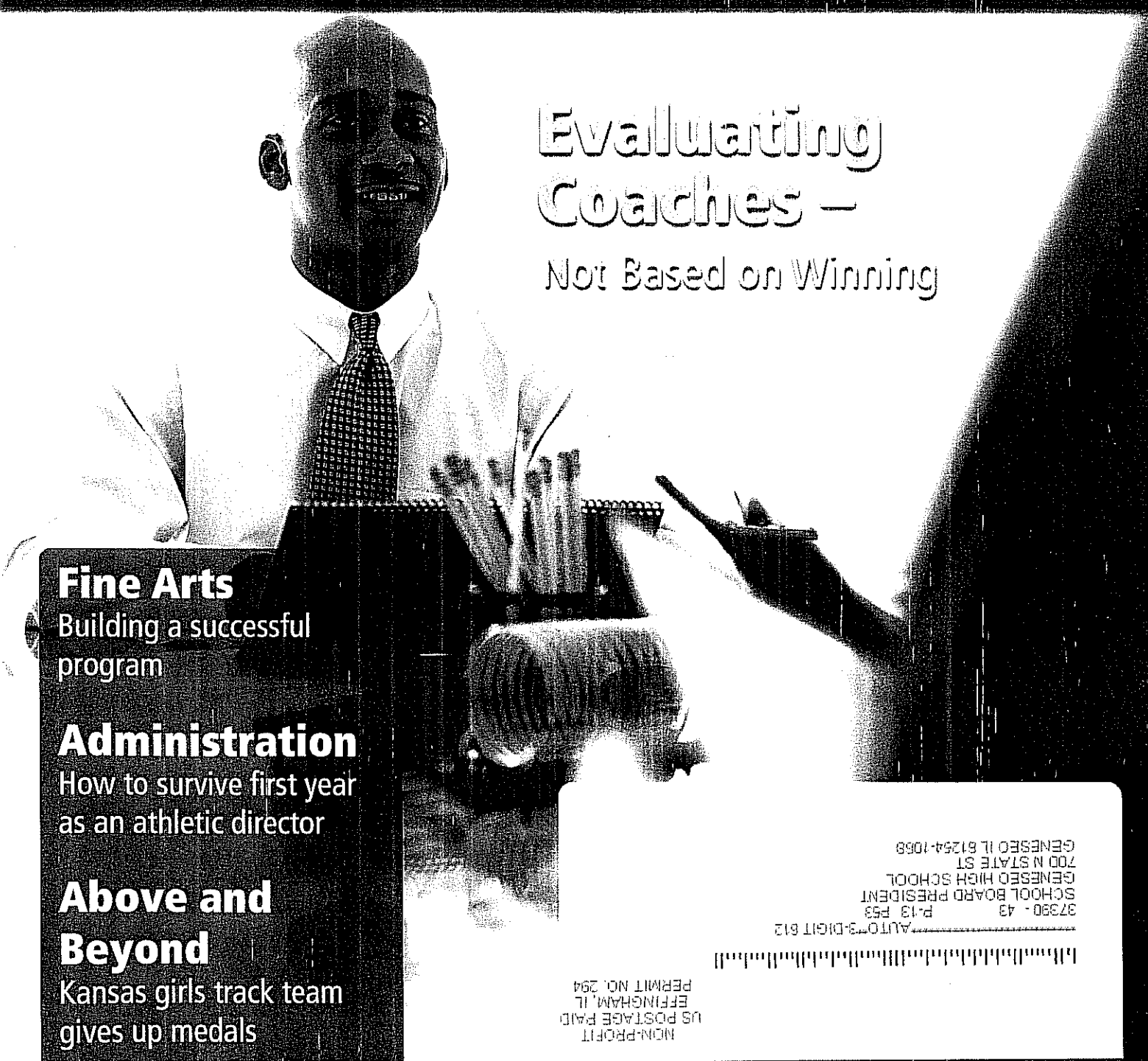


NOVEMBER 09

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Educator Night Focuses on Impact of Teachers

BY AARON HOMMELL

Geneseo (Illinois) High School has connected education to athletics in a way that has brought its athletes, educators and fans together for the common understanding that the playing field is a continuation of the classroom.

