

Leadership Matters

May 2019



2019



Superintendents of Distinction

**Play & Discovery:
CCSD #146 Offers
Innovative Full-Day
Kindergarten Program**

**Telling Students'
Stories In Video**

This Month...



12 SUPERINTENDENTS OF DISTINCTION HONORED

Learn about this year's 21 Superintendents of Distinction, honored May 9 at a luncheon in Springfield. Congratulations to all!



5

Play & Discovery Essential to CCSD #146's Innovative New Full-Day Kindergarten Program



20

Telling Students' Stories In Video



24

One Bad Apple Can Ruin Your School District's Finances and Reputation

4

Professional Development Opportunities

23

IASA News in Brief

28

Videos From the Districts



2648 Beechler Court
Springfield, IL 62703-7305
217.753.2213

800 Woodfield Road, Ste. F109
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4717
847.466.5075

1200 West Main Street
Marion, IL 62959-1138
618.364.0501



Scan here with your phone's QR code reader to get the IASA APP—
Don't have a QR reader?

Go to  Google Play or  App Store
and search for IllinoisASA.

Leadership Matters

May 2019

Volume 7, Issue 6

19094

Jason Nevel
Assistant Director of Communications
jnevel@iasaedu.org

Graphic Designer
Marjorie Gladish
mgladish@iasaedu.org

www.iasaedu.org





Message From the Executive Director

Pritzker Starts Slow But Clears the Board in Historic Legislative Session

Dr. Brent Clark

When JB Pritzker was elected governor, we knew we were looking at someone who might very well transform the political landscape in Springfield and probably Illinois. What strikes me the most is just how slow the new administration started and how strong they finished.

For a new administration that looked to be incredibly talented, they started out slower than any administration in recent memory and several people doubted if they could recover by the end of May. But, when the dust settled, they cleared the board in terms of the major issues outlined as gubernatorial initiatives. To say they posted an impressive finish would simply be an understatement. Setting aside whether a person agrees or disagrees with the initiatives, the administration showed how to get things done under the Capitol dome.

The budget battles that we all fought during Governor Rauner's administration were nonexistent this year. The FY20 budget was almost a foregone conclusion throughout the spring session. There's an additional \$375 million going into the EBF model, which is an increase of \$25 million more than last year. Lawmakers also pumped in a \$50 million increase for early childhood funding and an increase of \$26 million in transportation funding above last year's funding levels.

In 2009, we had a smallish capital bill that sort of included school construction, but not much. We have to go back into the late 1990's under Governor Ryan since we last had a major construction program for schools. Illinois will have a statewide capital bill and it includes money for school construction. These new dollars will significantly help our schools with new construction, renovations and maintenance projects that will improve the learning environments and opportunities across the state for students. In the weeks and months ahead, the newly created School Construction Task Force will iron out how these funds will be made available and distributed to districts.

Other key bills this session include the restoration of the 6 percent salary limitation law and the passage of legislation that eliminates the basic skills test, which should be a notable step in addressing Illinois' teacher shortage.

Politically controversial bills passed too. They covered divisive social issues, personal freedoms and fiscally impactful action like the measure to put the progressive income tax on the November 2020 ballots for Illinois voters to make the final call.

Then there are the bills that didn't pass—they died or were "killed" with some political maneuvering. Not an exhaustive list, but they include a property tax freeze initiative, the expanded PE mandate, forced consolidation of dual districts and forced sharing of superintendents. What we ended up with is a task force that will meet over the summer with a goal of coming up with measures to bring property tax relief to Illinois. I agree that relief is needed but doing so without harming the public schools is going to be quite the trick.

And, I think we're all waiting on Governor Pritzker to sign SB 28 so that all of the school calendars can get finalized. He's aware of the urgency to get that signed, and I'm confident he'll get to it in short order.

We call this online magazine *Leadership Matters*...and what we just witnessed over the last 4 1/2 months at the executive level of state government (just like in a school district) is that leadership really does matter if you're going to get things done.

Have a wonderful summer break—maybe it'll stop raining—and plan for a highly successful 2019–2020 school year!

Brent Clark

LM

IASA Summer Academy/ Workshop Opportunities

The following academies are accepting registrations for spring & summer. 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 Melissa Arney at 217-753-2213 or marney@iasaedu.org

Click on date to register:

The Legal Rights of Students and Parents

—Rev. 2016 (AA #1415)

Safety has to be at the forefront of every superintendent's mind today. However, there is a balancing act when it comes to preventing violence in schools and understanding the constitutional rights of students and their parents.

In addition to being superintendent of Goreville CUSD #1, Dr. Steve Webb is a certified police officer and safety expert who can help you navigate this important issue and create a better environment for students to learn.

Register for this academy today, held June 11 at the IASA office in Springfield.

[June 11, 2019](#)

IASA Office, 2648 Beechler Ct., Springfield, IL 62703



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

[June 13, 2019](#)

The Chateau Hotel and Conference Center, 1621 Jumer Dr., Bloomington, IL 61704 • Sponsored by ROE #17

[July 25, 2019](#)

Matthews Middle School, 3500 Darrell Rd., Island Lake, IL 60042

Budget Basics: Starting at the Beginning (For 1st, 2nd & 3rd Year Superintendents)

[6 July Dates](#)

9 Locations Throughout Illinois

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

[July 11, 2019](#)

ROE #11, 730 7th St., Charleston, IL 61920

Evidence-Based Leadership: Using Data to Drive Immediate and Lasting Improvements (AA #3020)

[August 7, 2019](#)

Pontiac Junior High School, 600 N. Morrow St., Pontiac, IL 61764

Teacher Evaluation Training (Initial) (AA #2001)

[August 9–10, 2019](#)

Concordia University Chicago, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, IL 60305

[August 12–13, 2019](#)

DePaul University College of Education, 2247 N. Halsted, St., Chicago, IL 60614



NEW SUPERINTENDENTS' CONFERENCE

July 31–August 1, 2019 • Springfield, IL

www.iasaedu.org



Scan here with your phone's QR code reader to get the IASA APP—
Don't have a QR reader? Go to Google Play or App Store
and search for IllinoisASA.



