Good afternoon.

I want to use today’s opener to share a summary of the 2005 Illinois Public Colleges Teacher Graduate Survey Overview and Results. The lead organization in getting this important survey accomplished was the Illinois Association of Deans of the Public Colleges of Education. ISBE provided support for the study, as did the Joyce Foundation and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

This teacher graduate assessment project looked at teachers in their first year of work, directly following their graduation from a public college of education in Illinois. The goal of the survey was to generate information to be used for improvements in teacher education programs.

The project covered seven dimensions and reported findings in each of them:

1. **Dimension One: Retention**
   Over 95 percent of survey responses indicated a plan to remain in education long-term. Of those responding, 28 percent indicated they intend to either take a break to care for children or seek employment in a different school or district.

2. **Dimension Two: Satisfaction**
   New teachers have high satisfaction with their decision to become a teacher. Over 98 percent report being satisfied or very satisfied with their choice of certification level and subject matter. Reports also showed 91 percent of new teachers being satisfied with the quality of their public institution teacher preparation program.

3. **Dimension Three: Teacher Education Programs**
   There were three areas of the survey where teachers felt positive support: instruction in their primary area, student assessment and creating instruction that is developmentally appropriate. The areas reflecting a need for improvement were preparation to teach English language learners, working with school administrators (I shall make NO editorial comment on this one…) and working in high accountability environments.

4. **Dimension Four: Knowledge and Use of Standards**
   All eleven Illinois Professional Teaching Standards were reported to be understood mostly or completely by more than 90 percent of respondents. Likewise, 90.6 percent reported applying the Illinois Learning Standards most or all the time.

5. **Dimension Five: Mentoring and Induction Programs**
   Four out of five respondents reported that they were supported by a formally assigned coach, mentor or master teacher during their first year of teaching.

6. **Dimension Six: Supervisor Responses**
   Over 80 percent of supervisor responses were from principals. From these respondents, 90.4 percent indicated they visited the new teacher’s classroom at least three or more times during the past year. Of those responding, 89 percent indicated the presence of a mentoring or induction program. Supervisors reported the use of technology standards as the lowest among the standard items in the survey.
7. Dimension Seven: Combined Teacher and Supervisor Responses

Approximately 85 percent of teachers and supervisors reported that teachers use the following standards most of the time: (1) the central concepts, methods of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) that are necessary to create learning experiences that make the content meaningful to all students; and (2) how individuals grow, develop and learn in order to provide learning opportunities to support the intellectual, social and personal development of all students.

Supervisors (72.5 percent) reported much higher perception of use of technology standards than teachers (58.1 percent).

I wanted to share these findings because the data paint a better picture for us here in Illinois than what we’ve been hearing from around the country for some time now. The responses to this survey indicate that new teachers in Illinois public schools plan to continue working in the field of education. I find the survey takers’ optimistic responses to working in education, combined with the satisfaction of their choice to enter the teaching profession to be encouraging for us in the state.

It strikes me that one challenge for us as administrators is to do all we can in our own dealings with these new professionals to foster and nurture their optimism and satisfaction over time—building upon it, not extinguishing it.

We do plenty of beating-ourselves-up around these issues; as such I was heartened to see these findings and want to be sure you are aware of them as well. The Teacher Graduate Assessment work is intended to be an ongoing project to develop annual trends of new teacher responses so our schools and colleges of education in Illinois can better respond to the call of providing the highest quality teachers for our public schools.

Have a great week.

Randy Dunn

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**Professional Development**

**Horace Mann Corporation and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Announce Fellowships Program for Educators**

Deadline: March 4, 2006

Horace Mann Educators Corporation, [http://www.horacemann.com/](http://www.horacemann.com/), and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, [http://www.alplm.org/](http://www.alplm.org/), have partnered to form the Horace Mann-Abraham Lincoln Fellowship, a program designed to help educators study the life and legacy of America’s 16th president. The program features a five-day institute at the new library in June and July 2006.

The inaugural fellowship program will offer fifty teachers up to $1,000 each to cover expenses for their trip to the Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois, to participate in programs created by the ALPL Foundation. Winning fellows will attend the library during the following dates: June 26-30, 2006 (25 fellows); and July 10-14, 2006 (25 fellows).

The fellowship is open to any full-time educator teaching kindergarten through 12th grade in the U.S. One fellowship will be awarded in each state. The fifty winning fellows will be announced on National Teacher Day, May 9, 2006.

Interested teachers should visit [http://www.horacemann.com/](http://www.horacemann.com/) for program information and application guidelines.

RFP Link: [http://fconline.fdncenter.org/pnd/5002095/horacemann](http://fconline.fdncenter.org/pnd/5002095/horacemann)

For additional RFPs in Education, visit: [http://fdncenter.org/pnd/rfp/cat_education.jhtml](http://fdncenter.org/pnd/rfp/cat_education.jhtml)
New Teacher Grant program

The New Teacher Academy (NTA) at Teachers College Innovations, a unit of Teachers College, Columbia University, has received a grant of $350,000 from Jones New York In The Classroom, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation for the purpose of supporting teachers and improving education.