Coach Steve Brucher's girls basketball team is one of Geneseo's athletic teams that has taken things to the next level. The girls basketball team has implemented a program that gives the girls a chance to highlight educators who have made an impact on their lives.

While most schools have homecoming or senior night, Geneseo goes one step further. It has educator night. Every year, Brucher has his girls pick their favorite educators. It does not matter if the educator was an elementary school, middle school, or even high school teacher. The girls write educators a letter letting them know how much their teaching has impacted them. Part of that letter is then engraved on a plaque that is given to the teachers.

"The program is one that gives students a chance to show appreciation for the teachers outside of a classroom," said Travis Mackey, athletic director of the high school. "Sometimes teachers don't know just how much their teaching affects the lives of their students."

"It is especially neat when our senior players select an elementary teacher. In many instances, those teachers get to see the little girl all grown up." Brucher said.

The girls have also started a book club. The girls buy the same book at the beginning of the season and read it while



Photo provided by Claudia Locks.

The team members and educators are (from left): Jessica DeFauw with Bill Eaker; Sammi Miller with Fran Hirschfelder; Melanie Piekos with Judy Kanke; Jordan Wagner with LaNel Carey; Meghan Wethington with Kristy Hansen; and Claire Wiese with Vicki Bailey. Steve Brucher is the varsity girls basketball coach who implemented the 'educators' night.'

the season is going on. Sometimes during the week, free time allows a chance for the girls to talk about the book and bond as a team.

"These are just a few of the things we have tried to make the playing field an extension of the classroom," Mackey said.

It's not just the girls basketball program. Each of the sports at the high school is beginning to tie its sport to something from the classroom, or outside of the realm of the playing field. The football team has an initiative to have players and their mothers stripe the helmets they wear each week.

"Players have a chance to bond. Mothers and sons, coming together as they help to stripe the helmets," Mackey said.

The football players also write letters to their mothers. "It opens up the lines of communication, which is important," Mackey said. ☺

Aaron Hommell is a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. He is a junior at Franklin (Indiana) College, majoring in journalism.

Basics of Law on Board Meetings and Practices*

This workshop focuses on the legal requirements related to board work. As a board may take action only at a legally convened meeting, the workshop presents the meeting requirements contained in the Open Meetings Act and the *School Code*. Discussion will cover meeting types, reasons for closed sessions, voting, email use, remote participation, committees, agenda and minutes. The workshop also reviews the key legal duties of the school board as well as the legal considerations regarding records, conflict of interest, gift ban, fiscal oversight, etc. Participants will have an opportunity to get their questions on legal issues related to board work answered!

*An encore presentation last offered in the 2009 new board member LeaderShop series.

Objective

This workshop will help school leaders understand the legalities that govern school boards to help them be more effective in their policy-making and governance functions.

Agenda

5:00 p.m.	Light Buffet Supper
6:00 p.m.	Workshop Session
10:00 p.m.	Adjournment

Accreditation

IASB's Master Board Member Program –
5 credits
IASB's School Board LeaderShop Academy –
Core Program

Places and Dates

January 25, 2010

The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows
442 W. De Mazenod Dr.
Belleville • 618/394-6277

January 26, 2010

IASB Springfield Office
2921 Baker Drive
Springfield • 217/528-9688

February 1, 2010

IASB Lombard Office
One Imperial Place
1 East 22nd Street, Suite 520
Lombard • 630/629-3776

Registration and Tuition

Tuition is \$185 per person, which includes materials and meals.

Advance registration is required. In school districts where the board of education has authorized reimbursement of expenses, the district superintendent may be providing group registration and lodging arrangements. Contact the superintendent's office for assistance.

