, who is headed to Southern Illinois University next fall.

Fairfield – who went through leadership training to take on this mentor role - has four freshmen in his group. They study, play games, work on interpersonal skills, and sometimes just sit and share about how the day is going.

"My goal is to help them get to know each other and build relationships and friendships. We work to provide an environment where there is open communication, and we can share things ... and still have fun," Fairfield said.



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ACT vs. SAT? What test will you administer?

1. Which test will you administer to your juniors this spring?
 - ACT
 - SAT
2. Will you provide the test regardless of whether funding is provided?
 - Yes
 - No
3. Please share any additional thoughts on the ACT/SAT issue.

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**Contact Mary Ellen Buch at 217.753.2213
or mbuch@iasaedu.org
to schedule an Academy
in your area**



Finding opportunity in challenging circumstances

By Joshua Stafford
Superintendent, Vienna 13-3

As the title of this publication indicates, leadership indeed does matter! As a young superintendent, one of the key aspects in the plethora of many to refining my leadership skills has been the when, where, how, how much, when not to, where not to, and how not to of communication. These questions seem to get even further complicated with years of extreme instability in state government and the age-old fact that all things are political and all politics are local.

Our district was faced with the consideration of recovering a property tax rate back to where it had been by implementing a slight increase. We took this question and measured it against the option of further cuts that would directly impact student programs and the seemingly guaranteed passage of some version of a statewide "property tax freeze." While the board was fully committed with a unanimous vote to hold a Truth in Taxation Hearing, a few in the community were hard pressed to understand the language with the legally required publication in the paper.

After a great article published by the paper the same week as the notice, many people were quickly satisfied that it was the best direction. However, one gentleman in the community still was not satisfied and attended the hearing with his interpretation of the situation. Our board listened patiently to his concern and still passed an increased tax levy. The gentlemen was still not pleased and wrote a letter to the editor with a great deal of information that was misleading, out of context, and untrue.

Back to my original statement about the refining of skills! Do we respond? How do we respond? What do we do and don't we say? How can you explain the complexities of tax levies, budgets, state problems, and education formulas for funding while still addressing issues and not attacking or isolating individuals?

These questions were hard to answer, but after

seeking direction from several trusted advisers (a panel of people that God has blessed me with including retired leaders from education and business, communication experts, and dear friends) I determined a path to what the best communication would be, which ended up in a written response via a letter to the editor.

I am finding that conditions that seem to be insurmountable, such as this, in the heat of the moment are actually opportunities. In my communication back, I was not only able to address the original letter, but established a presence in some

circles that otherwise I didn't have access to, and was also able to publicly support the board of education, staff, students, and taxpayers in our district. Additionally, we were able to provide more information to all stakeholders about the financial condition of education than we

have ever been able to before.

Following my response, a person for which I have a great deal of respect offered his experience on this overall situation that seems to plague most schools in the state. Mr. Toby Hightower's wisdom, accompanied by his sense of humor, was not only good for the community, but was also appreciated by me and further led me to establish an enhanced perspective. I hope that you enjoy reading his musing of where many of us currently find ourselves as we strive to inspire students to become positive, lifelong learners.



Horace "Toby" Hightower, left and Vienna Superintendent Josh Stafford.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A little disagreement between friends

The Vienna Times has aired a letter from Billy Fairless and a response from Supt. Josh Stafford in recent weeks.

These two fellows are a lot of years apart but they both happen to be dear to me. When I was principal at Vienna, I taught Billy in



By Horace "Toby" Hightower
Former VHS principal

increased by that amount as well.

A night was set for a bud-

joke with Mr. McCormack, so I called him in and showed him that we had sources other than taxes which furnished us income. These sources had provided us with almost the exact amount of our "other expenses."

With tongue firmly in cheek, I asked Mr. McCor-

Click [here](#) to view the full article.

In order to succeed, the superintendent must train the board to lead

Since the tenure of the superintendent depends on a positive relationship with the board, the superintendent must promote board training. Don McAdams (2003), president of the Center for Reform, states that “Effective Superintendents know that in addition to everything else they do, they must lead the board and take responsibility for its training. It is a paradox. The superintendent works for the board, yet the superintendent must accept responsibility for educating the board and showing the board how to lead.” In other words, the superintendent must train the board to lead, for the superintendent to succeed!

