



August 21, 2017

Welcome 2017-18 New Superintendents to the IASA New Superintendents Update

We hope your first several weeks on the job has been professionally and personally rewarding. We know how challenging it can be especially in light of no mechanism to fund schools. For those of you who attended the IASA New Superintendents' Conference on August 2nd and 3rd we hope you found the conference informative, relaxing (especially the trip to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum for dinner) and collaborative. You met many other new superintendents and hopefully you have continued a dialogue with these new friends. For those of you who did not attend the conference we hope to meet you soon and offer our services to you. Click here to view contact information for this year's new superintendents. We hope you find this useful as you network with your colleagues.

The two days were very busy with presentations from a wide range of professionals. As mentioned at the conference, the real purpose of the conference is for you to meet the various professionals that are available for your consultation. Feel free to access us whenever the need occurs.

This Update is a publication that IASA produces to keep you informed and up-to-date on issues critical to your success as a new superintendent. The update will be sent out weekly so be sure to look for it in your Inbox.

ISBE Financial Consultants

Assistance with school finance continues to be the number one request I have receive from new superintendents. In case you are not aware, ISBE employs several regional financial consultants serving the various geographical areas of the state. These consultants are top-notch school finance experts. I have worked with every one of them and they do outstanding work. I would recommend that if you need any financial help you email the consultant for your area and schedule an appointment. Obviously, now is the time you should be finalizing your school district's budget. In addition, ISBE developed an Excel five-year projection software that you may want to use to predict future district fund balances and trends.

You can identify the correct regional financial consultant by clicking on the following link to the ISBE website: [CLICK HERE](#)

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Please contact the (RFC) in your area. Leave a message or send an e-mail if you are not able to contact directly, and we will get back to you just as soon as possible. You may also leave a message with the Springfield office and your message will be forwarded to the appropriate RFC. Ph.# (217) 785-8779.

[Regional Consultant Brochure](#) 


[Download a PDF version of this page with County listings](#) 

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The Best of Times - The Worst of Times

K-12 public education has certainly had its share of changes in the past decade. Everything from NCLB to Rtl to Common Core to Performance-Based Teacher Evaluation to high stakes student testing to lack of state support for funding public education to changes in teacher and administrative certification to an increase in low income students, etc... All of these challenges require creative and thought provoking solutions.

Recently I was asked if all the changes that are occurring now in education cause the job of the superintendent to be harder, easier or the same as the past. This was an interesting question and as I reflected on my past 25 years in the superintendency, I had to admit that the magnitude and the number of changes administrators are dealing with today are far more complex and difficult than any I can remember from the past. However, I also think that we are at a crossroad for public education and as educational leaders we can truly make a positive difference.

I often ask this question when I am with school administrators, "Are you responsible for ensuring that adults are happy and satisfied or is your first responsibility the caring and educating of students?" Of course everybody agrees to the latter but sometimes we do not exhibit behaviors that reflect this belief and value system. If you remember the following when making critical decisions in your role as a school administrator I think you will find yourself satisfied with your

role as an educational leader. “Always make decisions with the best interests of students in mind.”

Twitter Messages for School Superintendents

For those of you who attended the New Superintendents’ Conference you may remember that I briefly mentioned that I send messages to all Illinois Superintendents via the social networking tool Twitter. You can elect to follow me on Twitter by signing up for a Twitter account. It is free. After you create an account you can find me by searching for my Twitter name, which is @rvoltz. You also can follow IASA under the name @IllinoisASA. You can follow Diane Hendren, IASA Director of Governmental Relations on Twitter @IllinoisASAGR and Dr. Brent Clark, IASA Executive Director @docclark05.

Many school districts, schools and individual teachers are now using Twitter and other social media to communicate with their school communities. This is a great way to communicate to others using technology.

There are several ways to view the IASA messages: 1) via your Twitter app; 2) front page of the IASA website; or 3) via the IASA App (go to the IASA website to learn more about the IASA App). This will only take a few minutes per day and I think you will find the information helpful to you in your role as a school administrator.

I also write blog articles that I publish on a site titled “Dr. Rich Voltz’s Ed Leadership Thoughts.” You can access this site at <http://richvoltz.edublogs.org>

Communication to the Public

Several years ago when I was campaigning for a building referendum, a prominent citizen in the community asked me why I only communicate to the public when the school district is asking for something like raising taxes to build a building or to balance the budget. He made a very good point. In reaction to this criticism, I started to communicate much more regularly with the public. I arranged with the local newspaper to write a column titled “Superintendent Scribbles,” so I could communicate current education-related topics to the community. In addition, a monthly newsletter was mailed to all registered voters, as well as a more detailed piece to parents of school age children.

Many of the “digital” parents of today don’t read newspapers and many told me they would rather receive the district newsletter online than in the mail. One way to reach these “digital” parents is via Podcasting, Blogging, Twitter, Facebook and other electronic means. Parents and others can electronically subscribe to these communication vehicles and download the information.

The Fred Factor

A superintendent gave me a book several years ago titled The Fred Factor by Mark Sanborn. I thought I would share some of the wisdom from this book for you. Fred is a postal carrier in Denver and he has a great passion for his work and goes out of his way to service his postal customers. The author was one of Fred’s postal customers and Mark uses lessons learned from Fred when he makes business motivational talks around the country.

The Fred Principles:

1. **Everyone Makes a Difference:** “Ultimately, the more valuable you are to others – the more value you create in your work or your interactions with others – the more value will eventually flow toward you. Faithfully doing your best, independent of the support, acknowledgment, or reward of others, is a key determination in a fulfilling career.” Are your school district employees just doing their jobs or do they really care about what they are doing and take pride in their students’ accomplishments?
2. **Success Is Built On Relationships:** “Indifferent people deliver impersonal service.” Do your teachers, administrators and staff really care about the students? Do they build relationships with all students, especially with those who have trouble learning or behaving correctly? Do high school teachers really believe in the high school mantra, Rigor, Relationships and Relevance?
3. **You Must Continually Create Value for Others, and It Doesn’t Have To Cost a Penny:** “In today’s economy, a high-school or college graduate should expect to be unemployed a few times during his or her career. But that unemployment will be brief as long as the individual is employable.” Are we meeting the needs of our students as we head through the 21st Century? Jobs that are not even imagined today will be here tomorrow. Are our students ready?
4. **You Can Reinvent Yourself Regularly:** “I believe that no matter what job you hold, what industry you work in, or where you live, every morning you wake up with a clean slate. You can make business, as well as your life, anything you choose it to be. That’s what I call the Fred Factor.” Are your employees reinventing themselves regularly? As superintendent, do you lead by example?

Tips for the Week

Just as you desire your principals to visit classrooms on a regular basis and teachers to move around the classrooms and work with students, then you also need to visit classrooms and buildings. Try to make it a point to visit one school per day and, when in that school, to visit one classroom. In addition to talking to classroom teachers and the building administration, please take time to talk to janitors, cooks, secretaries and other support staff. These are the people in your community who are “creditable” as to what kind of person you are. Give them some of your time, listen to their suggestions and even act on some of their suggestions. They will sing your praises in the community.