

Region 64 Update

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IEA elects new officers

A high school English teacher from Rochester has been elected president of the state's largest education employees' union.

On Saturday, March 12, delegates attending the Illinois Education Association (IEA) Representative Assembly in Rosemont elected **Cinda Klickna** to the organization's top position.

Klickna, who started teaching in Springfield in 1973, has served as IEA secretary-treasurer since 2005.

Prior to her election as an IEA officer, Klickna served on the IEA Board of Directors, the National Education Association (NEA) Board of Directors and as president of the Springfield Education Association.

Klickna will succeed Ken Swanson of Belvidere as the IEA president. Swanson is in his second and final term as president, a post he has held since 2005.



Delegates to the IEA meeting also elected a new vice president, secretary treasurer and members of the NEA Board of Directors

- **Kathi Griffin**, an elementary school teacher from Schaumburg was elected IEA vice president.
- **Al Llorens**, a high school teacher from Dolton, was elected the new IEA secretary-treasurer.
- **Joyce Bailey**, an elementary teacher from Naperville, **Tom Tully**, a driver's education instructor in Lombard, **Alex Wallace**, a school bus driver from Oswego and **Vickie Mahrt**, a speech/language pathologist in Normal, were elected to represent IEA on the NEA Board of Directors.

All the officer terms are for three years. Newly elected IEA officials will take office July 15.

TRS responds to misleading Tribune story

Article by Dick Ingram

Executive Director for the
Teachers Retirement System

The Teachers' Retirement System released the following statement in response to an article that appeared in the Chicago Tribune:

Today the Chicago Tribune ran a front-page story "Teachers' \$40 B pension hole." The article is wildly misleading and serves no other purpose than to scare teachers into thinking that their retirement checks are in jeopardy.

Rest assured that TRS will have enough money to pay pensions this year and for many decades to come. TRS has carried an unfunded liability since 1953 and has always paid retired teachers on time. We have never missed a pension check.

The "hole" is the \$39 billion unfunded portion of the System's total liability of \$77 billion. But what the Tribune did was confuse the "mortgage" with the "mortgage payment." The mortgage is \$77 billion, but it never has to be paid off at one point in time.



TRS, however, has always been able to meet the annual cost of pension and benefits – the mortgage payment. In fiscal year 2010 the cost of pensions and benefits was \$3.9 billion and total revenue was \$6.8 billion. TRS collected more than enough money to cover those expenditures and that's what happens in most years.

The total liability never comes due because active teachers cannot collect their pensions.

The story says that Illinois teacher pensions "get higher benefits, on average, than government retirees in most pension plans." The national average benefit is \$30,642. The average TRS benefit is \$40,798. While factually correct, it's true in part because retired teachers don't receive Social Security. Illinois teachers contrib-

ute more to their retirements than most teachers in other states. Plus, no one can consider \$40,798 as an "extravagant" pension.

The TRS unfunded liability was created by state officials who since the 1950s have decided not to give TRS all of the money required to cover current and future pension obligations. As a result, TRS has never been given the opportunity to function as it was designed to function.

A system that has been properly funded can expect to have investment earnings pay for 60 percent to 65 percent of benefits. It is estimated that the state has held back as much as \$14 billion in funding from TRS over the years. Because TRS has not had this money to invest, the difference has to be made up with higher contributions from taxpayers.

Although TRS has exceeded its investment target over the last 25 years, investment income only pays for 49 percent of TRS benefits.



Watch for the "WE are ONE" Rallies held in your area

Visit the IEA website for further details

<http://www.ieanea.org>

Education Funding: Sen. Dick Durbin fights Head Start cuts

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) has joined forces with state early childhood education officials to fight against cuts proposed by the U.S. House.

The House has proposed cuts of as much as 20 percent to an array of programs including Head Start. Under the proposal, education funding would be slashed by more than \$4 billion nationwide.

About \$1.1 billion would be stripped from Head Start.

Durbin said cuts that deep would leave thousands of low-income families without public education and health services.



In Illinois, approximately 9,000 Head Start students would lose services, the Illinois Head Start Association estimates. More than 2,000 early childhood profession-

als would lose their jobs.

Meantime, Senate Republicans lack support for the proposal, prompting Democrats to step in with compromises.

“Head Start gives low-income children the solid foundation they need to succeed from elementary school to college and beyond,” Durbin said. “Arbitrarily slashing funding for these programs will hinder our long-term economic recovery.”

 The advertisement features a background image of the Illinois State Capitol building. Overlaid on this is a calendar for May 2011. The calendar is tilted, and the date '4' (Thursday) is circled in red. Above the calendar, the text reads 'Save the date for MAY LOBBY DAY 2011'. At the bottom of the advertisement, there is a yellow banner with white text.

Save the date for
MAY LOBBY DAY 2011

Join us for Lobby Day 2011— May 4th 2011
Watch for further information

**ILLINOIS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
REGION 64**

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*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



**Summer Leadership Academy
Going the Distance
July 26-29, 2011
Illinois State University**

Save the date to join us this summer at Illinois State University in Bloomington-Normal for the Summer Leadership Academy

- **Early Bird Registration (\$75) opening in April**
- **Registration Fee \$125**