In order for the board and its superintendent to be successful at governing, the board needs a skilled superintendent. The key to making the relationship work is on-going training. According to the Iowa Lighthouse Study, the research is crystal clear; board training is a vital indicator of successful school districts, including those that beat the odds and raised student achievement despite negative variables such as poverty.

Research also suggests that most school boards intend to provide good leadership but often lack the vision and the necessary skills to implement a vision. They seldom participate in professional development without the encouragement of the superintendent. Often, boards look to the superintendent for information and guidance on various educational and governance issues.

A clear understanding of roles and duties is the most important training topic for the board and superintendent and is the foundation of their relationship. As the board is responsible for developing the district’s ends, comprised of the vision, mission, goal and policies, the superintendent is responsible for the guidance, planning and implementation for the accomplishment of district ends.

This process requires communication and trust between the board and the superintendent. Collaboration is essential to carry out the districts’ ends and it impacts the overall success of school districts. It also largely determines the longevity of superintendents because their tenure is

based upon the boards’ satisfaction with their governing work.

What training does a superintendent receive to help develop a positive board and superintendent relationship? On-the-job training is the norm for most superintendents. This unfortunately leaves most superintendents struggling and too often makes them unsuccessful.

Illinois’ aspiring superintendents typically adhere to the leadership standards as outlined in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium. These standards reflect the major roles, expectations, and accountability required by the superintendent for

teachers, students, and parents. The standards do not, however, address the superintendent’s roles, expectations and accountability to the board. Neither do they address the political and hidden agendas, and other unspoken expectations that boards, as employers, can expect from their superintendents. How should a superintendent handle such expectations? Answer: superintendents must be informed or advised through TRAINING!

To effectively promote board training, the superintendent must build and maintain a relationship with the board based in part on common expectations. Expectations begin at the very outset of the superintendent search process. Next, the superintendent should know the vital areas of board training that often wreak havoc for school boards, such as roles and duties, finance, legal concerns, and board/superintendent communication.

Concerning training venues, the superintendent can promote training in several ways. For instance, the superintendent can play a role in board orientation. The superintendent can also keep the board abreast of legislative issues, and hot topics in education, and schedule special board retreats with consultants of their state school board association. There is no single method to promote training, but training is indicative of a successful governance team, and if the superintendent is to succeed, the superintendent must help lead the board.

References: McAdams, D.R. (2003). Training Your Board to Lead-The Board-Savvy Superintendent. School Administrator.



By Dr. Patrick Rice, Director Field Services, IASB and Dr. Pamela Manning, Assistant Professor of Education, McKendree University

Metropolitan School Employee Benefits Program



The Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA), the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) and the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO) are proud to introduce the Metropolitan School Employee Benefits Program sponsorship and Mesirow Financial as our employee benefits broker.

Headquartered in Chicago, Mesirow Financial is a diversified financial services firm that will service those school districts in Cook and the surrounding DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties. Mesirow Financial has customized employee benefits programs specific to IASA, IASB and IASBO members in this area. We are calling this program the Metropolitan School Employee Benefits Program (MSEBP).

Employee Benefits Cost Savings Strategies

Evaluation of Current Health Insurance Program A comprehensive analysis of employee benefits programs, including trend analysis and model plan design alternatives so you can see what factors are driving health care costs and how to control them.

Procurement System Our online bidding and contract management system saves school districts on average 35% on Life/AD&D & Disability programs.

Wellness Wellness program evaluation, need analysis and customized wellness strategies help to create a healthier, more productive employee population.

Advanced Technology

Human Resource Management System Our integrated HR system manages the employee life cycle from pre-hire to retire by processing payroll, HRIS and benefits data in a single paperless platform.

Online Benefits Enrollment Platform A web-based, state of the art platform for benefits administration that reduces administrative costs, time consuming paperwork and errors while educating employees about their benefit options.

Investment Advisory services offered through Mesirow Financial Investment Management, Inc., an SEC Registered Investment Advisor. Securities offered through Mesirow Financial, Inc. Member NYSE, SIPC. Insurance services offered through Mesirow Insurance Services, Inc.

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rformell@mesirofinancial.com



2015-2016 Senate Bill 7 Performance Rankings Tool software available for purchase



Illinois School

Districts continue to comply with requirements of education reforms. As such, the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) has worked to provide support via the Senate Bill 7 Performance Rankings File.

