

REVIEW OF THE 2020 NSBA ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

February 2-4, 2020
Marriott Marquis Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Attending from Illinois:

Simon Kampwerth Jr. (IASB Vice President)	Thomas Bertrand (IASB)
Joanne Osmond (IASB Immediate Past President)	Susan Hilton (IASB)
Taiyuan Banks-Tillmon (Bourbonnais SD 53)	Ben Schwarm (IASB)
Shannon Swilley (Bourbonnais SD 53)	William Hayes (Northern Suburban Special Ed District)
Synathia Harris (Calumet Public SD 132)	Kurt Schneider (Northern Suburban Special Ed District)
Karen Ivey (Calumet Public SD 132)	Jenny Zinser (Lake Forest CHSD 115)
Christopher Towers (Calumet Public SD 132)	Alice LeVert (Lake Forest School District 67)
Kimberly Watkins (Calumet Public SD 132)	Michael Simeck (Lake Forest School District 67)
Tammy Jones (CCSD 168)	Kimsha Flex (Lincoln Elem SD 156)
Donna Simpson Leak (CCSD 168)	Sean McCloskey (Lincoln Elem SD 156)
Doris Blackwell (Country Club Hills SD 160)	Kieta McCloskey (Lincoln Elem SD 156)
Jacqueline Doss (Country Club Hills SD 160)	Henry Moore (Lincoln Elem SD 156)
Michael Humphrey (Country Club Hills SD 160)	Valencia Ross (Lincoln Elem SD 156)
Barbara Swain (Country Club Hills SD 160)	Bernice Brown (Matteson Elem SD 159)
Tamara Young (Country Club Hills SD 160)	William McClinton (Matteson Elem SD 159)
Lilly Chapman (Dolton-Riverdale SD 148)	Carolyn Palmer (Matteson Elem SD 159)
Faith Gunter (Dolton-Riverdale SD 148)	Michelle Skinlo (Mattoon CUSD 2)
Andrea Johnson (Dolton-Riverdale SD 148)	Erika Weaver (Mattoon CUSD 2)
Larry Lawrence (Dolton-Riverdale SD 148)	Christina Dupee (Park Forest Chicago Hgts SD 163)
Charles Lloyd (Dolton-Riverdale SD 148)	Allison McCray (Park Forest Chicago Hgts SD 163)
Ernesto Mickens (Dolton-Riverdale SD 148)	Mable Chapman (West Harvey-Dixmoor SD 147)
Kevin Nohelty (Dolton-Riverdale SD 148)	Lori Casey (Woodland CCSD 50)
Sonya Whitaker (Dolton-Riverdale SD 148)	Elizabeth Helgren (Woodland CCSD 50)
Mary Geraghty (Glenview Public SD 34)	Carla Little (Woodland CCSD 50)
Karen Hitzeman (Glenview Public SD 34)	Steve Thomas (Woodland CCSD 50)
Natalie Jachtorowycz (Glenview Public SD 34)	David Weinstein (Woodland CCSD 50)
Janet Rogers (Harvey SD 152)	
Andrea Bonds (Rich Township HSD 227)	
Pelleg Graupe (Aptakisic-Tripp SD 102)	

The 2020 National School Boards Association's (NSBA) Advocacy Institute was a great success. Those attending from Illinois included forty school board members and eleven administrators. The group attended two days of informational sessions on a wide variety of national education issues, and then had a long and productive day lobbying on Capitol Hill.

On Tuesday, February 4, the Institute attendees visited their congressional offices. Institute attendees met with Congressmen Kinzinger, Schneider, Shimkus, and Underwood; staff from Congresswoman Kelly and Schakowsky's offices; and staff from Senator Durbin and Duckworth's offices. The Institute attendees focused this year on educating members of the Illinois Delegation on the significant challenges districts face due to the federal government's funding shortfall for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Attendees also stressed the importance of engaging practitioners prior to the passage of any law, or adoption of any rule, addressing seclusion and restraint in schools. Finally, attendees expressed support of the recent proposed

flexibilities by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the school nutrition program, opposition to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) proposed cap on a funding source for E-Rate, and opposition to allowing private schools access to public funds.

On Monday, February 3, Institute attendees heard a review of a recent public education poll, which shows the general public views public education favorably. Attendees then heard from FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel who encouraged attendees to express support of the E-Rate program and start addressing the "Homework Gap" concerningly evident in education. NSBA lobbyists presented in the morning and afternoon sessions on the latest information on key federal education issues, including: IDEA, school safety, cybersecurity, infrastructure, and legislation addressing the teacher shortage. Attendees heard from key staff members of both House and Senate education committees, and then the day wrapped up with a conversation with public school students about their future.

The Institute officially began Sunday afternoon, February 2, with opening remarks by NSBA President Beth Branham and NSBA Executive Director Thomas Gentzel. Then attendees heard from political analyst Eugene Robinson with the Washington Post. The afternoon also included a discussion about the 2020 Census and an update on legal issues. The day ended with Keynote Speaker Mark McKinnon, who discussed the state of presidential politics today.