Members of the Board will be in Springfield this week for the regularly scheduled June meetings. The Finance and Audit Committee meeting, which is when I anticipate a number of you and or your representatives will provide testimony on the Fiscal Year 2010 budget, is anticipated to begin around 1:30 p.m. Wednesday.

This is not an easy process for any of us. Difficult decisions will have to be made as our Board attempts to address the 50% cut the General Assembly has made to the educational programs in our Board’s adopted FY2010 budget recommendation. You can view the Board’s FY2010 budget recommendation at this link http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY10_budget_book.pdf. The Board will only consider those items that it had already recommended for funding.

The Board will need to cut about $500 million from its request. Realistically, the Board simply can not cut every program by half. Some programs will need to remain at specific funding levels in order to capture federal funds and in some cases, reducing a line item would render the program ineffective.

I encourage everyone with a stake in our education budget to make your voices heard, not just with our Board, but with lawmakers. The Board simply sets the priorities for investing the funds the General Assembly and Governor provide us. The ultimate decision regarding how much funding education receives lies solely with our lawmakers.

This week, the World Health Organization declared a flu pandemic with regards to the spread of the H1N1 virus. The Secretaries of the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services are sending a joint letter to districts urging administrators to plan ahead for next school year and the possible return of the virus. We have posted this letter to our H1N1 page on our Web site, which I encourage you to view at http://www.isbe.net/htmls/H1N1.htm.

The 2010 NCLB Consolidated Application webinar is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Thursday, June 18. ISBE staff will explain the process for completing the application, as well as provide an update on new American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) Title I and IID fund applications.

Finally, we are making some progress on behalf of districts who received a negative Local Determination for IDEA Compliance Indicators which would have impacted your ability to access IDEA funds from ARRA. The U.S. Department of Education has provided some additional flexibility that will benefit approximately half of the 320 districts. Additional details about this new flexibility can be found in the Special Education section of the weekly message. While this is good news, we will continue to seek flexibility for the remaining districts.

Have a great week!

Chris
Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

- Part 65 (New Teacher Induction and Mentoring): Public Comment period ends – June 15
- Part 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing): Public comment period ends – June 15
- Application for Reading Improvement Block Grant – June 15
- ISAT and IAA Corrections – June 22
- E-report Card Form – June 26
- 2009 Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report – June 30
- Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment, and Staff Report – June 30
- Student Health Data – Vision and Dental – June 30
- Early Childhood Block Grant Program Applications – June 30
- Applications for the Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program – June 30
- FY10 Consolidated Application to Serve English Language Learners – postmarked by June 30
- Migrant Education Application for the 2009-2010 School Year – July 15
- TSR Salary Data – July 15
- Request for Proposals (RFP) for Reading Recovery ® training and professional development – July 20
- PSAE corrections – July 21
- Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 25 (Certification) and New Part 425 (Voluntary Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Schools) Public comment period ends – July 27
- Differentiated Accountability Flexibility Applications due – July 31
- FY 2009 State and Federal grant projects ending Aug. 31 submit amendments and project extension requests – Aug. 1
- Modified End of Year Report on IWAS – Aug. 1
- Deadline for entering data in IWAS on the 2008-2009 High School Students Taking Community College Courses – Aug. 1
- Statewide Youth Summit – Aug. 10
- Deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2009 – Aug. 14
- Annual Superintendents’ Conference in Springfield – Oct. 27-28

Student Assessment

Assessment Data

It’s that critical time of year when assessment results are being processed. ISAT and IAA score data were posted last week. If you haven’t had a chance yet, please be sure to go and verify your data. All ISAT and IAA corrections must be completed by June 22. Data at that time will be considered final. Failure to make corrections during this window will not be grounds for appeals later.

PSAE score data will be released earlier this year than in previous years. We expect to post them July 8th. Although scores won’t be posted until then, you currently have access to the assessment correction file and now should be verifying the accuracy of the demographic information it contains for your 11th graders as well as resolving any error codes that may exist. AYP data has also been posted for those elementary schools and districts that have completed their E-report card data. Please remember the deadline for completing the E-Report card data is June 26.

AYP Appeals process

AYP status reports will be released shortly and districts will begin reviewing the results.

AYP status released via IWAS is final unless the data are changed during the correction process or rescoring is requested. The No Child Left Behind law and the State Accountability statute and rules allow schools and districts to appeal their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
status if the district has questions regarding the accuracy of the determination. Appeal should be based on issues that could not have been resolved during the data correction period and for which there is an available remedy. For example, schools and districts have multiple opportunities throughout the year to ensure student demographic information is correct. The AYP appeal process cannot be used to correct demographic data that could have been addressed during the correction process.