Since the creation of the software, more than 400 school districts have used the software to help with making important staffing decisions. This program gives districts a method of managing district positions aligned to local qualifications, teachers' credentials and performance ratings. The program compiles this local data and creates reports needed to comply with Senate Bill 7.

The annual licensing fee of \$275 for members and \$550 for non-members remains the same this year.

If you would like to purchase the IASA SB 7 Performance Rating file, please click [here](#).

Please note that previous versions of the IASA Senate Bill 7 Performance Rankings File are no longer supported. Also, the service method for the 2015-2016 software will be via email only at sb7@iasasureys.org.



Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) Uses Website to Connect Employers with Job Seekers.

The Illinois Education Job Banksm has been redesigned to combine a more user-friendly interface, professional layout and enhancements such as the ability to apply online and manage resumes and vacancies easier. Whether you are seeking qualified applicants to fill permanent, interim, part or full-time vacancies, the Illinois Education Job Banksm makes posting jobs and finding candidates as easy as **1-2-3!**

With over **1,000** Illinois school districts and other educational institutions subscribing to the Illinois Education Job Banksm, the proof is in the numbers. Since 1999, the Job Bank has provided the opportunity for more than **75,000** vacancies and **100,000** profiles to be posted online.

FOR EMPLOYERS...

You can post vacancies and find candidates with ease and security.

New and enhanced features include the following:

- Quick and easy account setup
- Maintain complete control of job posting information, posting date and duration
- When you post an opening on the IASA Job Bank, the opening is also included on the school district's website without the school district reposting the information simply by setting up the RSS Feed
- Maintain low costs with minimal yearly fee
- Add customized questions to online applications
- Search for candidate features such as languages, skills and more
- Set up and maintain multiple profiles and users
- Save favorite candidates from job applications

FOR JOB SEEKERS...

You can search, save resumes and apply online for **free**.

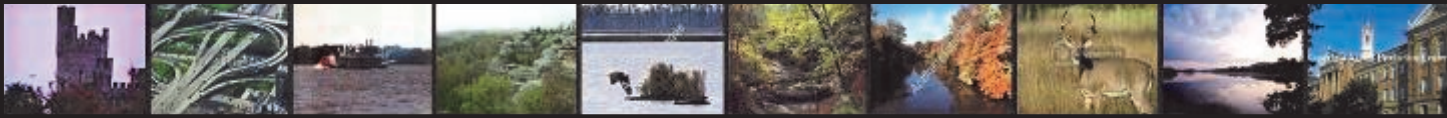
New and enhanced features include the following:

- Search from hundreds of openings throughout the state
- Create and maintain profiles and resumes in our secure online Job Search Portal
- Save and update your profile information including education, certification, employment, references, skills and more
- Set up convenient e-mail job alerts and notifications
- Save job listings, searches and applications

www.illinoiseducationjobbank.org



IASA News in Brief



AASA National Conference on Education February 11-13, 2016 in Phoenix



The 2016 AASA National Conference on Education will be held in Phoenix on February 11-13. Registration and housing is open. The preferred hotel for the Illinois delegation is the Sheraton Grand Phoenix Hotel. Go to <http://nce.aasa.org/> for additional information.

Superintendent of the Year Reception

A reception for the 2016 Illinois Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Judy Hackett of the Northwest Suburban Special Education Organization is scheduled for 5:30 to 7 p.m., Friday, February 12, 2016, at the Sheraton Grand Phoenix Hotel (Valley Overlook room).

Future AASA Conferences:

March 2-4, 2017 - New Orleans



Is your district hiring for the upcoming school year? If you're seeking administrators, classroom teachers, or school service personnel the Educators' Job Fair will feature candidates from both the University of Illinois and Eastern Illinois University.

Date: Monday, March 7th, 2016
Location: Hilton Garden Inn, Champaign, IL

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Registration Fee: \$175

Click [here](#) for additional information or to register.