Play and Discovery Essential to New CCSD #146 Kindergarten Program

By Dr. Jeff Stawick
Superintendent, CCSD #146

For many years the Board of Education at Community Consolidated School District #146 has wanted to offer a full-day kindergarten program. This year, District #146 accomplished that goal at our four elementary schools in Tinley Park, Oak Forest and Orland Park.

We considered the styles of teaching that were most likely to keep our newest full-day students interested, actively participating in the learning experience, and would result in the highest level of learning. Administrators and our team of kindergarten teachers settled on an expanded version of a discovery-based curriculum that utilizes play. We began by

applying it in our half-day program with amazing results. This year, we transitioned to our full-day program, which has thrived, so far.

Nancy Schwab, our curriculum director, has been instrumental in setting up the program. This is what she said about the initiative.

“The collaboration between the Board of Education, administration, teachers, staff and parents has been so exciting and has produced a play- and discovery-based, student-centered, whole-child approach to learning. We are ecstatic to see our young students flourish in

continued...

Play...cont'd.

the full-day setting, and we celebrate the expansion of wonderment, inquiry and discovery in our kindergarten students' lives."

Discovery-based learning is teacher-facilitated and activities are based on essential skills and learning standards. The developmentally-appropriate activities are based on play and teach students conflict resolution, social skills, communication, problem solving and turn taking.

Play-based kindergarten is important because we know children learn when they are mentally active, engaged, social and making meaningful connections to their lives. These are all natural characteristics of play. When play-based learning is done well, the classroom itself becomes another teacher. The classroom is a place where every activity and every object is selected with a learning purpose and desired outcome in mind.

In our program, learning is student-led and interest-driven, prompting students to ask "Why?", "What?" and "How?" Students' curiosity, interest and wonderment lead the discussion and learning.

Kindergarten teachers use these student-driven interests—often stemming from nonfiction books; open-ended activities; and live specimens, including tarantulas, bearded dragons and tortoises—to help students learn in new and exciting ways. Wonderment continues to build in our classrooms and expand how our students are learning.

Our kindergarten classrooms are separated into various learning areas, including building, literacy, dramatic play, art, writing, sensory, science/discovery and math. Each area contains activities that teach students in a context meaningful to them. For example, students will retell a story using puppets, action figures or dramatic play to strengthen their vocabulary, communication and writing.

Our kindergarten teachers are already noticing a difference.

"District #146 already has a strong academic program in place," said Julie Lingl, a kindergarten teacher at Fierke Education Center in Oak Forest. "Giving children a full day to learn is going to allow us to integrate more time for purposeful play and exploration, which help children internalize what they are learning as well as spark curiosity."

continued...



done well, the classroom itself
another teacher. ””



Quick Facts

Learning in District #146's kindergarten classrooms is teacher-facilitated based on the District's essential skills and learning standards.

The district's kindergarten curriculum:

- Is student-centered.
- Includes developmentally appropriate activities.
- Is engaging for every student.
 - High interest activities drive curiosity.
 - Learning is concrete and visible.
 - Students collaborate with peers.
 - Includes whole-child experiences to support age-appropriate social growth.
- Teaches real life skills including:
 - Conflict resolution.
 - Turn-taking.
 - Social skills.
 - Problem-solving.
 - Communication and vocabulary.

What does learning look like in District #146 classrooms?

- Multi-sensory approaches for learning needs: students utilize their five senses to learn.
- Movement and motion support and enhance learning.
- Students learn in a context that is meaningful to them.
- In the classroom, authentic learning is used to target essential skills:
 - Example: Retelling by using puppets, action figures, dramatic play, and/or acting out a story.
 - This activity ties into their writing, vocabulary and communication skills.
 - It also enables students to plan, work together and produce a product.
- Many types and levels of text are used in the kitchen areas, author areas, classroom library, restaurant area, etc.
 - Provides students access to high-quality vocabulary through listening.
 - Provides students with appropriate text to learn to read.
 - Provides an opportunity for students to write about topics of great importance and interest to them.

continued...



Play...cont'd.

As students prepare to leave kindergarten with a better understanding of key concepts and learning standards, District #146 has also begun enhancing its strategies, practices and curriculum for grades 1–8. We believe inquiry and play can be just as effective in subsequent grade levels. We intend to do some action research on this idea.

For more information including videos and parent testimonials, visit district146.org/kindergarten.

Quick Facts...cont'd.

- Number sense
 - Concrete application of number sense (in kitchen, restaurant and construction areas).
 - Comparing quantity with blocks, action figures and tiles.
- Math
 - Shapes and patterns are practiced using magnetiles, blocks, tiles and art areas.
 - Pictures are created to represent problems and solutions.
 - Students explore problem solving using different tools and strategies.
 - Patterns are produced with blocks and tiles.
 - Estimation is practiced using various items in the room.
 - Students use toys and other items to describe less than, more than, and same as.
- Blocks/construction area
 - Students plan and evaluate their plan, work collaboratively, create and problem solve.

With this program:

- Students have the active role and foster their natural curiosity and wonderment.
- Students are immersed in a topic to gain a deeper understanding.
- Student curiosity is encouraged and nurtured.
- The lessons are interest-driven.
- Student-led inquiry leads to asking questions and seeking answers.
- Student-driven interests stem from nonfiction books, open-ended activities, real life specimens in the classroom, and creative questioning.
- Use of discovery areas where students explore and question is prominent in classrooms.



“...my daughter has been able to process social-emotional aspects of life much better, especially in terms of advocating for herself and conflict management.”