For individual registration, send purchase order number, check or credit card information (Visa or MasterCard only) with the attached form to: IASB Registrar, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703

You may also fax your registration form and payment information to 217/528-2831 or register online at www.iasb.com

Cancellation Policy: Advance registrants who later find they cannot attend are urged to promptly notify the IASB Registrar. Registration fees will be refunded if cancellation is received by IASB in time to either (a) cancel meals and related expenses or (b) fill the vacated space with another registrant. To cancel, call IASB at 217/528-9688 or 630/629-3776, extension 1103.

Registration Confirmation and Directions:

Registrants will receive written confirmation along with driving directions to the workshop.

Overnight Lodging

Overnight lodging is not included in the workshop tuition. If you need lodging information for the workshop you plan to attend, please call Judy Williams at 217/528-9688 or 630/629-3776 extension 1103.

Dress is business casual.



If you need special arrangements, contact IASB at 217/528-9688, ext. 1115.

Basics of Law on Board Meetings and Practices

1. Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville
Jan. 25, 2010 (LB10)
2. IASB Springfield Office • Jan. 26, 2010 (LS10)
3. IASB Lombard Office • Feb. 1, 2010 (LL10)

School District Name/No.: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

Registrant Names:

Enter Workshop # below

Total Registrations:

_____ registration(s) Basics of Law on Board Meetings and Practices workshop at \$185 per person = \$ _____

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January 25, 2010
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Our Lady of the Snows
Belleville

January 26, 2010
IASB Office
Springfield

February 1, 2010
IASB Office
Lombard

GENESEO CUSD #228 CAFETERIA
PRODUCTION REPORT

2009-10	# OF DAYS BREAKFAST SERVED	TOTAL # OF BREAKFASTS SERVED FOR MONTH	# OF DAYS LUNCH SERVED	TOTAL # OF LUNCHESES SERVED FOR MONTH	TOTAL LOCAL REVENUE FOR MONTH	TOTAL # OF ABSENT EMPLOYEE DAYS PER MONTH	# OF SUBSTITUTE WORKER DAYS PER MONTH
MONTH							
August	5	1235	5	9885	\$88,565.00	1	1
September	21	8059	21	41763	\$80,841.00	21	15+5*
October	19	7481	19	36077	\$90,264.30	46	33+5*
November	18	7130	18	33955	\$84,785.40	35	28+3*
December							
January							
February							
March							
April							
May							
June							

* added number is for employee training
^ added number is for open positions

State School News Service

347 S. Durkin Drive, Springfield, IL 62704
 Contact: Business Manager Sarah Payne
 Phone: 217.697.8243 Fax: 877.529-0183
 URL: www.stateschoolnews.com



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State juggling shrinking bags of cash

By Jim Broadway, Publisher
 State School News Service

As the days of 2009 dwindle down to a hectic few, state Comptroller Dan Hynes struggles to distribute dwindling numbers of dollars to school districts and universities and others in the "provider community" who are struggling to arrive at 2010 intact.

The University of Illinois, for which \$743 million in state GRF dollars have been appropriated by law for FY 2010 has received just \$400,000. Tuition and fee hikes are on the table. Southern Illinois University is in jeopardy of missing a payroll unless Hynes can put a check in the mail pretty soon.

By this point in the fiscal year, under state law, the institutions of higher education were scheduled to receive about \$600 million from the state. To date, they have received about \$9 million (1.5%). While the backlog for public schools is not quantified in as much detail, a \$1.5 billion lag seems likely.

The state's unprecedented inability to pay its bills is "getting untenable," Hynes has said. Even with state programs slashed for FY 2010, the comptroller has more than \$4.5 billion in legitimate claims for funds appropriated but unavailable to be paid.

Public schools and universities are playing the role of banks, involuntarily lending the state money as it staggers into 2010. After the first of the year (not before February 2, for political reasons), legislators may find ways to generate revenue to make good on the meager promises of their enacted budget. In the meantime, tighten your belt to the last notch.

Bracey takes final shot at school-bashers

For 18 years, Gerald Bracey's annual "Condition of Public Education" report asserted realities that non-educator "education reformers" in the corporate and political arenas would rather not know.