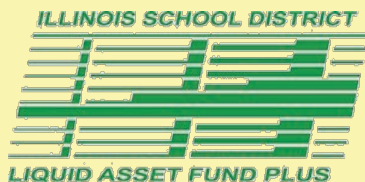
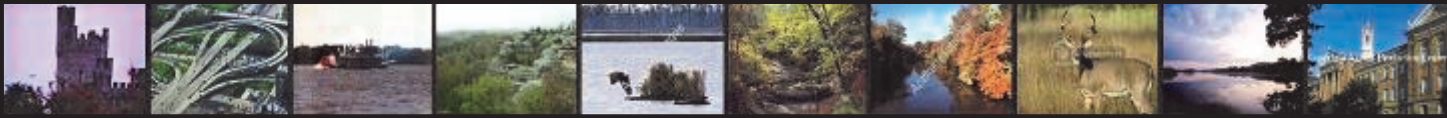
Woodridge student awarded Patriot Pen Award



Lilly Ford, left, student at Thomas Jefferson Junior High School in Woodridge School District 68, was recently awarded second place at the VFW District 19 Patriot's Pen Awards for her essay on "Why I Appreciate America's Veterans." Pictured with her is Bob Reichert, Commander of VFW Post 1578 in Woodridge. Three additional Jefferson students' writing talents were acknowledged as well: Kevin Dzitkowski, Jacob Poeschel, and Josh Roddy. Dr. Cathy Skinner is superintendent.



IASA News in Brief



ISDLAF+ February 2016 Monthly Update

Click [here](#) to view the February 2016 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.

In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we inform you that former IASA member Dr. Elmer Kirchoff passed away January 23. Dr. Kirchoff served as superintendent of Cahokia School District 187 from 1988 - 1995.

SIU Southern Illinois University CARBONDALE

19th Annual Southern Illinois Educational Leadership Conference

Date: March 23, 2016

Location: SIU Carbondale, Student Center

Cultivating Strong Practical P-20 Partnerships

Keynote: Beth Purvis, Illinois Secretary of Education

Breakout Sessions include:

- Legal Issues
- Community and Institution Partnerships
- Technology and Education
- Student Success
- Local, State and Federal Funding

Join us as we continue to strengthen the southern Illinois leadership network and school partnerships!

Visit www.continuinged.siu.edu for program updates or to register online!

Call for Proposals

Proposals are being sought for presentations for the 2016 conference. Email title, brief description and names of additional presenters to:

EAHELLeadershipConf@gmail.com

Deadline is February 12, 2016

Click [here](#) for a flyer.

February 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Shawnee Region Mtg.	2	3	4 Cook South/ Corn Belt Region Mtg.	5	6
7	8	9	10 Cook West/ Illini Region Mtg.	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 Central Illinois Valley Region Mtg.	19 Kaskaskia/ Western Region Mtg.	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
			IASA Committee meetings	IASA Board and Committee meetings		
28	29					

Click on a color-coded date to open a link for more information about the event.

**IASA
Event**

**Professional
Development
Event**

**Legislative
Event**

**Region
Meeting
(Contact your
Region President
for details)**

March 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Shawnee/ Two Rivers Region Mtg.	2	3 Corn Belt Region Mtg.	4	5
6	7 Blackhawk Region Mtg.	8 Starved Rock Region Mtg.	9 DuPage/ Illini Region Mtg. IASA-ISBE Advisory Committee mtg.	10	11 Cook North/ Kaskaskia Region Mtg.	12
13	14	15 Abe Lincoln Region Mtg.	16	17 Central IL Valley/ Three Rivers Region Mtg.	18 Western Region Mtg.	19
20	21	22	23 19 th Annual Southern IL Educational Leadership	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Click on a color-coded date to open a link for more information about the event.

**IASA
Event**

**Professional
Development
Event**

**Legislative
Event**

**Region
Meeting
(Contact your
Region President
for details)**

vpa is a communications firm dedicated to helping its clients improve their relationships with their communities.

VPA is a firm uniquely positioned to assist school districts get their message out to the people they serve in an effective, affordable manner. VPA brings more than 20 years of experience in local, state and federal public affairs to each assignment.

Crisis communications is just a part of our work. Strategic communications help you build trust and improve your relationships.

WE PROVIDE:

- Communications Strategy
- Editorial Services
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- Public Affairs
- Media Relations
- Crisis Communications
- Internal and External Communications
- Event Management

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Service and project-based contracting available. Call for pricing information at 217-341-3849 or email us at vpaininois@gmail.com.



**Indoor Air Quality
Tools for Schools
Action Kit**



The Action Kit provides best practices, industry guidelines, sample policies and a sample IAQ management plan to improve school air at little or no cost

Get the Action Kit!