Parent Testimonial

To close, I want to share with you what one of our parents, Amy Hamernick, had to say about how the all-day kindergarten program has helped her child. Hearing these words was truly inspirational and helped validate the work we are doing. From Amy:

“I have been amazed at the success my daughter has shown throughout this school year. I have a first grader who was in a kindergarten program last year (not at District #146), and now I have my younger daughter in the full-day program. I know comparing children is like comparing apples to oranges, but there is a significant difference in the levels of success that I see in my daughter in D146’s program compared to her big sister. I am astounded as to how much more my little girl has learned this year compared to her big sister during her year of kindergarten. Not only in the area of cognitive functioning, but emotional-social learning, as well.

She can read! She devours practicing her sight words and is thrilled when she recognizes them in the real world. She carries the books her teacher Ms. Lingl gives her around the house and will read to anyone who will listen, even the dog. She ventures out to our higher level picture books,

and I can see her using strategies that are taught in class as she goes through the pages. The metacognition is amazing. She talks, a lot, about her thinking and the process of her thoughts. This is something I am sure comes from class!

Socially and emotionally, I feel that because of the full-day, play-based kindergarten program my daughter has been able to process social-emotional aspects of life much better than her big sister, especially in terms of advocating for herself and conflict management. Every day, she informs me of her ‘zone’ at school, which identifies her feelings. This trickles over into our home and helps her handle situations when she is struggling to express her emotions. Throughout the year, she has also been able to improve her ability to stand up for herself and speak up when she needs to. Her conflict management has definitely grown over the year. Learning to work things out on her own in the class’s friendship garden has set the stage for her ability to realize that the grownups in her life are not going to solve her problems. I often hear her comprising with her big sister, using many techniques (her favorite is rock-paper-scissors).”

NEW • UPDATED
Improved & Streamlined

IASA Illinois Education
JOB BANKSM

NEW LOOK

USER-FRIENDLY

STREAMLINED PLATFORM

RSS FEED OPTION

CONNECTING EMPLOYERS WITH JOB SEEKERS



You can:

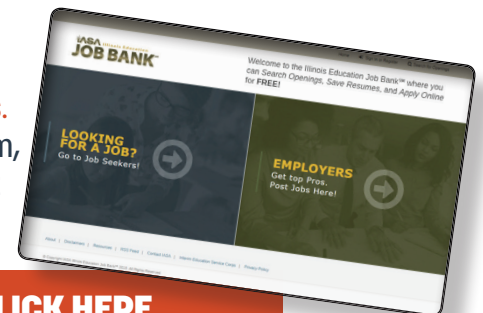
- Use the step-by-step wizard to manage your profile and set up alerts.
- Choose to see alerts whenever jobs for certain counties are posted.
- Quickly search hundreds of openings throughout the state.
- Narrow your search with filters; save your searches.
- Save job postings you want to review later.
- Create and access customized resumes and other documents from secured Job BankSM storage.
- Allow your profile to be searched by employers before a job is posted, if you make your profile public.
- Easily view your application history.
- It's free to all job seekers!

You can:

- Post your job openings, setting parameters and time frame.
- Add new job listings, and/or format wording (new modernized text editor).
- Save time by creating job posting templates.
- Easily search and filter the jobs you've posted.
- Use RSS feature to post your job listing to your school district/firm website automatically.
- Filter applicants easily by flagging favorites.
- Narrow your candidate search with filters.
- Search candidates even before publicly posting your position.*
- Advertise your listing affordably.

** From among those Job BankSM candidates who've elected to have their profiles "public."*

Check out the newly redesigned IASA Illinois Education Job BankSM and its expanded feature options for both employers and job seekers. Whether you are seeking qualified applicants to fill permanent, interim, part or full-time vacancies, the Job BankSM can help you find the right candidates. The Job BankSM is well known throughout the state and qualified educators seeking a new position frequently search the site.



**CLICK HERE
TO CHECK IT OUT**

If you have any questions about the IASA Job BankSM or new feature criteria, contact Ashleigh Knudson at 217-753-2213.



IASA
55th
**Annual
Conference**

September 25–27, 2019

President Abraham Lincoln–Springfield,
A DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel; and BOS Center

Registration Opens in Early July

Seeking Presenters for Ignite General Session

Share your best practices with your colleagues!

Does your school district have an innovative educational message that you would like to share with your colleagues? Then Ignite is for you!

- 5-Minute Presentation; “Enlighten us, but make it quick!”
- 20 slides that auto advance every 15 seconds
- Presenters will host a panel question/answer session from the audience
- 5 to 7 presenters are needed to participate in our Ignite session



If you are interested in telling your district’s story in the Ignite format, please contact Dr. Richard J. Voltz, Associate Director for Professional Development, at rvoltz@iasaedu.org.

Plus–School Service Members:
Take Advantage Of Excellent Marketing Opportunities

Click [here](#) to:

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

Superintendents of Distinction 2019 Awards Luncheon

sponsored by



Horace Mann
Founded by Educators for Educators



Superintendents of Distinction are selected by their peers based on professionalism, communications, community involvement and leadership for learning. Recipients were honored May 9 at a luncheon in Springfield along with honorees from the Illinois Principals Association. State Superintendent Dr. Carmen Ayala was the keynote speaker and the Illinois State Board of Education helped to coordinate the event. Thank you to Horace Mann for again sponsoring the luncheon.





Superintendents of Distinction





Jennifer Gill
Springfield SD #186
Abe Lincoln

- Led the district through the first voter-approved increase for school funding in 34 years, with the passage of the 1 percent county-wide sales tax increase in 2018.
- Partnered with Equal Opportunity Schools to focus on equity and increased enrollment in Advanced Placement courses across the district's three high schools. In addition, secured funding through the Community Foundation for

the Land of Lincoln to help students pay for AP tests.

