

Vision 20/20 Letter to the Editor

It's time for educators and members of the community to take back the conversation about public education in Illinois. That's why we are excited to share with the Geneseo District 228 School Community a new initiative called Vision 20/20. It's a blueprint for the future of public education that has been developed by Illinois educators from all regions of the state.

The goal of Vision 20/20 is summarized in its tagline: "Fulfilling the Promise of Public Education." Education is an investment in our children's future, our state's future, and our nation's future. It is our responsibility as educators to reflect upon the current state of education in Illinois and take action to create an education system that meets the needs of all students.

We endorse Vision 20/20 because for too long now, outside influences have spent too much of our time, money and resources "reforming" and regulating a system that functions best under local governance and monitoring. High stakes testing and unfunded mandates—including PARCC testing and other compliance regulations that take time away from academic and artistic endeavors, are strangling our ability to provide the best opportunities for our children.

Vision 20/20's policy platform is divided into four main pillars:

- 21st Century Learning – Not just knowledge of reading and math, but providing the technology and tools for learning in today's world as well as a commitment to the "whole child";
- Highly Effective Educators – Policies to help attract, develop and retain the highest quality of teachers and administrators;
- Shared Accountability – Creating a shared accountability model that includes more input from educators, increases collaboration with legislators and restructures mandates to allow more flexibility for local school districts and communities; and
- Equitable and Adequate Funding – An evidence-based funding model that takes into account what it actually costs to educate a student in various parts of our state and utilizes research to identify those things that have the most impact on student success.

This plan is representative of educators' opinions and expertise from the southern tip of Illinois through the northern Chicago suburbs. This vision is the result of input from more than 3,000 diverse stakeholders, discussions with field experts, and a review of current literature on best practices. The organizations that collaborated on Vision 20/20 include school board members, principals, school business officials, and school superintendents. The Illinois PTA and the Ounce of Prevention Fund, an organization dedicated to providing children in poverty the best chance for success in school, already have endorsed the plan.

We believe educators should be held to the highest standards, but also be given the flexibility to apply their experience and knowledge to match local needs in order to best support each individual student.

We invite you to learn more about Vision 20/20 by visiting the website at www.illinoisvision2020.org **and to sign the petition in support of these policies.** You also can follow the progress on Twitter at @ILVision2020. Changing the course of public education in Illinois can only happen with grassroots support, and we are asking you to help us fulfill the promise of public education to children in the Geneseo School Community.

Respectfully,

Scott D. Kuffel, Superintendent

(LETTER SENT BY IASA PRESIDENT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

December 29, 2014

Dear Directors,

I bring you wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy Holiday Season. I also bring you an opportunity to stand together in courage and commitment for the next phase of Vision 20/20 Mobilization.

Dr. Clark has oft used a military metaphor for this statewide referendum that we are undertaking. And unquestionably we recognize that this will be a battle moving forward to raise awareness around Vision 20/20, promote understanding of our cause, and to extend the invitation to support the Vision en masse, and to embrace and enjoin those who are enrolled in the crusade. We need “boots on the ground” and the strategy takes a new turn towards more than just Facebook posts and well-placed Tweets. The battle is coming to our own local home fronts, and it’s time for us to raise the level of engagement. Optimism has sparked, but the flames need fanning.

The Board of Directors of the Illinois Association of School Administrators started this process and we are morally charged to make sure that momentum does not wane. The first strikes and opening volleys have been executed, but Vision 20/20 cannot be allowed to be some “big event” like a PARCC test. Rather, it must be cured and matured into a way of being for us. The four pillars must be more than bullet points in a brochure, but must become daily talking points for us.

Therefore, I submit to you this challenge to your leadership between now and our Board meeting in February, 2015. If Brent is to be our General, then we move into the 2nd Lieutenant roles and we have to take our marching orders. Our *After Action Report* will occur at our February meeting when each of us will report back the achievement and victories at our own respective divisions.

You will see that there are 8 tasks listed on your target list for this phase. As a Director, I would expect that you will use your leadership to activate your Region Presidents, Committee leaders AND your divisional IASBO leadership, IPA, IASBO officers and whomever you can solicit for an “all hands on deck” approach to call to action. Each of us will be held accountable as leaders and your courage will be tested to hold your superintendent colleagues accountable as well. We must operate through principles of straight talk and activism that communicates that if we are not ALL IN—both with our energies and our numbers-- then we minimize the chance for success, which minimizes the opportunities for our CHILDREN.

I complete my 30th year in education knowing that while many casually discuss legacies, I can without reservation tell you that the satisfaction we will all feel when we know that Vision 20/20 is deeply entrenched in the hearts, heads and hands of all responsible for public school children will be immeasurable. Be innovative. Be strong in your resolve. We need to win hill after hill after hill. Call me anytime at (309)-489-6054 if you want to discuss this further. I’m impatient. For my children, for your children, for ALL children. Let’s get to work!

Outcomes to Report at February 2015 IASA Board of Directors Meeting

MOBILIZATION PHASE 2

These are outcomes that should be achieved prior to or scheduled prior to the February Board of Directors Meeting. These are assigned for *each* IASA Division. Your leadership and the ability to engage a variety of stakeholders and hold people accountable to support will be key to how we move forward in advocacy for CHILDREN!

- Publish a letter to the editor in each newspaper of general circulation within the division.
- Send at least one letter to each representative within the division, inviting awareness, understanding and an invitation to support of Vision 20/20.
- Send at least one letter to each senator within the division, inviting awareness, understanding and support of Vision 20/20.
- Coordinate at least one community meeting for awareness, understanding and an invitation to support Vision 20/20.
- 100% Board Resolution approval in support of Vision 20/20
- Each district conducts at least one activity for faculty for awareness, understanding and an invitation to support Vision 20/20.
- Each district completes at least one activity for parents (whether through a formal PTO or PTA meeting, or some other parent engagement process) for awareness, understanding and an invitation to support Vision 20/20.
- Each district completes at least one activity for students (whether through an individual club, team, or other organized student group, or some other form of student engagement process) for awareness, understanding and an invitation to support Vision 20/20.

Illinois Differentiated Accountability Model

The proposed differentiated accountability model modernizes the Illinois accountability system in a manner that satisfies federal requirements under the state's flexibility waiver. The proposed differentiated accountability model recognizes the diversity of Illinois schools by focusing on continuous improvement and district practices, rather than cross sectional comparisons of diverse schools to a single standard. The proposed model is guided by the following principles.

School accountability should:

- Focus on continuous quality improvement
- Recognize local district needs and challenges
- Align to educator accountability defined by best practices and student growth
- Promote shared accountability

Proposed Model

The proposed model establishes a holistic approach to improving student performance and district practice. Moreover, the model connects the framework for principal and teacher evaluations to improving district practices. The model has two major components; student performance and district practices.

Student Performance

The student performance component focuses on student outcomes and the closing of achievement gaps, which has the following sub components:

Achievement status measures the degree to which cross sectional student performance in reading/language arts and mathematics, as well as graduation rates, meet or exceed state benchmarks.

Achievement growth measures student growth in reading/language arts and mathematics via the state's growth value tables.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) measures the degree to which schools are closing achievement gaps.

District Practice

The district practices component measures the degree to which the school is implementing best practices, along with the degree to which the school is continually improving.

Compliance measure the degree to which schools meet current ROE/ISCs compliance probes.

Best Practices measure the degree to which schools are adhering to a set of quality standards and best practices for effective schools. The best practices component is measured using a rubric completed by external evaluators. The rubric process is similar to how the Danielson framework rates teacher practice.

Contextual Evidence provides opportunities for districts to demonstrate improved outcomes through local data. Districts are required to develop and implement action plans to address the identified areas for improvement, including school climate measures.