Each appeal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by ISBE staff and by the Appeals Advisory Committee, if necessary. An appeal must be filed within 30 days or release of the AYP status report on IWAS or by September 1, whichever is later.

Procedural guidance, a sample timeline and forms to begin the appeal process are available online at: [http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf)

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**Special Education**

**LEA Determinations**

ISBE, like many of you, was concerned about how a “Needs Assistance” local determination for IDEA Compliance Indicators impacted your ability to utilize IDEA funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

ISBE staff continued to pursue flexibility for school districts in relation to the LEA Determinations after the April 29 issuance of the Determinations. Therefore, as mentioned in Dr. Koch’s June 9 Weekly Superintendent’s Message, ISBE staff have had several conversations with our counterparts at the United States Department of Education (USDE) over the past few weeks. During these conversations, ISBE staff advocated for maximum flexibility in regard to LEA Determinations as they relate to the utilization of ARRA funds.

As a result of such conversations, ISBE received new information from the USDE Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on June 5 regarding additional flexibility that was not previously allowed. On that date, ISBE was informed that, in addition to the ability to acknowledge substantial compliance for districts that meet an Indicator at 95% versus 100%, we are now able to utilize a cell size in relation to the LEA Determinations process.

Upon receipt of this new information, ISBE staff reconvened the LEA Determinations stakeholder group on June 9 to discuss the possibility of applying this latest flexibility for Illinois districts. At that time, the stakeholder group chose to implement a cell size of 45 students for IDEA Compliance Indicators 11, 12 and 13. For example, regarding Indicator 13, if a district has fewer than 45 sixteen-year-old students with IEPs, the district’s data would be considered “not applicable” for LEA Determination purposes only, and therefore, would not be considered in the district’s overall determination. However, this does not exempt the district from meeting the outlined State Performance Plan (SPP) target of 100% compliance for this Indicator. Instances in which a district does not meet the target of 100% compliance will still result in findings of noncompliance. The cell size of 45 students was selected to align with the cell size used to calculate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

The decision to incorporate the cell size flexibility option reduces the number of school districts designated as “Needs Assistance” from 321 districts to 159 districts. ISBE staff contacted the districts whose designation was positively impacted by the new cell size flexibility, including districts that had previously appealed their LEA Determination and were denied. These districts will receive a corrected LEA determination letter to document the change.

**Special Education Focused Monitoring**

The 2009-2010 focused monitoring cycle is approaching. We would like all districts to be aware as they verify and finalize their data for submission in FACTS that the Department of Special Education will again be using the percentage of students with disabilities in the general education setting 80% or more day as the criteria for determining districts to be selected for an onsite review. With that in mind, we strongly suggest that districts review and verify the accuracy of their FACTS data as it relates to the Educational Environment (EE) codes prior to final submission.

**ARRA**

**Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) Program**

The Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program (QZAB), created in 1997, has been extended through 2011 by the Tax Extenders and Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act of 2008 and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The QZAB program provides federal tax credits in lieu of interest on bonds designated as QZAB’s by the issuing school district. QZAB proceeds may be...
used for rehabilitating or repairing public school facilities, investing in new equipment and technology, developing challenging course materials or training teachers. They cannot be used for new school construction.

In order to designate bonds as QZAB’s, a school district must receive an allocation of the State’s volume cap through application to the State Board of Education. To qualify for an allocation, the school or program designated as a qualified zone academy by the school district must be located in an empowerment zone or an enterprise community; or there is a reasonable expectation that at least 35 percent of their students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches under the National School Lunch Act. Additionally, private business contributions that total at least 10% of the face value of bonds to be designated as QZAB’s must be secured by the issuing district on behalf of the zone academy.

A qualified zone academy is a school or program that provides education and training below the postsecondary level if: (1) the public school or program is/was designed in cooperation with business to enhance the academic curriculum, increase graduation and employment rates, and better prepare students for the rigors of college and the increasingly complex workforce, (2) students in the public school or program will be subject to the same academic standards and assessments as other students educated by the eligible local education agency, and (3) the comprehensive educational plan of the public school or program is approved by the eligible local education agency.

