



**Illinois Association of  
Latino Administrators and Superintendents**  
**Quarterly Newsletter**

Dear IALAS Members,

Hope you were able to have a very restful and relaxing summer! It is not easy to decompress sometimes, but taking care of oneself must be a priority. We hope with the new school year, you are rejuvenated to inspire students and their families.

For the first time in history, IALAS will be attending the national [Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents \(ALAS\)](#) Summit, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as an ESTABLISHED state affiliate. It is hard to believe that this time, last year, we had just been approved to serve as the Illinois chapter of national ALAS. This will be the 13th annual summit, "...where educators from across the country work together to address challenges in the education system". More than 300 attendees are expected. Last year, several of us attended the summit, including Gloria Trejo, IALAS Members-At-Large Board member. "It was phenomenal to be around like-minded individuals that are passionate and driven and are striving to see all students excel. I was fortunate to meet many people who I've been able to connect with on a regular basis," said Gloria. We are excited to share what we learn at the summit. Of course, it is not too late to join us!

Here, in Illinois, we are planning the next event based on member requests. We look forward to seeing you at the [Network Mixer](#), **Friday, October 21st, Chicago Oak Brook Marriott Hotel in Oak Brook.** [Tickets](#) to the event include dinner, beverages and entertainment (local comedian and DJ). Bring a guest and enjoy an evening of networking, laughter and fun. Tickets also include the breakfast panelist event on the following day.

Finally, there is always an opportunity for involvement and leadership in IALAS. See page 6 of the newsletter to learn more.

As always, thank you for *all* that you do!  
Ivette M. Dubiel  
IALAS Board President



**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

Administrator Spotlight ..2

*Make Your Voice Heard:  
ESSA in Illinois ..... 3*

**IALAS EVENTS**

Summary and Images  
from the Educational  
Conclave .....4-5

**PAGE 6**

**FOUNDING PARTNERS**

**COMMITTEE & BOARD  
MEETING**

**FALL NETWORK MIXER**



## ADMINISTRATOR SPOTLIGHT

Name: **Dr. Charles Johns**

Occupation: **Superintendent , West Chicago District 33**

Dr. Charles Johns is being recognized for his support in West Chicago District 33 in expanding the Dual Language program. He has made a significant effort in being an advocate for all students, specifically Latino students. He has encouraged the addition of *Ballet Folklórico* amongst administration, teachers and students. For Institute Day opening at West Chicago School District 33, Dr. Johns invited Consuelo Castillo-Kickbush as keynote to staff. “It was important that his staff understands the value and heritage of our students as we serve a majority of Latino students,” said Gloria Trejo, Principal in West Chicago District 33. **On behalf of IALAS, THANK YOU Dr. Johns for all that you do!**

### Biography of Dr. Johns

Dr. Charles Johns has 24 years of experience as an administrator in public schools and is starting his third year as superintendent of West Chicago Elementary District 33. Throughout his career, Charles has passionately studied school leadership, systems management, teacher empowerment and social justice.

Dr. Johns obtained his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Loyola University Chicago. His dissertation studies the utilization of micro-politics within a school district. His graduate and undergraduate work was performed at the University of Iowa and he began his career as a high school English teacher and debate coach. Before becoming the superintendent of West Chicago District 33, Dr. Johns was the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction at Elmhurst Unit District 205. Prior to that role, he was the principal of Rolling Meadows High School, part of Township High School District 214, in the northwest suburbs of Chicago. During his tenure at Rolling Meadows High School, the school was selected as the model high school for Response to Intervention implementation in Illinois.

Dr. Johns was a founding partner of Empowered High Schools, LLC, and later Empowered Schools K12, Inc. These consulting groups provided curriculum, assessment, team development and data analysis support for schools and districts throughout the Midwest and parts of the East Coast. He was a founding director of the software startup Curriculum Commander, which is in the process of a merger with a larger software entity. Through these projects, he has had the opportunity to speak to audiences across the country and to make contributions in the form of training video offerings, publications, and blogs.

Dr. Johns and his wife, Michelle (also a teacher), have three children and reside in Palatine, Illinois.

# MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD: ESSA IN ILLINOIS

*Written by IALAS Member: Virginia Valdez*

Signed into law on December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaces the No Child Left Behind Act. As required under ESSA, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has to develop a State Plan in collaboration with stakeholders and submit that State Plan to the United States Department of Education by March 2017 or July 2017. ISBE has opted to submit its State Plan by March 2017, in order to implement it during school year 2017-2018. To date, ISBE has engaged stakeholders through numerous meetings, presentations, and listening tours. Based on the conversations and feedback from stakeholders and partners, ISBE created its first draft, *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan Draft #1*, and opened it for public comment on August 25, 2016. One of ISBE's partners, Partners for Each and Every Child, released *A READER'S GUIDE for the ISBE Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan Draft #1* on September 7, 2016 to help the public understand the first draft and provide more targeted feedback.

Given these recent developments, the question is no longer, "What should be included in the State Plan?" While still a work in progress, the State Plan has been created with five specific sections: 1) Consultation and Coordination; 2) Challenging State Academic Standards and Academic Assessments; 3) Accountability, Support, and Improvement for Schools; 4) Supporting Excellent Educators; and 5) Supporting All Students. Fortunately, there is an opportunity to shape the content because most of these sections are incomplete and/or have inconsistencies. In addition, ISBE has embedded requests for ideas on how to address various challenges throughout the entire document. As administrators, teachers, and advocates, our task is to accept this opportunity and make our voice heard by sharing our ideas, concerns, and solutions with ISBE.

**What should we do?** The first step is to read ISBE's *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan Draft #1* and utilize the reader's guide for clarification and guidance in reviewing the first draft and providing feedback. The next step is to focus on the sections that affect your school community or interest you the most. Submit your written comments regarding those sections to [essa@isbe.net](mailto:essa@isbe.net) by **October 7, 2016**. The last step is to continue to stay actively engaged. This is only the first draft. ISBE intends to revise the first draft and make the second draft public for comments in October and November of 2016.

ESSA will be affecting all of us for years to come. As stakeholders, we should contribute to what ESSA is for our students, our families, our teachers, and the state of Illinois. As State Superintendent of Education Dr. Tony Smith stated in his cover letter to *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan Draft #1*, "As educators, families, community leaders, and activists, we must seize the opportunities within ESSA. We must engage in dialogue, continue to build trusting relationships with one another, and activate all public, private, and philanthropic resources available in order to interrupt those practices that have left far too many of Illinois' most vulnerable behind and without real access to opportunity."

## Educational Conclave

On Thursday, June 23rd, 2016 IALAS hosted its first professional development opportunity—*Educational Conclave*—at Northeastern University, El Centro campus in Chicago.

Our keynote speaker, Pulitzer Prize winner and author, Sonia Nazario, shared her amazing, first-hand experience of migrant families in search of loved ones, work and prosperity.

A forum to discuss key issues surrounding education with attendees was also hosted. As our vision and mission state, we are committed to providing authentic, high-quality learning opportunities to assist in building capacity for Latino educational leaders, while advocating for responsive and informed policy development. We believe this can be achieved by unifying and empowering others.





# Educational Conclave



IALAS EVENTS

## Founding Partners



## ATTENTION COMMITTEES

The next public committee update is scheduled for **Sunday, November 6th, from 9:00 -10:00 a.m., at Pioneer Elementary, 615 Kenwood Avenue in West Chicago.** Public IALAS Board meeting will commence thereafter, 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

For more information, please email  
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## Upcoming IALAS Events

### Fall Network Mixer

**Friday, October 21, 2016**

**7:00 p.m.— Midnight**

**Chicago Marriott Oak Brook Hotel  
1401 W. 22nd Street, Oak Brook, IL**

*Experience a full course meal, beverages, entertainment and more. Ticket INCLUDES breakfast panelist discussion on **Saturday, October 22nd, 7:45-9:00 a.m. at the hotel.***