A total of 200 first-year teachers will benefit from the grant nationally. Participating districts in Illinois include:

- School District 89 Maywood-Melrose Park Broadview, Melrose Park, Illinois
- School District U-46, Elgin, Illinois

Grant funds, which will be applied for the 2005-2006 academic year, will bring the New Teacher Academy into four new areas: the Atlanta area, metropolitan Chicago and Los Angeles, and Prince George's County, Maryland, while funding a continuing program in metropolitan New York.

Established in 1998, New Teacher Academy is a year-long program designed to build support for and encourage retention of new teachers in school districts throughout the U.S. Focusing on leadership, differentiation, standards and community, experienced teachers within each school district serve as program facilitators for new teacher groups after receiving intensive professional development from Teachers College Innovations.

Fine Arts

Illinois Arts Education Week poster contest

March 13 through 19, 2006, is designated Illinois Arts Education Week in cooperation with the Illinois Alliance for Arts Education (IAAE), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and the Governor’s office.

Illinois K-12 students will be allowed to submit artwork celebrating the theme of “Creating Understanding through the Arts” for the 24th Annual Illinois Arts Education Week.

Each year an Illinois student’s artwork is featured on the front of the poster for Illinois Arts Education Week. ISBE produces the poster to promote the week and to reinforce the importance of arts in the growth and development of students.

To see last year’s Illinois Arts Education Poster Contest winner, please click this link http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/pdf/arts_week_poster.pdf.

Artwork considered for the 2006 Illinois Arts Education Week poster must meet the following criteria:

- Artist must be an Illinois student, grade K-12 (public or private).
- Any 2-D media accepted but no photography.
- No limit on colors.
- Prefer size to be 12” x 18” or smaller.
- On the back of entry student should include name, age, grade, teacher, school, home address and telephone number.
- Attach Authorization for Use of Artwork form to back of entry. It must be signed and dated by either parent or guardian.
- Artwork will be accepted through Tuesday, December 13, 2005*
- Theme for this year is “Creating Understanding through the Arts”.
- It is not necessary to write the theme on the artwork. Only the illustration is necessary.

Art teachers:

Please enclose a pre-addressed return label OR a 3”x5” index card that can be affixed to a return envelope. For schools that have multiple entries, please place the number of entries in the upper right hand corner of pre-addressed label/card. Please include your e-mail address and/or phone number where you can be reached.

*Please send entries to:
Illinois Art Education Week Poster Contest
Illinois State Board of Education
Curriculum & Instruction Division, C-215
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001

For more information please call 217-557-7323 or e-mail: cpowell@isbe.net.
Illinois School Purchasing Network

New U.S. Communities maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) supplies contract

U.S. Communities is the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) partner in the Illinois School Purchasing Network. U.S. Communities has announced that Maricopa County, Arizona, has awarded The Home Depot and its wholesale distribution subsidiary, The Home Depot Supply, a contract for maintenance, repair and operations equipment and supplies. The contract was awarded through the U.S. Communities Governmental Purchasing Alliance and is available for use by participating agencies nationwide effective December 1, 2005.

The Home Depot contract provides a broad range of MRO equipment and supplies without the need for additional solicitation through both the wholesale and retail sides of The Home Depot. The contract includes highly favorable pricing on entire categories products through The Home Depot Supply’s commercial catalog. In addition, for convenience purchases at retail, public agencies can arrange to have orders accepted at the Pro Desks located in every Home Depot retail store.

Public agencies that are interested in using The Home Depot contract must have registered to participate in the U.S. Communities program and will need to establish or update their account with The Home Depot and The Home Depot Supply. For more information on the contract, or to contact a representative of The Home Depot or The Home Depot Supply to establish or update your account, please click on the following links.


U.S. Communities registered participants visit: https://secure.cacomunities.com/uscommunitys/reg/contact_supp.asp?vn=hds

Federal Grants and Programs

Hearst Scholars named

After interviewing 18 semi-finalists over a two day period, a three-judge ISBE panel selected two high school seniors to represent Illinois in the 44th annual William Randolph Hearst/United States Senate Youth Program.

Illinois’ representatives are:
- Benjamin C. Backsmeier, Normal Community West High School
- James R. Higgins, Reavis High School in Burbank

The first and second alternates are:
- First Alternate: Claire Joseph of East Richland High School in Olney
- Second Alternate: Michael Jacobson of John Hersey High School in Arlington Heights

The two student representatives will each receive a $5000 college scholarship and participate in an all-expenses-paid week-long educational trip to Washington, D.C., March 4-11, 2006 where they will visit legislators, policymakers, and museums.

Nutrition

Child Nutrition Industry conference January 15-17


The conference allows Food Service operators and industry to build partnerships, develop strategies and share information, to boost student participation in school meal programs.

This conference gives attendees the added skills, and knowledge to perform well in the dynamic and ever-changing world of school food service. Attendees will see and sample new products and learn about new services
Local Wellness Policy seminar materials available

Are you familiar with the new law requiring that all school districts have a local wellness policy by the first school day of FY07? Learn more from the National Food Service Management Institute by viewing their webcast at: mms://130.74.84.77/omo/nfsmi/wellnesssat.wmv or accessing their webcast participant handouts at: http://www.nfsmi.org/Education/Satellite/ss37/partic.pdf. More information is available at: http://www.nfsmi.org/Education/Satellite/ss37/program_info.htm or through the Nutrition Education Loan Library. Call Stephanie Modglin at 618-993-2696, 800-455-5843, or by email at smodglin@roe21.k12.il.us.

Capturing the School Milk Opportunity Workshops Announced

The School Nutrition Association and MilkPEP (Milk Processor Education Program) have teamed up to present free one-day Capturing the School Milk Opportunity workshops specifically for school food service directors. The Illinois locations are February 22 in Chicago, and February 24, in Peoria. A St. Louis workshop is scheduled for January 27. Visit http://www.milkdelivers.org/schools/SNA/SNAseminars.cfm for further information.

Curriculum and Instruction

NASA Explorer Schools Program

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Explorer Schools Program is a unique three-year relationship with the opportunity for educators and students in grades four through nine to become involved in the excitement of NASA research, discoveries, and missions.

NASA Glenn was established in 1941 by the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA). NASA Glenn is a major participant in the three year program which will commence with a one-week, all-expense paid, professional development conference for teachers at a NASA Center.

The program works on three levels, involving students, teachers and parents in an effort to incorporate science, mathematics and technology into education. Throughout the three year commitment, schools will refine an action plan, continue professional development and incorporate students and parents into the learning process. NASA Glenn will work with schools in engaging scientific challenges, solving design problems, and collaborating on scientific discussions and data collection. Throughout this relationship, participating schools will have the opportunity to increase student interest, ability, and knowledge in science, mathematics and technology concepts and careers.

To apply or to find out additional information go to: http://explorerschools.nasa.gov/portal/site/nes/ applications are due by January 31, 2006.

TECH 2006

Students from all over Illinois will meet in Springfield on February 16, 2006 to demonstrate to legislators how classroom technology is helping them acquire the 21st Century skills they need to succeed in an information-based economy. TECH 2006 event marks the 15th year for this event.

Teams will be selected to represent a balanced distribution between legislative districts, grade levels and curricular areas and at least one team will be selected from each of the 59 Illinois senatorial districts. Preference will be given to projects that demonstrate improved teaching and learning through the use of technology. Each team, consisting of two or three students and one teacher or administrator, will participate for two hours in the morning or the afternoon of February 16, 2006 in the Rotunda of the Illinois State Capitol building.

Legislators, business leaders and other visitors will be invited by the TECH 2006 Committee to view short student presentations. To ensure the participation of their legislators, students (and superintendents) will also be asked to write to their legislators to personalize the invitation. In addition, all legislators will be informed about the demonstration schedule and the legislative leadership will encourage visits with the
students and teachers who participate in Springfield.

For more information, visit http://www.springfieldtech2000.org/ or http://www.roe21.k12.il.us/tech2006/

The application deadline is Wednesday, December 14, 2005. This event provides students a chance to demonstrate the importance of instructional technology to those at the highest levels of state government. TECH events are fun and provide a memorable experience for participants and observers alike.

Accountability

**Louisiana diplomas for displaced students**

The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has voted to allow students who relocated to other states due to the hurricanes to receive Louisiana diplomas during the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years.

- Receiving schools will provide information to displaced Louisiana high school juniors and seniors. An informational flyer for students and Frequently Asked Questions sheet will be available at: http://www.isbe.net/katrina/default.htm beginning November 29, 2005.
- The receiving school notifies the Louisiana Department of Education of the student’s decision by supplying the student name, Social Security number or date of birth and former school via an electronic form at http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/index.html.
- After the student has completed the required courses, the receiving school sends the student’s transcript to his or her home district in Louisiana.
- Instructions for electronic submission will be available soon at: http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/index.html. A paper transcript may be submitted in place of the electronic submission.
- The student’s home district will evaluate the transcript and send the diploma to the student’s receiving school.
- Students who need to take the Louisiana Graduation Exit Exam (GEE) will have three opportunities to take the exam online in Spring 2006. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

**ISBE employment opportunities**

**External vacancy list**

An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at: http://www.isbe.net/hr/pdf/VL05-31.pdf

**In the News**

**Weekly news clips**

Last week’s education news clips are posted at: http://www.isbe.net/news/2005/newsclips/051202.htm