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Worried about the reporting & tracking requirements for ACA?
We've got you covered.

We know the Affordable Care Act is new to everyone so we decided to cut through the noise and build a set of simple but powerful tools that won't break the bank

How does the ISEBC Help?



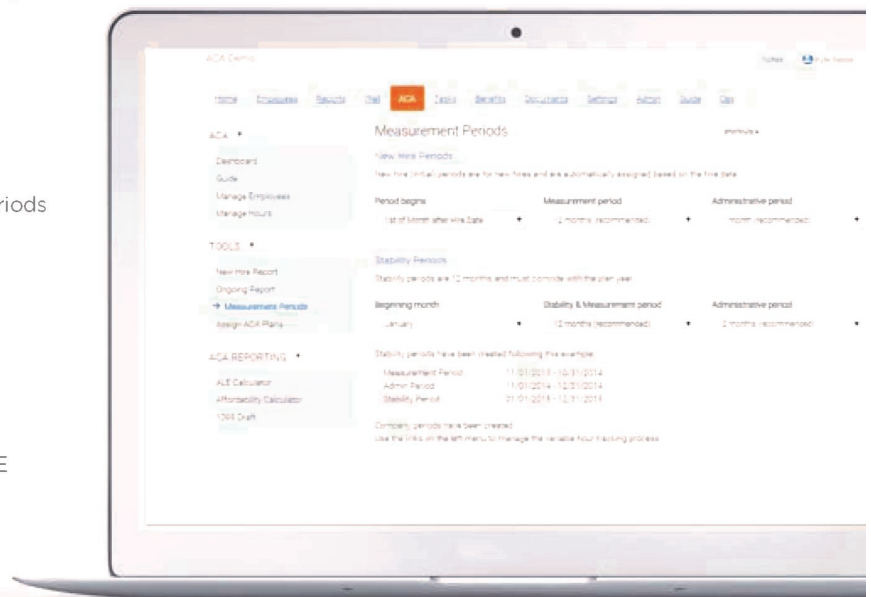
Eligibility tracking for hourly employees

- Set-up stability and administrative periods
- Easily track hours during measurement periods
- Quickly identify eligible employees



The best data collection tool for 1094/1095 reporting

- Track and categorize your employees
- Import health plan enrollment data
- Calculate affordability & your monthly FTE
- Generate 1094-C and 1095-C



A bureaucratic nightmare

So you don't think you need a system; think again. Employers are required to compile monthly hours worked for all hourly employees, categorize owners and seasonal employees and more. Finally companies need to track eligibility periods for all employees as well as offers of coverage & enrollment dates. Did we mention that the data also needs to be totaled on the 1094-C?

We built our ACA tracking tools from the ground up, making them easy to use and the most cost effective solution available. Don't bother spending tens of thousands of dollars on a system that takes months to configure, our ACA dashboard is ready to go out of the box.

Are you a large employer?

You are considered an Applicable Large Employer (ALE) under The Affordable Care Act if your company has 50+ full-time (FT) employees or equivalents. Compliance with the ACA employer mandate in 2015 is based on the size of your company in 2014.

Are you ready to give employees a 1095-C?

ALE's must give every employee a 1095-C each January which details health insurance enrollment and affordability information. The data itself isn't complicated, compiling it from multiple systems, now that's another story.

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INSURANCE SERVICES**

Est. 1987

For additional information, please call Stan Travelstead or Jeremy Travelstead 877-698-2247



Membership includes:

◆ Legal Support Program

IASA's in-house attorney provides legal counsel regarding superintendent contracts and legal assistance in job-related legal actions or proceedings.

◆ Return of Dues Program

A payment proportionate to the amount of dues paid during the past 10 consecutive years is made to a member's beneficiary upon an active member's death.

◆ Mentoring

Whether it is through one-on-one contact with the IASA Executive Director or through one of the Field Services Directors, members have quick access to experienced school administrators.

◆ Legislative Advocacy

IASA's governmental relations director tracks legislation that affects public education, lobbies on behalf of IASA's positions and keeps members informed with *Capitol Watch* updates and analysis.

◆ Professional Development

IASA's professional development director offers timely academies, workshops and blogs that provide helpful instruction to deal with emerging issues facing school leaders.