The federal legislation provided for national allocations of $400 million for calendar year 2008, and $1.4 billion in each of calendar years 2009 and 2010. The Internal Revenue Service notice (IRS Notice 2009 – 30) provides that Illinois’ share of these allocations is $14.972 million (for calendar year 2008) and $ 52.401 million (for calendar year 2009), for a total of $67.373 million. The allocations for calendar year 2010 have yet to be released by the IRS. Changes to the program made by the Tax Extenders and Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act of 2008 are discussed in the Notice which is available at: [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-09-30.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-09-30.pdf).

Allocations will be based on the relative degree of poverty as reflected by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, with preference given to those school districts that have not previously been awarded an allocation.

The State Board of Education will be accepting applications and supporting materials for the calendar year 2008 and 2009 allocations beginning June 9, 2009 through 4 p.m., **June 30, 2009**. Applications and additional information are available on the ISBE web site at: [http://www.isbe.net/construction/html/qzab.htm](http://www.isbe.net/construction/html/qzab.htm)

For further questions or inquiries, please call Lou Ferratier, School Support Services at 217-785-8779.

**Qualified School Construction Bond (QSCB) Program**

The Qualified School Construction Bond Program (QSCB) is a new category of tax credit bonds for the construction, rehabilitation, or repair of public school facilities or for the acquisition of land on which a public school facility will be constructed, and expenditures for costs of acquisition of equipment to be used in the facility that is being constructed, rehabilitated or repaired with the proceeds of QSCB’s. The program was created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). It provides federal tax credits to bondholders in lieu of the issuing school district paying interest on the borrowing.

The ARRA provides for national allocations of $11 billion for each of calendar years 2009 and 2010. The Internal Revenue Service notice (IRS Notice 2009 – 35) provides that Illinois’ share of these allocations for calendar year 2009 is $254.25 million for the City of Chicago School District 299, and $244.435 million for the balance of the state. The allocations for calendar year 2010 have yet to be made by the IRS.

Additional information regarding participation in this bond designation program will be provided in the near future.

**Maintenance of Buildings**

We have received many questions about what are acceptable or unacceptable expenditures under ARRA in terms of maintenance buildings costs. For example, ‘Is repair work covered?’ and ‘Can you use the funds to pay a janitor’s salary?’

The 2003 federal handbook defines “maintenance of buildings” as “activities associated with keeping buildings at an acceptable level of efficiency through repairs and preventative maintenance.” Expenses
associated with maintenance of buildings are not acceptable under ARRA General State Aid funds.

Therefore, maintenance costs not acceptable under ARRA General State Aid funds include expenditures such as window replacement, roof repair/replacement, electrical repair and maintenance personnel, painting and tuck pointing.

The federal handbook also includes “Operation of Buildings,” as activities concerned with keeping the physical plant clean and ready for daily use. This includes operating lighting and HVAC systems and doing minor repairs. Also included are the costs of building rental and property insurance. These expenditures are acceptable under ARRA General State Aid funds.

Therefore, some acceptable operational expenditures for ARRA General State Aid funds include janitorial services, janitorial salaries and utilities.

**Funding and Disbursements**

**FY 2010 NCLB Consolidated application Available Soon**

The FY 2010 regular NCLB Consolidated application should be available to all districts in the very near future via the electronic Grants Management System. Districts will receive an email notice through IWAS when it is available. We appreciate your patience. We have been working on an important enhancement to link the targeted schools served between the regular and ARRA Title I applications.

We are aware some districts may need a firm July 1 start date in order to properly charge obligations to the FY 2010 grant. Due to the short window of time to transmit the initial application, for those districts that must have a July 1 start date, we are extending the initial application deadline to **July 15**. In addition, you must complete and return the following form by **July 31**

http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/nclb_conapl.pdf

Once the form is received by IBSE, a written approval for the July 1 start date will be provided to your district for auditing purposes.

If your district does not need a firm July 1 start date, then the start date will be dependent upon the date that you transmit your initial application. If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact **Kim Lewis** or **Sally Cray** at 217-782-5256 in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services.

**Estimated FY 10 Funding for Children Requiring Special Education Services Distribution**

Estimated FY 10 district allocations have been calculated for the Funding For Children Requiring Special Education Services program authorized under Section 14-7.02b of the School Code, and can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/estimated_funding.pdf.

The estimate assumes the FY 10 ISBE requested appropriation, 2008-09 estimated average daily attendance and preliminary poverty counts from the Dept of Human Services. The final column compares the FY 07 allocation to the estimated allocation amount for FY 10.