- Led the district on a new mission and strategic plan that aligns district and school improvement plans, as well as communicates strategic goals.
- Collaboratively developed a partnership with Memorial Health System to provide wellness supports for employees, priority service and chronic disease management, as well as a \$0 co-pay structure that encourages employees to take care of health concerns and helps them save on out-of-pocket expenses.
- Presented a balanced budget each year as superintendent and restored a healthy fund balance in cash reserves.
- Ushered in new reading, writing, science, math and social science curricula across various grade levels.



Dr. Roger Alvey
Illini Bluffs CUSD #327
Central IL Valley

- Improved student achievement and financial stability.
- Assisted in leading Peoria County through the passage of a 1 percent county-wide sales tax increase.

- Planned and organized a 1:1 technology program for grades K-12.
- Implemented a multi-year, multi-million dollar facilities master plan to upgrade infrastructure throughout the district.
- Planned and organized the 21st Century Learning Initiative and Future Ready process.
- Organized, planned and conducted a district wide school safety training, including Stop the Bleed training, as well as procured by donation more than 100 emergency kits to be used in classrooms, buses and in common areas.



Dr. Mike Oberhaus
Rock Island/Milan SD #41
Blackhawk

- Implemented a balanced calendar.
- Led the district through the passage of a 1 percent county-wide sales tax increase.
- Increased dual credit and Advanced Placement offerings with increased enrollment from underrepresented student subgroups.
- Started an AVID program in high school and junior high, as well as a Learn Enrich and Discover (LEAD) program in two elementary schools.
- Facilitated a regional approach to improving education through collaboration with United Way and local business community.
- Built a community collaborative-based set of programs to serve students before and after school.



Dr. Cindy Whittaker
Fairview SD #72
Cook North

- Student Achievement: Fairview students enter Niles Twp. HSD #219 with the highest test scores of all sender schools.
- Established the Skokie English Language Parent Center to support EL parents better understand the American public school system and provide help for their child's success in school.
- Recruited and retained a diverse faculty and staff

to serve a diverse community where more than 60 languages are spoken.

- Lessened the tax burden on residents by defeasing outstanding bonds. Fairview SD #72 is currently debt free.
- Named Project Lead the Way Distinguished District.
- Selected to participate in the prestigious Museum of Science and Industry's Science Leadership Initiative for four continuous years.



Dr. Jennifer Kelsall
Ridgewood CHSD #234
Cook West

- Guided Ridgewood CHSD #234 into a Competency-Based Education Pilot.
- Ensured all levels of transitional math and English are available to students.
- Created an innovative culture to transform learning.
- Expanded opportunities for students by fostering community partnerships that allow students to earn industry credentials.

- Received the Cool School Award for cross-curricular projects.
- Listed by Washington Post as one of America's Most Challenging High Schools for its high standards.



Dr. Dale Mitchell
Homewood SD #153
Cook South

- Implementation of Professional Learning Communities.
- Passed two referendums to maintain programs during funding crisis the past decade.
- Implemented a STEM program for grades 3-8.
- Continued a Tradition of Excellence with strong academics and co-curricular activities.
- Maintained a positive district climate and relationships between all stakeholders.



Dr. Barry Reilly
Bloomington SD #87
Corn Belt

- Completed a major fine arts addition to Bloomington High School and renovated the existing band and orchestra rooms.
- Oversaw an \$8 million project to place artificial turf on the multipurpose field that is home to soccer, football, band and PE programs without increasing the tax rate.
- Named Administrator of the Year by the Illinois Music Education Association in January for the district's commitment to its fine arts program.



Dr. John H. Correll
Salt Creek SD #48
DuPage

- Oversaw a successful building bond referendum to repair schools in 2016.
- Implemented Professional Learning Communities and provided Kagan Teacher Professional Development Training for staff.
- Designed and implemented a Student Leadership Program.
- Received the highest rating from ISBE regarding the district's financial status.
- Chaired the Special Education Board of Control (SASED).



Dr. Gary Kelly
DuQuoin CUSD #300
Egyptian

- Named Illinois 2019 Superintendent of the Year
- Managed the district's budget through tough financial times without cutting academic or extra-curricular programs or sending reduction-in-force notices to staff.
- Passed two building referendums and two sales tax referendums to build and finance facility improvements.
- Implemented blended classrooms at the elementary level that place students needing extra support in rooms with a teacher and instructional aide who modify instruction to fit student needs.
- Helped establish a District Educational Foundation to provide classroom grants to support student learning.
- Implemented focus group meetings with parents, community members and students to discuss and share various aspects of school improvement and programs.



Kenneth Schwengel
Arthur CUSD #305
Illini

- Instrumental in bringing together three small districts in the last seven years. Arthur CUSD #305 now has more than 1,200 students, 160 staff members and 252 square miles, featuring four buildings in three communities.
- Maintained a fiscally responsible school district with one of the lowest tax rates in the state.
- Provided students with more academic opportunities.



Chuck Lane
Centralia HSD #200
Kaskaskia

- Oversaw construction of a \$3 million Special Education Annex.
- Constructed a \$2 million football stadium without raising taxes.
- Improved student achievement and financial stability in Centralia HSD #200.
- Implemented new technology across the curriculum.
- Member of Equity 1st Superintendents group that helped get Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) passed.



Dr. Debbie Ehlenburg
Alden Hebron SD #19
Kishwaukee

- Dedicated her entire career to Alden-Hebron School District #19, including as a teacher, principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent.
- As the leader of a small unit district, Ehlenburg wears many hats, including curriculum director, summer school director, transportation supervisor and building and grounds supervisor.
- Her top accomplishment is all the students who graduated during her tenure as superintendent at Alden-Hebron SD #19.