◆ Communications Services

IASA's communications director assists superintendents in the development of talking points, media statements or letters to parents regarding issues that arise in a school district.

◆ Conference Opportunities

IASA's Annual Conference in the fall and its biennial Alliance Leadership Summit in the spring offer members the opportunity to hear from nationally known speakers and to network with colleagues from throughout the state.

Renew your membership or join IASA today

For more information or to join or renew online, go to the IASA website at www.iasaedu.org and click on the Membership Tab at the top of the page.

If you have any questions, please contact Misti at 217.753.2213 or mmurphy@iasaedu.org.



Call for Presentations

IASA Annual Conference
Sept. 28-30, 2016

**President Abraham Lincoln
Hotel by DoubleTree and the
Prairie Capital Convention
Center
Springfield, Illinois**

*Annually, hundreds of school
leaders attend IASA's Annual
Conference for the purpose of
increasing their professional
growth.*

Key Dates:

*Submission Deadline: May 13, 2016
Presenters Notified: Mid-July 2016*

Questions:

Contact Jodi Gillespie,
Panel Coordinator,
at 217/753-2213 or
jgillespie@iasaedu.org.

The Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) is soliciting breakout session proposals for the IASA Annual Conference, scheduled on September 28-30, 2016, at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel by Double Tree and the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield, IL. This is an opportunity to share your best practices on educational issues with your colleagues. Past sessions have addressed topics such as: assessments; technology; short-term borrowing solutions for schools; retirement planning for school professionals; violence prevention programs; curriculum alignment; hiring and evaluation of personnel; legal updates and school district reorganization. We look forward to reviewing what you have to offer!

Breakout sessions will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Thursday, September 29, 2016 and 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., Friday, September 30, 2016.

Guidelines and Criteria:

- No more than two proposals per person will be considered.
- Speakers do not need to be IASA members in order to submit a presentation proposal; however, if a proposal is accepted for presentation, speakers will be required to pay the full conference registration fee if they are eligible for any class of IASA membership.
- IASA reserves the right to edit session titles and descriptions for marketing purposes.
- All breakout sessions have a moderator that will be assigned by IASA.
- Audio/visual equipment needs must be provided via this proposal. The standard audio/visual equipment provided by IASA includes LCD projector, screen, podium, and a microphone. Computers, internet connections, or other audio/visual equipment will be at the cost of the presenter. There are no exceptions.
- Presenters will be required to provide an electronic copy of their handouts three weeks prior to the conference. There are no exceptions.
- Presenters will be responsible for providing the handouts for the attendees.
- All presentations must adhere to copyright laws.
- Presentations accepted by IASA may not be altered or changed without approval.
- IASA reserves the right to record sessions and make those audio and/or video recordings, available to its members. Likewise, photos will be taken for inclusion on the IASA website. By returning the proposal form, you and the other presenters listed, agree to be recorded.
- IASA will not pay an honorarium, speaker fees or travel expenses.
- Please note that proposals constituting sales promotions for products or services will not be considered (proposals submitted by vendors).

*To submit a proposal for a breakout session,
Please click [here](#) to complete the form.*

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Take Advantage of Your

MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

YOU AND YOUR FIRM ARE *invited* TO PARTICIPATE IN THE...

52ND ANNUAL IASA CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 28-30, 2016

- ◆ Reserve a Booth
- ◆ Host a Hospitality Suite for Attendees
- ◆ Sponsor an Event, Meal or Speaker

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MARKETPLACE

HOSPITALITY SUITES

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Meal Sponsorship

Wednesday - Opening Ceremony Speaker, Evening Welcoming Reception

Thursday - Second General Session Speaker, Third General Session Speaker,
Evening President's Reception

Thursday & Friday - Breakout Sessions

Friday - Closing General Session Speaker

Program Booklet

Event Website

Click [here](#) for Details

Stunning design, sharp communication

Congratulations to Barrington 220 School District, Community Unit School District 308, and Evanston/Skokie School District 65 on their brilliant new websites! Their responsively designed websites adapt to all devices, house family and community resources, and directly connect with social media for modern communication.



Community Unit School District 308
Oswego, IL

Evanston/Skokie School District 65
Evanston, IL

Barrington 220 School District
Barrington, IL

Do you want your district's online presence to look this good?

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bill.reynolds@blackboard.com

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