

**IPACE**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**PROCEDURES**

**2010 CAMPAIGN**



Dear Colleagues,

As I travel around the state, I'm often asked, "Why does IEA devote such significant energy and resources to politics?" I always answer with a simple declarative statement: "Every decision that impacts both our profession and the students we serve is a political decision."

This is because all education policies - local, state and federal - are set by men and women who become empowered to make those decisions by getting elected to office.

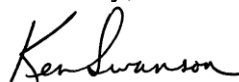
The Illinois Political Action Committee for Education (IPACE) is the vehicle that allows all IEA members to come together collectively for the purpose of influencing the political decisions that directly affects each of us. IPACE recommendations are member decisions and this document explains how the recommendation process works and provides a guide as to how all IEA members can participate in the recommendation process.

Along with IEA members and staff, IPACE-recommended candidates are members of "Team IEA," which has long welcomed all candidates, regardless of political party, who share our values and goals. Our bipartisan approach has allowed IEA to successfully advocate for our members, even during times of significant political change.

Every election impacts you and every IEA member and 2010 is one of those times when the impact will be profound. Many of you have expressed your disappointment and anger at the politicians and their failure to fund our schools, our pensions, and our state responsibly. This election year gives you the opportunity to help us hold the politicians accountable. This state is on the edge of economic meltdown. Are you ready to get involved and let those who want your vote know what you want and expect from them?

Get off the bench and into the game. Get involved in the recommendation process and other meetings with the politicians. There is nothing more powerful than you and your colleagues personally engaging in conversations with those who want your vote. Use that untapped power you and your colleagues hold in your hands. Help us help you by making sure everyone seeking your vote knows what you expect from them and why.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Swanson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'K'.

Ken Swanson  
President, Illinois Education Association

## **IPACE Executive Committee and Staff**

### **Chair**

Ken Swanson (54)

### **Vice Chair**

Bob Blade (7)

Cinda Klickna (11)

Max Bochmann (39)

Elston Flowers (62)

Joyce Francis (IEA-R)

Kathi Griffin (35)

Dave Griffith (39)

Jim Grimes (47)

Al Llorens (27)

Nancy A. Miller (14)

Anthony Palumbo (Student)

John Seeber (54)

Tammy Smith (IEA-R)

Terry Waldron (4)

Celina Watts (43)

Bill Wright (IEA-R)

### **Coordinator**

Jim Reed

### **Treasurer**

Randy Welch

### **Consultants**

Gaye Larison

Janette Weatherall

Michelle Ishmael

Will Lovett

Sean Denney

### **Administrative Assistant**

Donna Proefrock

### **Associate Staff**

Arlene Criglar

Diane Covington

Bridget McHatton

## **THE 2010 ELECTIONS – WHAT’S AT STAKE?**

Our association cares about elections, because politicians decide policies that affect our members and the students we care for and teach.

### **Who’s up for election in 2010?**

- One United States Senate seat
- 1/3 of the Illinois state Senate seats (20 seats)
- All 118 members of the Illinois House of Representatives
- All 19 members of the Illinois congressional delegation

### **What’s at stake in this election?**

Deciding who will set policy that affects you and your students.

### **Policy, politics, and you**

IEA uses its collective voice to try and shape public education policies that impact you and the students in your classroom and school.

We know that every education decision is a political one. Men and women who make the decisions must first be elected to their policy-making positions ... the school board, the governorship, the state legislature, and Congress.

We also know that there is no vacuum in policy-making or politics. If we are not talking to policy-makers, someone else will be. If we do not use our collective strength to elect men and women who share our values, principles, and priorities, then someone else will.

Whether or not we choose to be involved in the election or in policy advocacy, the 2008 elections will take place, and thereafter, policies will be passed. This is the connection between policy, politics, and you.

### **The Education Party**

Our association does not concede the issue of public education to anyone or any political party. Public education is not a partisan issue, because it matters to all of us.

We believe that IEA members – working every day at the business of teaching and caring for students – have a much better sense of the progress being made in making Illinois’ good public schools and higher education institutions even better than any political leader.

IEA members are Democrats, Independents, Republicans, and more – just like their neighbors. Consequently, IEA is bipartisan in the candidates we recommend for office, because our membership is bipartisan, and because we measure candidates as individuals based on their positions and performance on education issues.

During the 2010 election, our association will continue working to build an Education Party made up of men and women running for office who share our values, principles, and priorities. We support them based only on their positions on public education and their willingness to be partners with us in deciding education policies.

## **Criteria for recommending candidates**

The recommendation process is about evaluating candidates. As we evaluate candidates, we judge human qualities. No candidate is perfect, yet many will earn our support.

The two main criteria we use when evaluating candidates for recommendation is if they are **acceptable** to our membership and **electable** on Election Day.

A candidate must respond to an IPACE questionnaire and meet with the recommendation committee to be considered for recommendation.

### **Acceptable**

We must be able to promote an acceptable candidate to our membership. We can help determine if they are “acceptable” by reviewing their record, seeking their positions on education issues, and evaluating their relationship with our association.

- **Record**

We look first at the record of IPACE-recommended incumbents in the race. “Performance over promise” is the guiding credo. An incumbent with a positive record of performance is always preferred over a challenger who can only make promises. Being a union of education employees, our focus is on public education issues. We only track an incumbent’s votes on education legislation.

- **Position on education issues**

If no performing incumbent is in the race, we must evaluate each candidate’s attitudes toward public education and higher education issues. The candidate’s responses to the IEA-NEA questionnaire are an important way of evaluating candidates for a recommendation.

- **Relationship/attitude with IEA**

Politics is about relationships, building, maintaining, and strengthening them. It is vital that we have good working relationships with policy-makers. When evaluating candidates, we want to know how they would build and maintain a relationship with our members. We also want to learn how they would consult and partner with the IEA on education issues.

### **Electable**

Do we think the candidate can win the election? Even the most devoted friend of education will be unable to advance our legislative program if the candidate is unsuccessful on Election Day. Past election results, analyses of party and independent voter strength, and professional and informal polls help us to decide whether a candidate is a potential winner.

### **What’s at stake in this election?**

Virtually everything that affects IEA members and public education.

## YOUR INPUT AND FEEDBACK

Together we are strong. The IEA is the collective voice for our 133,000 members. IPACE is our political voice.

IEA members like you are chosen to serve on the IPACE executive committee. These active and retired teachers, ESPs, and students decide the association's policies about political action and make the decisions about which candidates to recommend for statewide offices. These members also have the responsibility of reaching concurrence with local members on state legislative and congressional recommendations.

The association values your feedback before decisions are made and appreciates your feedback throughout the year.

We want to continue to hear from you and encourage you to reach us one of the following ways:

- through IEA's web page at [www.ieanea.org](http://www.ieanea.org)
- by subscribing to the IEA Insider through IEA's Communications Department
- by writing to: IPACE, 100 East Edwards Street, Springfield, IL 62704
- by contacting IPACE Chairperson Ken Swanson or any of the IPACE executive committee members

Political decisions can be difficult. IEA makes decisions about which candidates to support based solely on education issues and the candidates' willingness to be partners with us to move our agenda into law. We recognize, however, that some IEA members make decisions about politicians based on a range of personal issues unrelated to education. The decision on which candidate to vote for is yours. IEA makes recommendations so that you know which candidate the association thinks would be best for public education employees.

Additionally, making choices means someone has not been chosen. The procedures detailed in this manual are rooted in fairness. The decisions are made by IEA local leaders and members.

You can influence those decisions by talking with your local association president and leaders, your IEA region chair, or by contacting a member of the IPACE executive committee. If you feel strongly about a candidate, let us know before decisions are made. If you have questions, please ask them. We seek your involvement, and we want to hear from you.

## **THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY – ILLINOIS’ STATE LEGISLATURE**

The Illinois legislature – the General Assembly – is arguably the most important policy-making body to Illinois K-12 and higher education employees.

### **Why?**

- The General Assembly decides what local and state resources are available to your school district and higher education institution.
- The General Assembly sets professional and working standards that you must meet to teach and be employed in an Illinois public school.
- The General Assembly sets your pension benefits and determines your individual and collective rights.

Which candidate the association decides to support for election to the Illinois legislature is a critical decision. This section of the manual describes the process for making this critical decision.

### **Legislative recommendations: A two-step process**

The decision about which candidates IEA-IPACE recommends for the legislature is a two-step process:

1. Recommendation by local association presidents, or their designee within the legislative district.
2. Concurrence by the IPACE executive committee.

The IPACE executive committee and the legislative district recommendation committee must pass concurrent motions to complete the recommendation.

The IPACE executive committee meets regularly during the year to consider these recommendations. The committee considers either a motion to concur or a motion to non-concur with the local recommendation motion.

### **Local recommendation**

- **IPACE recommendation meeting**

The IPACE executive committee, through the IEA Government Relations department, initiates all recommendation meetings to consider candidates for the General Assembly.

All recommendation meetings shall take place with a member of the Government Relations department staff present, and whenever possible, with a member of the IPACE executive committee.

At least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting, a recommendation meeting notice will be sent to local presidents and other leaders within the legislative district, along with a sample designee form.

Recommendation meetings are open to all IEA-IPACE contributors within the respective legislative district.

Encourage team approach (Region Chair/UD/GPA)

- **Candidate invitations**

At least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting, an invitation to the meeting and a written questionnaire is mailed to all eligible candidates by the Government Relations department on behalf of the IPACE executive committee.

Candidates can only be considered for recommendation if they have submitted the questionnaire and participate in the meeting.

- **Committee make-up**

The local association presidents within the legislative district constitute the legislative district recommendation committee. Only a local association president, or their designee, may cast votes on behalf of the local association. The designee must have a written notice to cast the vote on behalf of the local president. No proxy votes are allowed.

- **Committee responsibilities**

The legislative district committee shall elect its presiding officer (chairperson), who will serve a two-year term.

The legislative district committees will then interview the candidates, discuss whether the candidate is acceptable and electable, and make a motion for recommendation. They are also encouraged to assist in the recommended candidates' campaign activities.

A member of the Government Relations staff or the IPACE executive committee will be responsible for the following items at the meeting:

- Record motions and vote tallies, and compile a record of the voting representatives of each local.
- Notify the IPACE executive committee of the candidate recommended in the legislative district.
- Coordination of electoral activities between the recommended candidate and the IEA.

- **Weighted votes**

Recommendation decisions are determined by a majority of the weighted votes of those committee members present and participating at the meeting.

Every IEA local within the legislative district is entitled to one vote.

Locals have additional weighted votes for every \$200 contributed to IPACE by their local association during the previous fiscal year. Generally, this equates to one weighted vote for every 10 IPACE contributors in a local.

Questions or concerns with the weighted votes can be answered and handled at the recommendation meeting.

- **Performing incumbents**

IPACE recommended legislators with positive voting records are considered “performing incumbents.” Individuals serving in the current state legislature have a voting record on issues important to IEA members.

IEA-IPACE stands by their recommended candidates who continue to advocate and support public education. “Performance over promise” is the guiding credo. An incumbent with a positive record of performance is always preferred over a challenger who can only make promises.

In a legislative district where a “performing incumbent” exists, only that candidate is invited to the recommendation meeting. Where no performing incumbent exists, all eligible candidates are invited to attend the meeting.

**Mail Ballot**

Recommendation of a performing incumbent may be done by mail ballot.

A mail ballot, including the performing incumbent’s voting record, will be mailed to local presidents in the legislative district. Unless ballots are returned with a majority of the weighted vote opposed to continued support for the legislator, the IEA-IPACE recommendation will continue.

## **UNITED STATES SENATE**

Increasingly, the federal government is taking a more active role in how public schools function in Illinois. The policies adopted by Congress in Washington, D.C. directly impact the dollars available to meet students' needs and what accountability measures are required for federal dollars.

The IPACE executive committee has the responsibility to make recommendations for candidates for the U.S. Senate. To complete the recommendation, both the IEA-NEA board of directors and the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education board of directors must concur.

### **Recommendation Meeting**

Prior to the general election, United State Senate candidates will be invited to attend an IPACE meeting designed to interview candidates. Candidates will also be mailed an IPACE questionnaire.

Candidates can only be considered for recommendation if they have submitted the questionnaire and participate in the meeting.

## **UNITED STATES CONGRESS**

Illinois' congressional delegation, the members of the U.S. House of Representatives, are partners with the U.S. Senate in deciding federal education policy passed to the president of the United States.

### **Recommendations**

The same process described in the section on the Illinois General Assembly applies to the recommendation of congressional candidates. In addition to the IPACE concurrence, the NEA board of directors must also concur with the local and state recommendation.

## **OTHER OFFICES**

### **U.S. president recommendation**

The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education board of directors evaluates and recommends a presidential candidate. The IPACE executive committee, the IEA-NEA board of directors, and corresponding committees in other states must act upon this recommendation to complete the process.

### **Judicial recommendations**

The same process described in the section on the Illinois General Assembly applies to deciding which candidates to support for state, circuit, and appellate court.

The IPACE executive committee is responsible for interviewing and recommending candidates to the state Supreme Court.

## **County recommendation committees (except Cook County)**

The rules and procedures for this level of recommendation committees are like those at all other levels.

County recommendation committees consist of the local IEA presidents/local political action chairpersons in the county. A chairperson is elected and he/she arranges meetings, contacts candidates, and presides at meetings. Recommendations are determined by this committee through the weighted vote procedure.

Multi-county office recommendations must have IPACE executive committee concurrence, and IPACE initiates the meetings.

## **Cook County recommendation committee**

This recommendation committee is made up of the local IEA presidents, their designees, or the local political action committee chairpersons within Cook County, and the IEA region chairperson.

Each member is allotted votes on the same basis used at other levels. If a local IEA president, their designee, or a local political action committee chairperson does not attend the meeting, he/she forfeits the votes to the appropriate IEA region chairperson.

The committee must receive concurrence from the IPACE executive committee on recommendations for Cook County offices. After agreement is reached, all affected local association presidents will receive a ballot and must vote on the suggested recommendations within 10 days. Ballots not returned are assumed to be in agreement with the recommendations. A majority of the weighted votes is required to make the recommendation whole.

## **Unorganized areas and other political committees**

In political entities which are largely or wholly unorganized by IEA, the political recommendations are made by the IPACE executive committee.

Where area and regional IPACE structures are formed, they must be coterminous with the boundaries of the political subdivision (i.e., state, senate or representative district, judicial, circuit or district, or educational service region). Proposals for formation of special political subdivisions must have the approval of the IPACE executive committee.