Dr. Jean Sophie
Lake Bluff ESD #65
Lake

- Elementary and middle schools in Lake Bluff ESD #65 were designated as Exemplary by the Illinois State Board of Education.
- Refinanced bonds and provided financial stability in the district's fund balance.
- Kept the focus on balance of academics and fine arts and provided opportunities for all students.
- Restructured the district's Enrichment Program to provide more opportunities for acceleration.
- Renovated the district's middle school without a referendum.
- Improved safety for students by restructuring the entrance to the elementary school and entered into intergovernmental agreements with police to provide video surveillance.



Margo Empen
Dixon USD #170
Northwest

- Created a Student Worker Assistance Program, which helps students in need pay athletic fees by working for the district.
- Partnered with Sauk Valley Community College to revive Dixon High School's agriculture program.
- Secured a grant to build a greenhouse at the school.
- Improved safety for students by partnering with Dixon police to implement new safety protocols.
- Resurrected the district's food science program.



Belinda Hill
Giant City CCSD #130
Shawnee

- Giant City CCSD #130 was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2018. The award recognizes public and private K-12 schools that are either high-performing or have improved student achievement to high levels.
- Aggressively pursued training for teachers.
- Established a teacher mentoring program.



Matthew Klosterman
Belleville SD #118
Southwestern

- Received multiple honors for the district's Character Initiative, including being named the 2017 Illinois District of Character. The award recognizes districts that demonstrate an outstanding character education initiative that yields

positive results in student behavior, school climate and academic performance.

- Received the Belleville Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence and Commitment to Community awards.
- Integrated full 1:1 Chromebooks for grades K-8.
- Maintained a strong financial rating through tough financial times.
- Completed a \$20 million addition/renovation project across Belleville SD #118.
- Converted to an in-house bus service. Food service is also operated in-house and provides food to 20 additional school programs.



Dr. Cheryl McCarthy
Joliet Twp HSD #204
Three Rivers

- Helped develop the district's strategic plan in 2001 and continued to follow it and update it. Sticking with the plan has led to numerous successes, including strong finances and Joliet Township High School becoming the school of choice in the community.
- Named Advanced Placement District of the Year by the College Board in 2017.

- Implemented a bilingual communication strategy that has engaged the district's Hispanic population.
- Expanded technology districtwide, including a 1:1 initiative, full wireless access, a student help desk, blended learning, an online learning environment and a home access center for parents and students to monitor progress, grades and other records online.
- Created a Freshman Academy and Career Academies for sophomores designed to increase student achievement through job shadowing, online course offerings and an advisory program.
- Improved community partnerships that provide students with increased opportunities and supports.
- Developed robust summer programs offered to students at little or no cost.



Roy S. Webb
Quincy SD #172
Two Rivers

- Oversaw an \$89 million capital project, which included building five new elementary schools and renovating of Quincy High School.
- Reorganized grade levels districtwide.
- Built community partnerships with medical, law enforcement, faith, business and many other groups to tackle issues in the community.
- Implemented new boundaries and bus routes; supervised a logistical transition that involved moving 500 staff and 3,000 students to new schools.
- Welcomed new initiatives, such as a multi-tiered system of support for attendance and behavior, community-based healthcare and competency-based education.
- Fostered a high level of trust between staff, the community, school board and students.



Cary Jackson
Dieterich CUSD #30
Wabash Valley

- Dieterich CUSD #30 was recognized as a top school district by both US News & World Report and Niche.
- Received the ISBE Bright Star Award for high achievement with low per-pupil costs.
- Both schools in the district were given an Exemplary rating from ISBE.

- Fostered relationships with students, staff and community members that have led to successes in the district.

Awarded Superintendent of Distinction
of the Starved Rock Region:
Timothy Smith, Princeton ESD #115



Kim Schilson
Illini West HS Dist #307
Western

- Started a teacher mentor/mentee program to help young teachers be successful.
- Updated curriculum throughout the district in the last few years.
- Increased the number of students taking dual-credit classes.
- Updated technology districtwide, including the purchase of Chrome-books and interactive televisions. Illini West HSD #307 also has ESports and robotics, as well as a digital video class.
- Updated the district's industrial technology lab and renovated the family consumer science room.
- Kept Illini West HSD #307 financially stable during tough financial times.

Congratulations To All!

To see the unique stories of two Anna-Jonesboro students, click on the image at right.

Telling Students' Stories In Video

by Jason Nevel
IASA Assistant Director of Communications

Outside of the walls of Meridian #101 school district in the rural southern Illinois community of Mounds, hope can be hard to find if you don't know where to look.

The community claims one grocery store, a gas station/convenience store, a laundromat, a car wash, a senior citizens' center and a Dollar General discount retailer. According to a 2016 story in "The Southern Illinoisan," about one-third of Mounds is abandoned buildings.

"It's not a place where there are a lot of possibilities for careers," Meridian #101 Superintendent Jonathan Green says.

But inside those walls, Green sees hope and potential in his students. It's just a matter if he can get them to see it too.

One hundred percent of Meridian's 456 students are considered low income. For many their idea of a vacation, Green says, is a 35-minute trip northwest to Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

"A lot of times our kids don't even know what's out there," he says.

If that's the reality for students, how can the district establish a culture of hope and promise? That's a question Green says he's wrestled with since taking the job of superintendent before the start of the 2018-19 school year.

Telling Student Stories with Video

Beginning next school year, Meridian #101 plans to launch a new initiative Green hopes can help students dream bigger and reach their potential.

Using video, the district wants to tell the stories of individual students who have aspirations to pursue college, a career or military service. The idea, he says, is that by sharing the stories of students with dreams beyond what's offered in Mounds, it will inspire their classmates to think bigger.

"We need to put seeds in their minds of what they can become," Green says.

To produce the videos, the district plans to partner with Journey 12, a nonprofit started by Craig Williams, a former Pinckneyville school board member Green met while he was superintendent there.

