

STATEMENT REGARDING EDUCATION
For the Illinois Education Association/NEA,
member organization of the Responsible Budget Coalition
Presented by Brenda Powers
President, Alton Education Association/NEA



Photos: David Vitoff/IEA

Fairness to students in Illinois does not come with political parties. It comes in being responsible elected officials whose common goal is to pass a budget that meets the needs of Illinoisans across this great state. It does not mean watching children get on busses at 6:15 in the morning when their school doesn't start until 8:00, and they only live seven miles from school. It does not mean students at Southwestern High School who are being asked to pay enormous fees for each extracurricular activity a student signs up to participate in. It does not mean that in Carrolton, the superintendent may have to ask parents to transport their children and other children to academic and sporting events in which they represent the school because the school does not have money for transportation to extra events or possibly even to school. Transportation reductions are disastrous to our school funding.

At this time, there are some districts that have laid off all of their support personnel for the 2010-2011 school year. I wonder how those students will get to school, what they will eat, and how this experience will change the way the students and their parents respect and trust the government in their state.

As a result of the inadequate state funding, class sizes will increase in Alton, Southwestern, Edwardsville, Bethalto, and every school in our region and across this state. With large sizes it is impossible to even walk around the room to check on our student's progress, and further assist them in their learning. How would you like an emergency room doctor to assist you and twenty nine others at the same time with no one around to assist them and in a room not much larger than your living room?

Bethalto, Alton, Southwestern are cutting services in fine arts programs, physical education, and instruction to your students, my students and the students of this state. These are just but a few schools and a few cuts that is spreading like a mighty illness across our state because our elected officials are not taking the necessary steps to help stop the progression of this disease called 'politics'. I ask you to pass a responsible budget with the help of the great people from the State of Illinois.

Alton school superintendent, David Elson, walked hand in hand with the employees of his

district marching on the Springfield Capital asking for the government to be responsible financially to the students in our state and district. The Alton School Board, Administration, and employees work together to solve the problems in our district. I ask that you, our legislators, work together to solve the problems in our state.

Sincerely,

Brenda L. Powers

President, Alton Education Association-NEA, and
Language Arts Teacher, Alton Middle School

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