HB 4148 was signed by the Governor on January 8, 2008 (P.A. 95-0705). The new law made changes to Section 14-7.02b stating that, for fiscal year 2008 and each fiscal year thereafter, individual school districts must not receive payments under that Section totaling less than they received for fiscal year 2007 (commonly referred to as a “hold harmless” provision). However, the language further states that any “hold harmless” funding is to be “computed last and shall be separate calculation from any other calculation set forth in [Section 14-7.02b].”

The “other calculation” referenced in the new language is the existing split of the entire appropriation--85% based on each district’s average daily attendance and 15% on poverty which were used in General State Aid. Thus, under the new statutory scheme, the Agency in FY 10 will complete the 85-15 calculation for each district and, if the amount calculated for any district is less than what the district received in FY 2007, the district is eligible for hold harmless. A separate supplemental appropriation is required to bring such districts back to their FY 2007 level but none has been proposed for FY 10.

The estimated hold harmless amount for FY 10 is approximately $17.1 million.

**2009-2010 Proposed Public School Calendars**

As a reminder, if you have not already done so, please enter and submit for Regional Superintendent approval
the 2009-2010 Proposed Public School Calendar for the upcoming school year.

**2008-09 General State Aid Claim Deadlines**

Please be advised that per Section 18-12 of the School Code, the 2008-09 General State Aid Claim must be transmitted via IWAS to each respective Regional Office of Education by June 21 for districts with an official school calendar end date before June 15 or within 2 weeks following the official school calendar end date for districts with a school year end date of June 15 or later. The regional superintendent shall certify and file with the State Superintendent of Education district State aid claims by July 1 for districts with an official school calendar end date before June 15 or no later than July 15 for districts with an official school calendar end date of June 15 or later. Failure to so file by these deadlines constitutes a forfeiture of the right to receive payment by the State until such claim is filed and vouched for payment.

A final school calendar must be transmitted and approved before the General State Aid claim can be transmitted. If you need technical assistance with completing the final school calendar, you may contact your Regional Office of Education or Marj Beck, Funding & Disbursements, at mbeck@isbe.net. Questions related to completing the General State Aid Claim can be directed to Jim Mathes, Funding & Disbursements, at jmathes@isbe.net. Marj and Jim can also be reached in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

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**School Business Services**

**School District/Joint Agreement Budget Forms Now Available**

Now available at the School Business Services Division Web site are the FY2010 School District/Joint Agreement Budget Forms (ISBE Form 50-36/50-39) with related additional information and instructions.

FY2010 School district budget forms are to be adopted within or before the first quarter of each fiscal year and joint agreement budgets are adopted before September 30, annually.

The School Code, Section 17-1 (105 ILCS 5/17-1) requires school districts to electronically submit the adopted annual budget to ISBE within 30 days of adoption and no later than **Friday, October 30, 2009**.

The School Code, Section 17-1 (105 ILCS 5/17-1) also requires school districts to complete a Deficit Reduction Plan to balance the budget within three years if their Fiscal Year 2010 budget is not balanced in the operating funds.

Links to the following topics are included at the webpage:

- ARRA budgeting requirements – Emergency Rules Part 100
- Links to current rules and school code requirements - Rules & School Code 105 ILCS 5.

**Note:** The Joint Agreement Budget Form 50-39 is excluded from this state filing requirement and should be filed locally as determined by the provisions of the joint agreement. If you have any questions, please contact the School Business Services Division at 217-785-8779.

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**Rules & Waivers**

**Notice of Completed Rulemaking**

Please be advised that three sets of amendments recently adopted by the State Board are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s Web site at [www.isbe.net/rules](http://www.isbe.net/rules);

Choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to the relevant Part number. If you print the affected Sections, please be sure to include the table of contents for the Part, since that changes every time the rules are amended.

**Part 145 (Temporary Relocation Expenses)**

Technical updating only.

AFFECTED SECTION: 145.50

**Effective Date:** June 1, 2009

**Part 151 (School Construction Program)**

Technical updating only.

AFFECTED SECTIONS: 151.20, 151.50, and 151.140

**Effective Date:** June 1, 2009

**Part 675 (Temporary Relocation Expenses)**

Code of Ethics; basis for evaluating providers; miscellaneous.

AFFECTED SECTIONS: 675.30, 675.50, 675.70, 675.90, 675.175, 675.210, 675.220, 675.230, 675.Appendix B, and 675.Appendix C

**Effective Date:** June 1, 2009
Invitation to Comment on Rules

Three proposed rulemakings recently reviewed by the State Board of Education are now available for public comment. These items have been posted on the agency’s Web site at www.isbe.net/rules; Choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments”. Please submit any comments or suggestions you may have to rules@isbe.net.

Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision)
Numerous revisions in a large number of Sections throughout this Part.
Deadline for Public Comment: July 27, 2009

Part 25 (Certification)
Numerous revisions in a large number of Sections throughout this Part.
Deadline for Public Comment: July 27, 2009

New Part 425 (Voluntary Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Schools)
New rules setting forth the registration timelines and process; the initial recognition requirements and process; requirements for renewal of recognition; and requirements for receipt of funding under the school safety and educational improvement block grant.
Deadline for Public Comment: July 27, 2009

Background check reports for contractors

You may have seen the following statement from our agency regarding the sharing of background check reports for contractors:

``There is no provision in Section 10-21.9 that permits sharing of background check reports for contractors (which would include construction workers) within or outside of the educational service region, so my advice to you is that such sharing is not permitted under the School Code. Further, as a point of clarification, the ROE is permitted to share background check reports with other ROEs and school boards only for substitutes and other concurrent employees. ```

We’d like to take this as an opportunity to clear up any unintended miscommunication that may have occurred from this language. This language was sent in response to a specific scenario: where a contractor has a contract with District A, and after that contract ends, the same contractor enters into a contract with District B (either in same ROE region as or a different ROE region than District A). The question posed was “whether it is permissible under Section 10-21.9 of the School Code for District A to share the background check reports of the contractor’s employees with District B.”

The position of our agency in regards to Section 10-21.9(f) of the School Code is that, if a contractor holds contracts in more than one school district within the educational service region simultaneously, Section 10-21.9(f) provides that any of those school districts may ask the ROE to coordinate the background check and provide copies to each of the school boards (with cost sharing to be worked out between the districts). The limitless portability of background checks between districts and ROEs across the state that exists for substitutes and concurrent employees does not exist to the same extent for contractors. The portability that Section 10-21.9(f) does provide for contractors is limited to a contractor holding simultaneous contracts with more than one district within the same ROE region, and allows for those districts to obtain a copy of the background check report from the ROE.

We encourage you to share this information as you see fit.

No Child Left Behind

Differentiated Accountability

ISBE continues to implement the U.S. Department of Education’s Differentiated Accountability pilot. Districts are encouraged to apply for the two pieces of available flexibility:

1) Optional reversal of the order of Public School Choice (PSC) and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) for schools newly identified for improvement:

2) Schools that are entering their second consecutive year of not making AYP will be able to implement SES during the first year of School Improvement instead of PSC.

Reversing the order of sanctions may provide a more effective intervention strategy for the first year of improvement by offering eligible students SES while planning for choice implementation in year two. For instructions on how to apply for the pilot, go to:
Waiver of some of the PSC notification requirements under NCLB:

In some instances, where there is limited or no space available for students eligible to participate in public school choice, a district may choose to target notification letters to a segment of the eligible student population. For details on the required information needed to apply for the waiver, please see: http://www.isbe.net/nclb/htmls/differentiated_flexibility_waiver.htm.

Applications are due Friday, July 31. For additional information, contact Ev Deimel at 217-524-4832 or by e-mail at edeimel@isbe.net for additional information.

Strengthening NCLB: Early Notification to Parents Regarding Public School Choice

ISBE is encouraging school districts with schools in Federal status to notify parents about public school choice before the districts receive their Adequate Yearly Progress determinations. The final regulations and additional guidance provided by the U. S. Department of Education in October 2008 emphasized the importance of timely and clear notification to parents of the availability of public school choice (PSC) and supplemental educational services (SES). The supplemental regulations require the districts to implement the following requirements:

- Notify parents of eligible children of the option to transfer their children to another public school making adequate yearly progress reasonable in advance but no later than 14 days before the start of the school year; and

- Notify parents of eligible children of the availability of SES in a clear and concise communication that obviously distinguishes SES from other school-related information the parents receive. School districts with Title I schools in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that can not exit status this year can implement Early Notification.

The guidance document for Early Notification, with links to U. S. Department of Education documents, can be found at the following ISBE web site: www.isbe.net/grants/html/choice.htm

Curriculum and Instruction

Learn and Serve America Grants

The State Board has released an RFP for the Learn and Serve America Grants. The purpose of the program is to encourage the use of service-learning as a teaching methodology by supporting the development of high-quality service-learning projects in elementary, middle, and secondary schools. The RFP is available at the following site: http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/html/Active_RFPs.htm.