School leaders interested in the idea could take different approaches, Green adds, such as having students in a media or broadcasting class produce their own videos.

According to Williams, Journey 12 originated because he recognized there are numerous students inside school districts who have powerful stories about overcoming adversity that probably never get told in the newspaper or local television station.

continued...



- Madison wants to become an orthodontist, bringing smiles to people's faces, and giving back to a world that she believes has given her so much.



- Jackson wants to learn about business and build his own company by leveraging his experience in leadership, and his interest in supply chain management.

Videos...cont'd.

If he could create videos of those students, he thought, it could be inspirational to their peers, who may be rudderless when it comes to thinking about life after high school.

"We believe there is huge potential for younger students when they get to see their older peers articulating their commitment," he says.

Williams describes the videos he creates as "micro-documentaries." Once finished, school districts can share them on their website, social media and with other community organizations. Each video is about 90 seconds in length and always ends on a positive note of the student announcing their career ambition.

Journey 12 is still in its infancy but has produced two videos for Anna Jonesboro CHSD #81 and several for schools in Missouri. The Anna Jonesboro video highlights Madison, who was born in China, abandoned by her parents and adopted by an American family. The second features Jackson, who wants to learn about business and build his own company.

"There are so many kids whose stories are unique and who have overcome challenges and obstacles our kids can

relate to," says Brett Detering, principal at Anna Jonesboro Community High School.

Tell Your Story

In addition to inspiring students, Green believes the videos are another way the district can tell its own story to the community.

"If you are not telling your story someone else will," he adds.

Given the challenges Meridian #101 faces, Green knows the videos won't solve everything. The district is pursuing other initiatives through its increase in state funding, like expanding dual-credit opportunities for students.

But the videos will be part of the process in establishing a culture of hope and promise, something that's harder to come by in Mounds as businesses close doors and residents flee.

"We're trying to turn things around," Green says. "We have talented kids, but we need to get them to see their own potential."

LM

School Service Members:

Extend your brand to who matters most.

School Service Members can purchase advertising space in the 2019-2020 IASA Membership Directory, an indispensable tool for all IASA members. Don't miss out on the opportunity to stand out from your competitors for an entire year by advertising or enhancing your company's listing!

Advertising Deadline—08/01/2019

Listing Inclusion Deadline—08/01/2019

For rates and availability of opportunities, call Cherry Middleton at 217-753-2213 or email cmiddleton@iasaedu.org



Reach 1,000+

school administrators, superintendents, assistant superintendents, and other administrators throughout the state. Get your company's name in front of the decision makers in Illinois school districts!

- **Establish an Image**
- **Build Relationships with Clients**
- **Enjoy Year-Round Exposure**

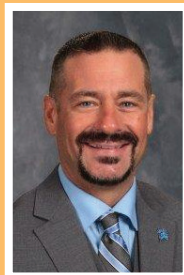
AASA Election Results

Dr. Andrew S. Wise, superintendent of Olympia CUSD #16 was elected to fill the one-year unexpired term in the Northcentral Super Region.

Dr. Judith Hackett, superintendent of Northwest Suburban Special Education Organization, was re-elected to a three-year term on the AASA Governing Board in the Northeastern Super Region.

Dr. Steve Webb, superintendent of Goreville CUSD #1, was re-elected to a three-year term in the Southern Super Region.

Other representatives who currently serve on the AASA Governing Board include Dr. Arthur Fessler, superintendent of Community Cons. #59 (Northeastern Super Region—term



Dr. Andrew Wise



Dr. Judith Hackett



Dr. Steve Webb

expires June 30, 2020); Dr. Jennifer Kelsall, superintendent of Ridgewood CHSD #234 (Northeastern Super Region—term expires June 30, 2020); and Dr. Brian Harris, superintendent of Barrington #220 (AASA Executive Committee—term expires June 30, 2021).



Updated IASA Superintendents' Toolkit Now Available

We are pleased to share with you a new resource available to IASA members that was created based on your feedback; IASA's newly updated Superintendents' Toolkit. The toolkit is intended to be a

guide to help superintendents in four areas: Legislative, Communications, Safety and a 2019–2020 Task Calendar, courtesy of IASBO.

The toolkit is intended to be a working document, so we always welcome suggestions of resources to add. Contact Jason Nevel, IASA Assistant Director of Communications, at jnevel@iasaedu.org.



Past President Dr. Richard Carrabine Passes Away

We recently learned Dr. Richard “Dick” Carrabine passed away in December. Carrabine was president of the Illinois Association of School Administrators in 1991, while he served as superintendent of Bloom Twp HS #206. His career in education spanned 37 years, including as a teacher, assistant principal, principal and superintendent. Carrabine was also a member of the American Association of School Superintendents. He was preceded in death by his wife-Dolores and his brothers. He is survived by his children.



ISDLAF+ Monthly Update

Click [here](#) to view the most current ISDLAF+ rates, economic indicators and general economic news brief. To obtain additional information regarding this IASA sponsored service, contact Dr. 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.

One Bad Apple Can Ruin Your School District's Finances and Reputation.

by Tracy Olsen
Senior Managing Counsel, Claims and
Corporate Services, Brokers' Risk

February 20, 2019:

A former chief financial officer pleaded guilty to 20 federal counts of embezzlement, wire fraud, and money laundering over a 16-year period after stealing \$1.2 million from his former employer. This CFO oversaw all of the employer's finances, including a nearly \$260 million general fund and misspent \$46 million of the fund balance.



This news item is not about a corrupt corporate CFO—it is about the once-trusted CFO for the Berkeley County School District, who pulled off what is believed to be the largest public embezzlement scheme in the history of South Carolina.¹

What happened in South Carolina is a stark example of how a school district can fall victim not only to financial fraud, but even unintentional financial mistakes, by not establishing the right internal procedures. This article aims to highlight important policies and processes for school districts to implement in order to minimize the risk of fraudulent activity and financial mishandling.