Since his death last month, he has been described as an "acidic" critic of the flailing reforms following the publication of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983. This is an apt description. He documented like the scholar he was, but he wrote with blunt force. If someone in authority acted like an idiot, Bracey said so.

Fortunately, before he died Bracey developed his 2009 report to a point where it could be finished by his friends and colleagues – notably the author and kindred spirit Susan Ohanian – and published by the University of Colorado and Arizona State University. This year, he focused on:

- 1) Whether high-quality schools can "eliminate the achievement gap between whites and minorities." (They can play a necessary role, but society must also ameliorate relevant out-of-school factors.)
- 2) Whether mayoral control is an improvement over school governance by elected boards. (Using New York and Chicago as primary examples, Bracey casts doubt on the effectiveness of mayoral control.)
- 3) Whether "higher standards" will improve public schools' performance. (You just have to read this for his insights and for the power of his prose.)

As always, Bracey's analysis is thorough. It may be a tad lengthy for legislators, but they should read it. The copyright on this issue is suspended, so you can forward it to anyone you think would be interested.

Too big to (be made to) fail: Part II

[Today's issue continues our analysis, directed to the educators of Illinois and the nation, suggesting they are part of something "too big to fail." Thank you to all who commented on Part I of this series.]

You are a part of something so big that even if you were controlled by a powerful central authority you could not quickly or easily be redirected.

Of America's 300 million citizens, about 50 million come through your doors every school day. Illinois schools see the same ratio of the population (1 in 6) in their pre-k to 12th grade classrooms.

So you can see why the corporate sector so strives to "privatize" the schools. CEOs would love to see the \$610 billion America invests in public education flowing through their bank accounts.

You can see why corporations care about children as the building blocks of brand loyalty (via vending contracts for soft drinks, snack foods, etc.), and as the nag-factor influencing how their families spend hundreds of billions of dollars. It may be hard to capture the public school system, but for corporate interests the potential return is certainly worth the effort. (Every crime has a motive.)

But it is not just the size of your structure – all those students and staff – that makes it so difficult for you to be taken over. The size of your mission also plays a role. You do more than just teach the kids to read and cipher. You are *in loco parentis*.

You transport them and provide what for many will be their only decent meal of the day. In the process, you monitor their nutrients. You exercise them and in other ways promote their health. You guide them into wholesome relationships with each other and with society at large. You counsel and protect, discipline and encourage.

In ways the private sector will never be entrusted to replicate, you assume responsibility for the whole student not just his test score. Turning it all over to private sector profiteers is out of the question.

Nobel Laureate: One size fits one

For all the recent furor about folks winning a Nobel Prize without having done anything, we would point out that the wisdom of those whose Nobel honors are based on actual achievements often is ignored.

Take Roger Sperry, for example, who won the Prize in physiology in 1981. In ways that relate powerfully to the "one size fits all" assumption driving current school "reforms," Sperry's words still ring true.

Sperry's research focused on the apparent ability of the brain hemispheres to function independently in ways too eerie to describe. For us it is important to note simply the complexity of what goes on in our heads – and in the heads of your students.

"The more we learn, the more complex becomes the picture ... regarding any one individual and the more it seems to reinforce the conclusion that the ... unique individuality in our brain networks makes that of fingerprints or facial features appear gross and simple The need for educational tests and policy measures to selectively indentify, accommodate, and maximize the differentially specialized forms of individual intellectual potential becomes increasingly evident."

Translation: Once size fits one.

Clearly, the trend toward "standardization" in every respect runs counter to Sperry's conclusion. Clearly, the "Standardistas" (as Susan Ohanian calls them) ignore science and block teachers' efforts to engage fully in relationships with students as individuals.

In the future, centuries from now when we are near the goal of being civilized, historians will look back on our era and say: "How primitive they were. They tried to cure illnesses with leeches. They drowned women in efforts to find out if they were witches. They assumed every brain learns the same things at the same pace in the same ways. How primitive."

Have an enjoyable holiday. We return next week with more on the politics of education in the 2010 elections. To comment to SSNS [click here.](#)