

Region 64 Update

Volume 1, Issue 2

March 2009

State's constitutional officers address 155th IEA RA

Calling it the "elephant in the room," state Treasurer Alexi Giannoulias told the Illinois Education Association's Representative Assembly Friday that he is not committed to an idea he has floated to combine the state's major pension systems, including the teachers'

"We've ordered a study," he said, to determine whether

that plan is the best, adding that his proposal would combine the investment functions but not the money. "If the plan is right for all of you, we'll do it. If not, we won't."

Giannoulias, Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Comptroller Dan Hynes addressed the

assembly by having a sit-down conversation with IEA President Ken Swanson.

All agreed that the problem with the pension system is not the fact that it exists – saying that educators deserve a safe retirement as a trade-off for a life of public service – but the fact that state budgeters have consistently underfunded the system.

Swanson asked the three whether they will stand behind Gov. Pat Quinn in his proposal to increase the state's income tax to 4.5 percent from 3 percent. None said they will outright support it. "I advised the governor that the first thing is to look at the budget and find out where the cost savings is as a show of good faith for the people of Illinois," Hynes said.



As for fairer school funding, all three agreed that the system is broken and needs to be fixed. But Hynes said the next two years will have to be spent "righting the ship" of the state's economy and that little else is likely to get as much attention.

Editors Note

The Teacher trustees of the TRS pension board did submit a rebuttal on the statements made by Alexi Giannoulias in regards to the actions of the TRS board.

To view the comments go to the following web link:

<http://www.ieanea.org/page319701930.aspx>

Governor Quinn gets real at IEA RA

"See what a difference a real governor makes?"

That comment from IEA President Ken Swanson elicited one of the biggest cheers of the morning conversation with Governor Pat Quinn.

Quinn, who replaced Rod Blagojevich just six weeks ago, was [welcomed warmly by delegates](#) to the IEA Representative Assem-

bly in Rosemont, and the differences between this governor and his disgraced predecessor were obvious from the start,

- He arrived on time
- He made no lame Elvis references
- He took notes while listening to IEA members' concerns
- He spoke to the delegates the way an educated adult talks to other educated adults

The governor was greeted with a raucous demonstration in support of

fair funding. He reacted by pledging that education would remain the state's top priority and by stating his



commitment to reduce the state's reliance on property taxes to fund schools. He promised to work to protect pensions of current state employees and said he doubts the proposal to combine the state pension systems (opposed by IEA) is going anywhere.

The governor has already indicated interest in a second (lesser) tier of retirement benefits for new state employees, to reduce state pension costs, so it's clear that he and the delegates are not in complete agreement on all policies.

Nevertheless, it was a refreshing visit from a new governor. The ar-

reas of agreement are many. Based on his long record, there is no reason to doubt Gov. Quinn's sincerity on education issues.

We won't always like what Pat Quinn says, but those who offer education employees a seat at the table and who are willing to listen to contrasting

views deserve respect.

Pat Quinn doesn't pretend there are easy answers to today's problems.

Yes, having a real governor is different. In a good way.

Jo Anderson Will Take DOE Position

The executive director for the Illinois Education Association (IEA), Jo Anderson, has accepted an appointment to join the staff of U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan as a senior advisor.

Anderson, who has spent more than 30 years with IEA, is resigning, effective April 1. The IEA Board of Directors was informed of the appointment in February, but the announcement was delayed pending the official word from the Department of Education.

"Jo has been my right hand from the day I became president and we all will miss him personally and profes-

sionally," said IEA president Ken Swanson.

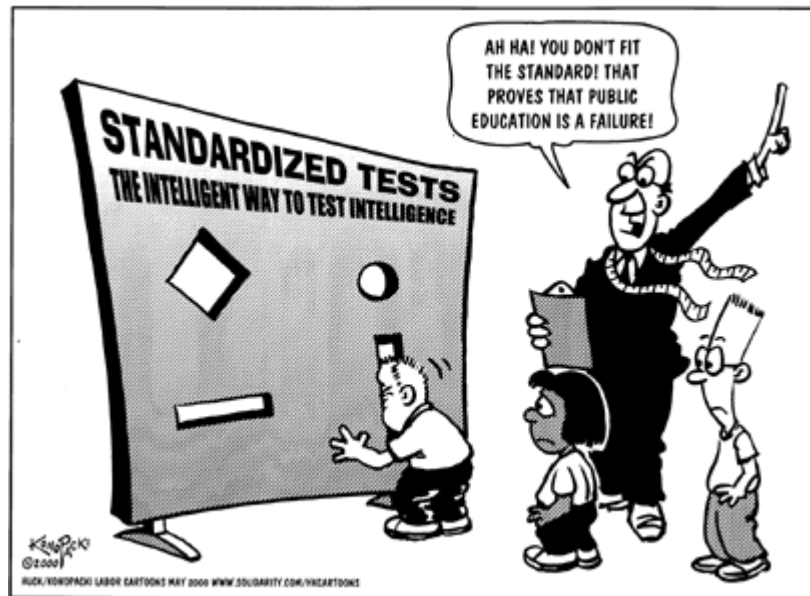
"Our sadness is tempered by the knowledge that Jo will be working with a Secretary of Education as committed as he is to giving every student the opportunity to succeed. No one has worked harder to improve education in Illinois than Jo Anderson and it's good news that he will be working on national education policy," Swanson added.

Jo Anderson has long been at the forefront of the IEA efforts on behalf of school transformation.

In 1995, Anderson founded the Cen-

ter for Educational Innovation (CEI), created to facilitate school restructuring and reform efforts throughout Illinois. CEI serves as a catalyst for positive changes in education and provides Illinois Education Association locals with the resources, expertise and motivation to experiment with school restructuring.

As part of the work of the Center, Anderson founded and served as Executive Director of the Consortium for Educational Change (CEC), a network of 75 Illinois school districts and other partners that are working collaboratively to restructure and improve their schools.



**ILLINOIS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
REGION 64**

Scott Moore—Region Chair
Corina Robles—Region Vice Chair
Luana Byte—Secretary
Sandie Edwards—Treasurer
Tom Walsh—IEA Uniserv Director

Phone: 847- 359-0300
E-mail: scott.moore@ieanea.org
E-mail: tom.walsh@ieanea.org



*Region 64
Barrington - Lake Zurich*

We're on the web

WWW.IEANEA.ORG/REGION/64

Region 64



The 3 locals that comprise Region 64 are dedicated to delivering the best education possible to the children within our communities.

Region 64 is there to advocate for you at the state level to ensure our educators have the tools they need to provide the best education that every child deserves.

Join us in advocating for education

IEA LOBBY DAY



MAY 6, 2009