¹ "Berkeley schools CFO who embezzled \$1.2 million sentenced to 63 months in federal prison," The Post and Courier, February 19, 2019, available at https://www.postandcourier.com/news/berkeley-schools-cfo-who-embezzled-million-sentenced-to-months-in/article_c6ab085e-347b-11e9-a3c4-fb69aba546dc.html

The Landscape of Financial Fraud

The sad reality is that financial fraud is far from uncommon. The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) publishes an annual study on occupational fraud—defined as the use of one’s occupation for personal enrichment through the deliberate misuse of an employer’s resources or assets. According to ACFE’s 2018 report, the 2,690 studied cases of occupational fraud are believed to be only a small fraction of the actual number of occupational fraud incidents that occurred globally,² strongly suggesting that fraud is more rampant than the schemes that are detected, investigated and reported.

The ACFE study data reveal striking trends: 89 percent of fraud involved asset misappropriation (schemes involving billing, check and payment tampering, and theft of non-cash assets), and 80% of all fraudsters either created fraudulent evidence or altered existing evidence to conceal the fraud.³ Moreover, occupational fraud is hardly confined to public and private corporations or large organizations. Of the organizations victimized by fraud, 16 percent are governmental entities. Among governmental entities, local government units accounted for 31 percent of the cases, while state and provincial government units were victims in 26 percent of the cases. In looking at overall organization size, 28 percent of the cases in the study involved small organizations (100 or fewer employees).⁴ With regard to small organizations, 42 percent of fraud involved a lack of internal controls, and the median loss was \$200,000—compared to a median loss across all sizes of organizations of \$130,000.⁵

These figures should hit home to Illinois school leaders. With 852 school districts,⁶ and the top 10 largest districts controlling over \$8.45 billion in operating funds,⁷ Illinois public schools are rich targets for internal fraud schemes. It is important to remember that many Illinois school districts

are relatively small-sized organizations without significant administrative staff. Based on the ACFE fraud study data, these smaller school districts could be more vulnerable to costly financial fraud or errors than larger districts.

Establish Strong Internal Controls

Internal controls are the cornerstone for maintaining any organization’s financial integrity. A strong internal control system includes the following:

- Segregation of duties.
- Restriction of physical and electronic access to assets, records and IT systems.
- Regular data monitoring/analysis (e.g. reconciliation of bank statements and accounts).
- Regular examination of supporting financial documentation.
- Regular internal and external audits.
- Surprise audits.
- Mandatory vacation time for employees with financial authority.

The segregation of duties is the most crucial internal control for school districts. Financial errors or impropriety can easily occur when one person controls or can influence all aspects of a school district’s financial transactions. Although a school district’s treasurer has ultimate responsibility for all of a school district’s assets, the treasurer should not control all phases of any school transaction. For this reason, a “Rule of Three” is an effective segregation of duties approach: (1) the treasurer maintains oversight, ultimate responsibility and the power to disburse funds; (2) the business manager (or equivalent role) processes invoices or bills and authorizes the payment of funds; and (3) a third official is responsible for reconciling the school’s bank accounts with the internal school ledger of deposits and disbursements.

continued...

2 For comprehensive information on ACFE’s current findings on occupational fraud, refer to “Report to the Nations: 2018 Global Study on Occupational Fraud and Abuse,” Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, available at <https://www.acfe.com/report-to-the-nations/2018/>.

3 See “Report to the Nations: 2018 Global Study on Occupational Fraud and Abuse,” p. 12, 15, available at <https://www.acfe.com/report-to-the-nations/2018/>.

4 See “Report to the Nations: 2018 Global Study on Occupational Fraud and Abuse,” p. 20-1, available at <https://www.acfe.com/report-to-the-nations/2018/>.

5 See “Report to the Nations: 2018 Global Study on Occupational Fraud and Abuse,” pp. 9, 22-3, available at <https://www.acfe.com/report-to-the-nations/2018/>.

6 Based on 2017-2018 Illinois public school data gathered by Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) in “Agency and Board Information 2018 Annual Report,” p.22, available at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/2018-Annual-Report.aspx>.

7 Financial information is based on U.S. Department of Education data, as reported in Niche.com, available at <https://www.niche.com/k12/search/largest-school-districts/s/illinois/>.

In smaller school districts, segregation of duties can pose a challenge due to fewer employees on staff. Accordingly, smaller school districts should consider having a school district official or other trusted party outside the business office review the bank statements or other financial reports for unusual activity or the possibility of error.

Top-down Integrity

For fraud prevention and detection to become part of a school district's culture, leadership needs to set the tone about responsible stewardship of public resources. From the superintendent, to business officials, to individual school principals, school district leadership should model and support ethical practices and behavior, open communication about mistakes and potential problems, willingness to correct mistakes and investigating potential fraudulent activity with appropriate speed and seriousness. The open communication piece is extremely important. Otherwise, employees might be reluctant to come forward with allegations of misconduct.

Exercise Diligence in Hiring & Observing Employees

According to the ACFE study, there is no "typical" person who commits fraud—and many fraudsters appear to be honest people on the surface. However, the following hiring process activities can root out the potential for fraud, where allowed by state law:

- Criminal and civil background checks.
- Credit checks.
- Past employment and education verification.
- Reference checks.
- Drug screening.

After hiring, supervisors and management should stay vigilant, not only about quality of employee work product, but in observing employee behavior. Although no foolproof fraudster profile exists, "red flag" employee behaviors include living beyond means, financial

difficulties, unusually close association with a vendor/customer, controlling behaviors/ unwillingness to allow access to work product or sharing of duties, divorce/family problems, irritability, suspiciousness or defensiveness.