Reading Recovery RFP for Training and Ongoing Professional Development Site Grants

The Illinois State Board of Education has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Reading Recovery ® training and ongoing professional development. School districts, charter schools, public university laboratory schools approved by ISBE, regional offices of education, postsecondary institutions, and Reading Recovery ® consortia are eligible to apply for funds to establish a training site if they employ a registered Reading Recovery® teacher leader.

Reading Recovery®, first implemented by New Zealand psychologist and researcher Dr. Marie Clay, is a short-term, one-to-one intervention taught by specifically trained teachers. Teachers tutor the lowest achieving first-grade students for 30 minutes daily. The tutoring typically is provided within the school day as a pull-out program and consists of a 12- to 20-week set of customized lessons that supplement the regular education program provided by classroom teachers.

The goal is to accelerate progress for children in first grade who are having the greatest difficulty learning to read and write.

Those who wish to submit proposals by mail or in person should provide an original and four copies to the Illinois State Board of Education, Curriculum and Instruction Division, 100 North First Street, C-215, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001.

To ensure receipt, proposals should be submitted no later than 4 p.m., Monday, July 20.

Proposals also may be hand-delivered to the following locations:
Grants and Programs

Early Notification of Public School Choice

IWAS notification of ISAT scores has started the clock ticking for submitting improvement plans.

IWAS notification to district superintendents was provided on June 3.

This notification begins the time period for completing district and school improvement plans and developing restructuring plans for districts and schools in academic status.


If you need additional assistance, please contact your area RESPRO for assistance, http://www.isbe.net/sos/pdf/respro_contacts.pdf.

Districts and schools in academic status must always have a current two-year improvement plan posted at IIRC [see Section 1.85(d) of the Illinois Administrative Code]. If a district or school is in academic status and has a locally approved current improvement plan submitted to ISBE via the IIRC Web site, then no plan is due during the 2009-2010 school year. If a district or school is in academic status and does not have a locally approved current improvement plan submitted to ISBE via the IIRC website, a plan is due. If a district or school is not in academic status, no improvement plan is required.

http://www.isbe.net/pdf/plan_submission.pdf

Early Childhood

Block Grants Available

Applications for two Early Childhood Block Grant programs are available through IWAS for school year 2009-2010 (FY 10).

Recipients of all Early Childhood Block Grant programs funded in FY 09 and earlier will apply online for their FY 10 continuation grants and will be applying for 100% of their current funding. NOTE: Projected allocations are contingent upon legislative appropriation.

Program availability and names in IWAS are as follows:

- Preschool for All-Cont. 3-5 Early Childhood – available 6/4/09
- Preschool for All-3-5 Early Childhood – available 6/4/09
- Preschool for All-Cont. 0-3 Early Childhood – will be available within the next two weeks
- Preschool for All-Prev Initiative 0-3 Early Childhood – will be available within the next two weeks

There is a change with the Preschool for All-3-5 Early Childhood application as it will now be one project instead of having separate projects for different fiscal years.

REMINDER: In order to create an FY10 Preschool for All-3-5 Early Childhood application, you must first click on the "Yes" box that appears on the Application Select page. This should display the fiscal year, project title, allotment amount, and Create New Project button. The FY10 application should display after you click on the Create New Project button.

All applications must be submitted to ISBE by June 30, 2009 for a July 1st start date.

If you have any questions, please call the Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835.

Nutrition

Illinois Nutrition Education and Training, Free E-Newsletter

Join the over 2,300 Illinois individuals who have already signed up for the Illinois Schools Can! Free E-newsletter today to get the latest news on student wellness resources, grant opportunities and upcoming training to help you meet local wellness policy objectives or HealthierUS School Challenge criteria.
Visit [www.kidseatwell.org/Enewsletter.htm](http://www.kidseatwell.org/Enewsletter.htm)
Click on Subscribe to e-newsletter Illinois Schools Can! on the right side of the page. Archived issues are also available at that site.

**Free Evidence-Based Nutrition Education Curriculum**

Attention Principals: The Illinois Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program is offering one free nutrition education curriculum per Illinois school on a First-Come, First-Serve Basis.

Visit [www.kidseatwell.org](http://www.kidseatwell.org) to complete the simple one-page application, select the curriculum from eight choices representing K–12th grade, and complete the ten-question pre-survey today.

Illinois NET requires that you implement the curriculum during school year 2010, and complete a short post-survey by **May 15, 2010**.

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**Employment Opportunities**

**ISBE External Vacancy List**

An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at:
[http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm)

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**In the News**

**Weekly news clips**

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at: