

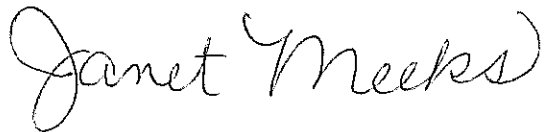
Dear Members of the Geneseo Board of Education,

I am writing you regarding a matter I hope you have on your agenda for your next meeting.

Enclosed is an article from the Geneseo Republic and also an article that I wrote to the editor in agreement with the senior that is quoted.

I hope that all members of your board will read both enclosures and take serious consideration to this matter.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet Meeks". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Mrs. Janet Meeks

Letter to the Editor:

I am writing in regard to an article in the September 18th Geneseo Republic. It was titled "Students question district dance ban". I appreciate the fact that it was put on the front page as I believe it is an important issue.

I totally agree with senior Tawni Ricketts, as does everyone that I have talked to about this issue. She stated "some current senior students were ticketed for illegal consumption of alcohol by a minor. They have been told that, in addition to getting their licenses taken away by the law, being on probation, paying a high fine and punishments implemented by their parents, they will be forced to sit out half of an athletic season and be prohibited from going not only to the homecoming dance, but to the junior/senior prom as well." I would add paying high insurance rates for several years and I would point out that the fine was high and took all summer on a teen's salary to pay it off.

I am the grandmother of one of over 100 young people who made the wrong decision and tried alcohol before they were of age. He did make the right choice and never got into a vehicle. He was given a ticket and had to go to court and stand in front of a judge. He also faced his parents. That is the way it should be. Why in the world would a school district want to step in when the law and the parents are doing what they are supposed to be doing!

The school staff and the board work for and with the parents but they are not employed to discipline students during the summer when the teens are not in school or on school property.

I also have a problem with the administration telling students that they can not participate in 50% of each sport or club and can't go to a once in a life time prom that occurs 10-12 months after a first and only time offense. In the Geneseo Board of Ed policy number 6.190 under Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities it states that district sponsored activities (sports, clubs, dances) "will contribute to the leadership abilities, social well-being, self realization, good citizenship or general growth of student-participants." I would sincerely request that the Board reconsider and give their students a chance to prove themselves good citizens.

These are good teens that made one bad decision and they have paid over and over for their mistake. Our courts and their parents have done their part and these teens have taken responsibility for their action and they will be fine responsible adults. The school should not take milestones and memories from them. It's overkill and will be counter productive.

Mrs. Janet Meeks

Students question district dance ban

By LISA DEPIES
Republic Editor

In Geneseo, high school students arrested for underage drinking — even if that infraction occurred in the summer — are barred from attending that year's homecoming and prom dances. It's a punishment that some students feel is too harsh.

A group of approximately 20 students and parents attended the Sept. 10 Geneseo School District board meeting to share their opposition for the policy.

According to the high school handbook, "Individuals who have been arrested for alcohol or drug-related offenses, or who are on proba-

tion for criminal offenses within the past year, will not be allowed to attend Geneseo High School dances."

"What gives the school administration, who most likely know little about the student on a personal level, the right to ban them from school functions based upon a poor personal choice they made on private property, in the summer, when school was not in session?" asked senior Tawni Ricketts, who addressed the board.

"I am not condoning this type of behavior, nor do I participate in this type of behavior myself, but I feel that the newly enforced consequences are very unfair," she said.

Please see POLICY Page 2

Policy: Underage drinking charges lead to school discipline

Continued from 1

In a letter she read to the board, Ricketts wrote, "There have been instances in the past couple years at Geneseo High School where students were caught on school grounds with substances not only prohibited by the school on these grounds, but that were also prohibited by the law due to the individual's age. Their punishments, in my opinion, were fair.

"They were forced to sit out for half of an athletic season, if they participated in such activities, and, in a case during the previous school year, some students were prohibited from going to the school's homecoming dance. I believe these consequences are tough, and perhaps the dance part a little over the top, but they are justifiable as the consequence is equal for everyone," she said.

"However, recently, over this summer break, some current senior students were ticketed for illegal consumption of alcohol by a minor. They have been told that, in addition to getting their licenses taken away by the law, being on probation, paying a high fine and punishments implemented by their parents, they will be forced to sit out half of an athletic season and be prohibited from going not only to the homecoming dance, but to the junior/senior prom as well.

"I find this incredibly unfair, because, if these students had been younger, they would be receiving a lesser punishment," said Ricketts. "For example, if a sophomore student were to have been caught for the same illegal act, they would not be banned from their junior or senior prom ... by implementing the prom consequence. I believe you are portraying

the idea of 'the younger you are, the less trouble you'll be in.'"

She added, "I find it especially hard to justify this consequence considering that these events took place over the summer, not during the school year and not on school grounds, yet they are receiving a noticeably greater punishment than students in the past, especially when they had been caught on school grounds."

Ricketts said, "Additionally, if the school has the right to look at a student's personal legal records, shouldn't students who get traffic tickets also be punished and banned from participating in school sporting events and social functions like dances considering they are both seen as petty offenses in the court's eyes? What about those who get caught stealing? Why limit it to just alcohol? I'm not saying that I want more consequences to be enforced for such activities. I am just simply asking for students to be treated, rewarded and punished fairly and equally."

Ricketts told the board Geneseo "is the only school in the area that implements the dance consequence."

"In a school where cell phone usage, tardies and occasional drinking incidents are the biggest problems we're faced with, I believe the administration is missing the bigger picture. We have little to no school violence. We don't have gang problems. We don't have student after student dropping out of high school. We rarely have vandalism, and the percentage of students who graduate is exceptional. Instead of looking at the positive things that set Geneseo High School apart from many other schools in Illinois,

the administration seems to be focusing more on the little mistakes people make," she said.

Ricketts added she believes the dance ban may even be counterproductive. "I think students have nothing to look forward to for the rest of their senior year, what incentive do they have not to participate in such activities again?"

The high school senior asked the school board to reconsider its current policy. "Perhaps a better idea would be to implement a system in which you apply consequences in steps, based on the number of offenses the student has had."

She added, "I believe the school has the right to discipline students to a certain level, but I feel that line was crossed when they put into effect the dance policy.

"Let our parents' parent. Let's leave law enforcement to police officers and legal authorities, and let's let our school administrators keep their focus on academics, athletics and all the things that make Geneseo High School great," she said.

Ricketts' mother, Kim, echoed her daughter's comments. "These kids aren't perfect. Let them learn from their mistakes. For a first time offense, you took almost everything away from them for a year," she said.

Because the infractions occurred "not on school grounds and not during the school year" she said punishment should remain in the hands of the parents. "You have to trust the parents."

Board members thanked the pair for their comments, however because the issue was not on the meeting's agenda no action was taken.

GENESEO CUSD #228 CAFETERIA
PRODUCTION REPORT

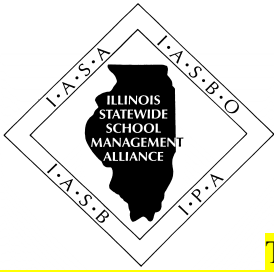
2009-10	# OF DAYS BREAKFAST SERVED	TOTAL # OF BREAKFASTS SERVED FOR MONTH	# OF DAYS LUNCH SERVED	TOTAL # OF LUNCHESES SERVED FOR MONTH	TOTAL LOCAL REVENUE FOR MONTH	TOTAL # OF ABSENT EMPLOYEE DAYS PER MONTH	# OF SUBSTITUTE WORKER DAYS PER MONTH
MONTH							
August	5	1235	5	9885	\$88,565.00	1	1
September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

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

FREE AND REDUCED MEAL ELIGIBILITY
2009-2010 - 10/15/09

BUILDING	ENROLLMENT	# OF FREE	% OF FREE	# OF REDUCED	% OF REDUCED	TOTAL OF FREE/RED.	% OF FREE/RED.
HIGH SCHOOL	893	90	10.08%	55	6.16%	145	16.24%
M.S.	631	66	10.46%	52	8.24%	118	18.70%
NORTHSIDE	303	47	15.51%	29	9.57%	76	25.08%
MILLIKIN	418	53	12.68%	24	5.74%	77	18.42%
SOUTHWEST	396	61	15.40%	22	5.56%	83	20.96%
LADDERS	78	7	8.97%	3	3.85%	10	12.82%
DIST. 228 TOTALS (K-12)	2641	317	12.00%	182	6.89%	499	18.89%
DIST. 228 TOTALS INCLUDING LADDERS	2719	324	11.92%	185	6.80%	509	18.72%
ROCK RIV.	23	9	39.13%	3	13.04%	12	52.17%
ST. MALACHY	120	7	5.83%	9	7.50%	16	13.33%

October 30, 2009



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (96-37)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY DONE FOR THE YEAR

The Illinois General Assembly is preparing to adjourn this afternoon (Friday) after completing its Veto Session business and is not scheduled to return to the Capitol until January 12. No significant changes or additions were made, or even attempted, to the Fiscal Year 2010 budget. Lawmakers will consider budgetary amendments and possible new revenue sources next year, most likely after the February 2 Primary Election.

This week legislators did debate issues relating to: campaign finance reform and ethics (**SB 1466, SB 146, HB 5**), “clean-up” language regarding the State Lottery (**HB 607**) and gaming (**HB 1306, SB 744**), and addressed cemetery care (**SB 1471**) and mass transit fees (**SB 941**).

MILITARY COMPACT BILL DOES NOT ADVANCE

As has been reported in the last several Alliance Legislative Reports, a push was made to pass a bill containing provisions for Illinois to join the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. A military compact amendment was added to **SB 277** in the House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee Wednesday, but no vote was taken on the bill once the supporters realized that they did not have enough votes to move the bill out of Committee. The amendment was initiated by **Governor Pat Quinn** and the bill was carried by **State Representative Tom Holbrook (D-Belleville)**.

If Illinois would join the Compact, all decisions about students of parents who are in the military who transfer into a school district would be determined by this interstate commission – not the school district or the State. Decisions about student placement in classes, graduation requirements, immunizations, participation in sports or other extracurricular activities, would not be made by the local school district or even State law – but would be solely determined by the interstate commission. A synopsis of the military compact can be found at: <http://www.iasb.com/govrel/compact.cfm>

The Alliance and other education groups strongly opposed the legislation based, not on the concept behind the bill, but by the bill’s drafting that usurps local school district and State authority to make decisions. All agree that efforts should be made by school districts to facilitate the educational experience of all students who transfer into the area. The Alliance offered an alternative amendment which would have addressed the concerns brought forth by military personnel, but by *changing current State law* instead of by joining the military compact. The Alliance amendment was not considered by the Committee.

Opposition to the military compact bill was led by Alliance lobbyist **Susan Hilton** and **Dr. Sam McGowen**, Superintendent of Mascoutah SD #19. They reached out to supporters of the bill in search of a compromise, drafted an alternative amendment, and ultimately testified against the bill in Committee.

The military compact initiative will likely emerge again in the Capitol in the spring legislative session.

AED CLARIFICATION APPROVED

A bill was approved that clarifies that a school district is not responsible for providing an Automated

External Defibrillator (AED) or a trained AED user if the activity taking place is not a school-sponsored event. **SB 1371 (Crotty, D-Oak Forest)** makes clarifications to the law that requires school districts and other entities to have access to an AED at all outdoor physical fitness facilities. It more clearly states that school districts only must provide the AED and trained AED user at outside athletic facilities if the activity is directly supervised by an employee (not maintenance or security personnel) of the school district and specifically exempts any activity or program that is organized by a private or not-for-profit organization and supervised by a person who is not employed by the school district. So, if another organization – say a Little League baseball team or Junior Soccer League team – uses a school’s baseball diamond or soccer field in the summer the school district is not responsible for providing an AED or a trained AED user.

SB 1371 will be sent to the Governor for consideration.

MORE FUNDING FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION?

A bill is on the way to the Governor, **SB 1514 (Viverito, D-Burbank)**, which could provide an avenue for additional funding for school construction. It allows for the issuance of “Qualified School Construction Bonds” if the Governor so directs. The bill includes authorizing language for school districts to apply for Qualified School Construction Bonds, which is a new program set up within the federal stimulus package. The bond program uses the same tax credit financing mechanism as the relatively small Qualified Zone Academy Bond program (QZAB). The federal government will provide tax credits to bond holders in lieu of interest payments, and school districts will only be responsible for repaying the principal. This program will allocate 40% of funds to the 125 poorest school districts nationally. Other qualifications are unknown at this point, but there is not supposed to be any match requirements attached to this program. It is also uncertain at this point to which agency school districts will apply for this program.

OTHER BILL ACTION THIS WEEK

SB 227 (Dahl, R-Granville) extends to 35 years the Tax Increment Financing districts for Mendota, Cahokia, and Belleville. **The Senate concurred** in the House amendment and the bill will be sent to the Governor for consideration.

SB 595 (Koehler, D-Peoria) extends the Tax Increment Financing District in the Village of Bellevue to 35 years. **The bill was approved** by the House of Representatives and will be sent to the Governor for consideration.

SB 932 (DeLeo, D-Chicago) provides that the Secretary of State shall suspend a school bus driver permit for 3 years if the permit holder fails to perform a post-trip inspection in accordance with the school district or private school bus company inspection policy. It requires a school bus to have an operating digital two-way radio while the school bus driver is in possession of a school bus, and the device must be turned on and adjusted in a manner that would alert the school bus driver of an incoming communication request. **The Senate concurred** in the House amendments and the bill will be sent to the Governor for consideration.

SB 1391 (Clayborne, D-E. St. Louis) allows school districts to hire marital and family therapists if they meet the certification standards contained in rules adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). **The motion to override** the Governor’s amendatory veto **was defeated** in the House of Representatives and the bill is dead.

SB 1882 (Cronin, R-Elmhurst) establishes a task force to explore and examine all duties of the Illinois State Board of Education and regional offices of education in order to determine which duties and responsibilities a regional office of education could more appropriately and efficiently deliver to school districts. **The House voted to override** the Governor's amendatory veto and the bill becomes law in its original form without the Governor's proposed changes.

SB 2188 (Clayborne) states that if a taxing body cannot issue bonds because of a court action, this delay does not count against the time limits for bond issuance set forth in the law. **The bill was approved** by the House of Representatives and will be sent to the Governor for consideration.

HB 363 (Soto, D-Chicago) establishes a Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force in order to ensure that school facility related decisions are made with the input of the community and reflect educationally sound and fiscally responsible criteria. **The Senate voted to override** the Governor's Amendatory Veto and the bill becomes law in its original form without the Governor's proposed changes.

HB 547 (Pihos, R-Glen Ellyn) creates the Identity Protection Act and prohibits – with certain exceptions – local government agencies (including school districts) from publicly displaying or printing an individual's social security number. The bill also requires each local governmental agency to draft and approve an identity-protection policy within 12 months. **The Senate voted to accept** the Governor's Amendatory Veto and the bill becomes law with the Governor's changes.

HB 557 (Chapa La Via, D-Aurora) places elementary and secondary education facilities under the Interference with a Public Institution of Higher Education Act. A person commits interference with a public institution of education by denying school personnel or visitors freedom of movement at the institution or by interfering in other ways. **The Senate voted to override** the Governor's Amendatory Veto and the bill becomes law in its original form without the Governor's proposed changes.

HB 613 (Eddy, R-Hutsonville), in provisions requiring contracts to be awarded by competitive bid, provides that the acceptance of bids sealed by a bidder and the opening of these bids at a public bid opening may be permitted by an electronic process for communicating, accepting, and opening competitive bids. **The Senate voted to accept** the Governor's Amendatory Veto and the bill becomes law with the Governor's changes.

HB 725 (Watson, R-Jacksonville) encourages school boards to implement American Sign Language (ASL) courses into school foreign language curriculum. **The Senate voted to accept** the Governor's Amendatory Veto and the bill becomes law with the Governor's changes.

HB 806 (Fortner, R-West Chicago), based upon an assessment of a child's readiness, allows children 6 years of age due to be 7 years by December 31, who have attended a state-certified, private preschool through kindergarten to be enrolled in the first grade. The bill also allows the Department of Human Services to operate a "Gateways to Opportunity" program, a comprehensive professional development system the goal of which is to support a diverse, stable, and quality workforce for settings serving children and youth. **The House concurred** in the Senate amendment and the bill will be sent to the Governor for consideration.

HB 2445 (Chapa La Via) makes changes concerning Illinois Education Labor Relations Board attorneys and investigators, choice of employee organization, unit clarification petitions, and arbitration procedures. **The Senate voted to override** the Governor's Amendatory Veto and the bill becomes law in its original form without the Governor's proposed changes.

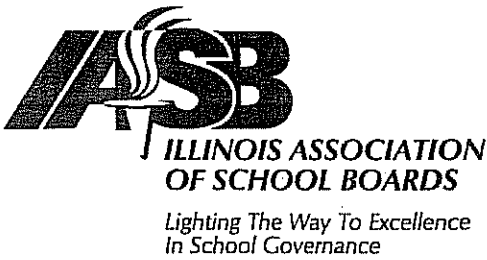
HB 2547 (Fritchey, D-Chicago) provides that, with respect to a non-sectarian school, the exercise of free speech shall not be a civil rights violation and the jurisdiction of the Department of Human Rights is limited. The limitations include: the failure to enroll an individual; the denial of access to facilities, goods, or services; harassment, bullying, or similar acts against an individual; or the failure of a covered entity to take corrective action to stop harassment. **The Senate voted to override** the Governor's Amendatory Veto and the bill becomes law in its original form without the Governor's proposed changes.

HJR 77 (Smith, D-Canton) denies the following mandate waiver requests: the Lake Park CHSD 108 request regarding content of evaluation plans; the Hononegah CHSD 207 request regarding content of evaluation plans; and the Wheaton CUSD 200 request regarding behind-the-wheel drivers' education. **The resolution was adopted** by chambers and those waiver requests are denied.

**The legislative report is written and edited by the lobbyists of the Illinois Association of School Boards to provide information to the members of the organizations that comprise the Statewide School Management Alliance.*

Alliance Legislative Reports:
Bill Text/Status: Illinois General Assembly

www.iasb.com
www.ilga.gov



Blackhawk Division Governing Committee Meeting

me

The Cellar • Geneseo
Tuesday, December 1, 2009 • \$25.00

DIVISION OFFICERS

Chair
Don Sproul
United THSD 30

Vice Chair
Larry Atkinson
Orion CUSD 223

Resolutions Chair
Rick Kessler
Riverdale CUSD 100

IASB Board of Directors
Jackie Mickley
Geneseo CUSD 228

AGENDA

- ◆ Dinner — 6:30 p.m.
- ◆ Director's Report
- ◆ Resolutions Report
- ◆ Spring Conference Planning:
 Wednesday, March 10, 2010, Location: Orion CUSD 223
- ◆ Summer Governing Committee Meeting: Wednesday, May 12, 2010, Geneseo
- ◆ Suggested Meeting Dates
 Fall Dinner Conference — Wednesday, October 6, 2010, Location: _____
 Winter Governing Committee Meeting — Thursday, December 2, 2010, Geneseo
- ◆ Roundtable Discussion – Conference Review
- ◆ Adjournment

Each member school district in the Division is entitled to representation on the Governing Committee. Board member participation is solicited to help your officers and staff determine programs and services desired by the membership. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS ARE WELCOME.**

Reservations are requested prior to noon, Wednesday, November 25, 2009.

RESERVATION FORM

Please register _____ persons at \$25.00 each for the Blackhawk Division Governing Committee meeting at the Cellar Restaurant, Geneseo on Tuesday, December 1, 2009.

Please check one: Bill district, P.O. # _____ Payment is enclosed
or register online at www.iasb.com

Charge my: Visa MasterCard Discover Credit Card # _____
Exp. Date _____ Card Security # _____ Signature _____

PLEASE CHOOSE: _____ PRIME RIB or _____ ORANGE ROUGHY

List of Attendees: _____

District Name, No. & Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

If mailing send to: Illinois Association of School Boards, 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62703; telephone 217/528-9688 ext. 1118 or fax to Jenny Harkins at 217/528-2831. Reservations may be canceled no later than two working days prior to the meeting. This is a legitimate school board expense. {5 credits}

BHG9

Dean Langdon, Director, Field Services, IASB