Establish Fraud Policy & Procedures

Like any employer, school districts should adopt a policy against fraud, waste and abuse. The policy should include the following: examples of inappropriate or suspicious financial dealings; a requirement for employees to report suspected fraud, waste or abuse to a specific school district official; and an anti-retaliation policy for reporting suspected financial impropriety. Some large organizations have internal fraud hotlines that employees can call to report fraud, which is particularly important in the event that the suspected fraud involves high ranking people in the organization. For smaller organizations, this can be impractical or impossible, so having a third party vendor hotline is one solution to this issue.

The policy should also state the actions that the school district will take to investigate allegations, as well as a statement of zero tolerance for fraud, waste and abuse, up to and including referral to law enforcement and termination of employees found to have engaged in the conduct.

Train Employees

Employees need to know how to spot problems in order to identify, report and avoid financial irregularities. Therefore, school districts must raise awareness by training their employees to understand what constitutes fraud, the organizational costs of fraud and how employees can seek advice when faced with ethical dilemmas, such as being asked to override established internal controls. Fraud instruction should also include specific examples of types of fraud, as well as warning signs or "red flags" indicative of possible fraud. Training should highlight the key points of the applicable policy regarding fraud, including the fraud zero-tolerance policy. Importantly, the training should emphasize that employees can report suspicious activity without fear of reprisal or retaliation.



Investigate Promptly & Take Action

Sweeping employees' reports of errors or suspicious activity under the rug will undermine efforts to root out fraud or other problems. When employees come forward with potential fraudulent conduct, school districts need to respond to the allegations with an investigation according to written policy. In the event that an investigation does uncover inappropriate activity, school districts must take appropriate action—including termination of the employees involved and criminal referrals to law enforcement if warranted—according to the written policy.

Potential Recovery

In the event of a loss due to financial fraud or mistakes, a school district can possibly recoup losses sustained by turning to various vehicles such as a treasurer's bond or insurance coverage. In Illinois, school districts are required by statute to purchase treasurer's bonds to help protect the school district from failure of the treasurer to faithfully perform his or her duties. If a financial fraud or mistake involves a school district's treasurer, a claim under a surety bond might be presented. Insurance coverages—such as crime/fidelity, directors' and officers' liability, errors and omissions and cyber liability—could also apply. The viability of any claim will be highly dependent upon the specific facts of the loss, the parties involved, the type of coverages purchased and the specific language of the coverages. School districts would be well advised to consult their attorney and their agent concerning coverages that could apply to a loss.

Protect Your School District

Without the implementation of the policies and processes discussed above, school districts may be vulnerable to financial duplicity or human errors, potentially costing significant resources. By implementing the practical steps described above, school districts can go a long way to help control the risks of financial impropriety. Purchasing a treasurer's surety bond as required by Illinois law will also help protect your school district. Nevertheless, schools must be very prudent to ensure the bond purchased complies with the mandates of the Illinois School Code. The Illinois Code specifies the language that must be included in the bond. However, certain bonds issued to schools in Illinois contain additional terms and conditions aside from those specified in the Illinois School Code. These additional terms and conditions included by certain issuers of treasurer's bonds conflict with the express terms of the law and limit the protections of the bond. School districts should consult with their agent to ensure they are purchasing treasurer's bonds compliant with the Illinois School Code.



For more information on Treasurers' Bonds or our other products, call us toll free at 1-800-255-1195 or visit us on the web at www.brokersrisk.com



155 North Wacker Drive, Suite 3700 • Chicago, Illinois 60606-1731
Phone: 800-255-1195 • Fax: 312-906-8116

© Copyright 2019 Brokers' Risk Placement Service, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Videos from the Districts



Experiencing the Arts

On April 26, 2019, we celebrated Fine Arts Day at Oak Grove School in Green Oaks, IL, with performers from every discipline of the arts. Students from every grade were treated to live demonstrations of visual arts, dance, music and theater from a wide base of local and regional performers. The artists performed 40-minute sessions, which rotated all day long. It was a fantastic day for the kids! Thanks to the administration, staff and PTO for planning and funding such a festival of talented groups and individuals.

— Dr. Lonny Lemon, Superintendent, Oak Grove SD #68



Send your school videos to jnevel@iasaedu.org.
We want to highlight what's going on in your school districts.



Membership Drive

TO ALL MEMBERS:

We must have all member information before Aug. 1, 2019 in order to include you in the directory.

If you plan to be a paid IASA member for FY 2020, contact Misti Murphy at 217-753-2213 or mmurphy@iasaedu.org by August 1, 2019.

Membership Does Have Its Privileges...

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



IASA Annual Conference
Associate Director of Professional Development to provide Administrators' Academy and seminar training opportunities designed around best practices and compliance with Illinois laws
Podcasts and video training libraries
New Superintendent Mentoring Program
IASA School for Advanced Leadership
IASA Aspiring Superintendent Academy



GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS



Director of Governmental Relations to analyze and track legislation
Capitol Watch updates when legislative news occurs
Lobbying activities coordinated with other members of the Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance
Guide to members of the General Assembly and Constitutional officers
Meetings and seminars with elected and government officials

LEGAL SERVICES



Legal counsel to assist with personal employment contract information and assistance
Legal Support Program

COMMUNICATION SERVICES



Communications department to assist with local issues and media relations

Award-winning monthly online magazine *Leadership Matters*



Informative interactive website and mobile app

Eye on Education—your daily synopsis of education news



Social media presence on Facebook and Twitter

Superintendent's Toolkit with legislative issues and talking points for hot topics

OTHER SERVICES



Offices in Schaumburg, Springfield (IASA headquarters) and Marion
Field Services Directors to provide mentoring
Illinois Education Job Bank
Resume/credentials review
Personal mentoring
Retirement information
Return of Dues Program
Interim Education Service Corps