



Oct. 26, 2009

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

I look forward to seeing many of you this week at the Superintendents' Conference. This will be a great chance to meet with some old friends and make some new ones. My senior staff will be available for much of the conference and I want to point out that the Hot Topics session will be Tuesday afternoon.

This weekend I had the opportunity to recognize teachers, parents, administrators, school support personnel and board members at the Those Who Excel dinner on Saturday. Congratulations to all of those honored. A complete list of those recognized can be found on our Web site at http://www.isbe.net/news/pdf/those_who_excel_list09-10.pdf.

I also wanted to give you an update on finances. No doubt many of you are beginning to notice a large amount of unpaid bills from the state beginning to stack up again. I know this was frustrating for many of you last year. Unfortunately, it will continue this year.

The agency has continued to voucher bills and grants to the Comptroller's Office in a timely manner. However, the Comptroller's Office has not had sufficient funds to make timely disbursements.

Currently, the total amount of unpaid bills in the Comptroller's Office is greater than \$3.5 billion. Some of these bills date back to the start of the fiscal year and, on average, are more than 70 business days in arrears. There are more than 10,500 unpaid vouchers from the Illinois State Board of Education, and schools are owed more than \$600 million.

This situation does not look like it will improve anytime soon. This is a slow revenue period for state government. Additionally, we had hoped to receive Phase II federal State Fiscal Stabilization Funds, however, the U.S. Department of Education has not yet released the application for these funds.

We will continue to watch for the SFSF Phase II application to be released because those SFSF funds make up \$1 billion of General State Aid funding for FY 2010. We are told that the application could be quite lengthy and may take weeks to complete. We are nevertheless committed to doing this as accurately and expeditiously as possible.

Finally, we will release report cards this Friday.

Have a great week.

Chris

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Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Part 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting and Auditing):** Public comment period ends Oct. 26
- **Annual Superintendents' Conference in Springfield** – Oct. 27-28
- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Springfield** – Oct. 28
- **School District's Adopted Budget due at ISBE** – Oct. 30
- **Special Education Summer Claims deadline** – Nov. 2
- **Illinois Dropout Prevention Summit** – Nov. 4
- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Wheeling** – Nov. 5
- **Illinois Advisory Council for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children application deadline** – Nov. 6
- **Annual Statewide Transition Conference** – Nov. 8-10
- **Illinois Arts Education Week Poster Contest deadline** – Nov. 9
- **2009-10 Unfilled Positions Survey deadline** – Nov. 15
- **2009-10 Health and Immunization Collection deadline** – Nov. 16
- **Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet deadline** – Nov. 16
- **Annual Financial Report due at ISBE** – Nov. 16 (excluding those granted extensions due Dec. 15)
- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Mundelein** – Dec. 9
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Spring 2010** – Jan. 8

External Assurance

NCLB Monitoring Instrument and NCLB Title I Comparability

The FY10 NCLB Monitoring Instrument is now available for completion and submission in the IWAS system. The due date is Sunday, Nov. 30.

All districts receiving NCLB funding are required to submit the document every year. As before, the previous year's information will be imported to the document and the district should ensure its accuracy before submitting.

Many changes have occurred with the Title I Comparability submittal. The Excel document has been eliminated from the submittal process. Still located on the IWAS system, districts that are "exempt" may simply select the "Exempt" radio button and then "Submit." Their submittal requirements will have been met. Districts requiring a comparison will have all of their district's school buildings imported from the FY10 NCLB Consolidated Application. Districts will have to account for all of their buildings through exclusions or in a comparison with other schools of similar population and grade spans. Documents that were previously required to be on hand at the district will now be loaded into the IWAS system for review. This includes the written procedures and board approved equivalency policies and salary schedules for districts. Building

student populations and the names and positions of all FTEs will need to be supplied for those using Pupil/Staff ratio.

This year districts will need to define the various comparison classifications. There is no limit to the groupings that a district may want to use. For example if a district has both large and small elementary schools with similar grade spans, they may define both in the system to avoid comparing larger and smaller schools in the same comparison. A "User's Guide" is located on the menu bar of this application.

Because it is a new concept and coming a couple weeks later the Comparability documentation will be due by Tuesday, Dec. 15. All districts receiving Title I funds must complete the document. Failure to comply will result in program funds being frozen.

If you have questions concerning the Title I Comparability or the Monitoring Instrument, contact Paul Williams, External Assurance, at 217-782-7970 or pwilliam@isbe.net.

Legal

Moment of Silence for Veterans Day

Public Act 96-0084, which took effect on July 27, requires that a school holding any type of event at the

school on Nov. 11, Veterans Day, include a moment of silence at that event to recognize veterans of foreign wars. The act also applies to state universities and community colleges.

Here is the link to the public act:

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=096-0084&GA=096>.

School Business Services

Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet Deadline Coming Up

School districts must submit the completed Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet to the Illinois State Board of Education's School Business Services Division by Nov. 16.

A copy of the worksheet can be accessed at <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/AdminCaps/AdminCaps.htm>.

Additionally, the Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet is included in the Illinois School District Annual Financial Report – June 30, 2009 (ISBE 50-35). If a completed Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet was submitted along with the school district's Annual Financial Report, a separate worksheet does not have to be submitted. Please note that the worksheet included in the School District Budget Form July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010 (ISBE 50-36) is a working document for local use only and will not be accepted for official submission of the Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet.

If you have any questions, contact **Michelle Heninger** at 217-785-8779 or mheninge@isbe.net.

School Budgets Due Oct. 30

Reminder: All school district budgets must be adopted within or before the first quarter of each fiscal year. Joint Agreement budgets must be adopted annually by Sept. 1.

All budgets are required to be entered and adopted on the applicable form provided by the Illinois State Board of Education at the following link:

<http://www.isbe.net/sfms/budget/2010/default.htm>.

The School District Budget Form 50-36 must be submitted electronically to ISBE within 30 days of adoption and no later than Oct. 30.

The filing deadline for the Annual Financial Report (AFR) is Oct. 15 of each year.

Statute requires that the AFR and attachments are to be filed on or before Oct. 15 of each year with the appropriate Regional Superintendent. In extenuating circumstances, the Regional Superintendent may grant up to 60 days extension per Section 3-7 of the School Code. If an extension has not been granted, the AFR must be electronically submitted to ISBE on or before Nov. 15. As well, a hard copy of the cover page through Page 8 is required to be mailed to ISBE with the appropriate signatures affixed by Nov. 15. The AFR and related material for school districts/joint agreements may be obtained from the following Web site: <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/afr.htm>.

Annual Statement of Affairs forms must be completed and published in the residing district's local newspaper by Dec. 1, annually, and submitted to ISBE by Dec. 15, annually.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact School Business Services at 217-785-8779.

Funding and Disbursement Services

Special Education Summer Claims Are Due by Nov. 2

Special Education Summer School State Aid and Special Education Summer Individual Orphanage claims are statutorily required to be received at the Illinois State Board of Education on or before Nov. 2. Claims are for eligible students educated in 2009 summer programs and must be filed electronically. No claims will be accepted or honored after the statutory date.

Special Education Summer School State Aid claims authorized under Section 18-4.3 are required to be filed electronically via the Illinois State Board of Education's Web Application Security System (IWAS) and will only be available to transmit student data until midnight Nov. 2.

Eligibility requirements for pupils claimed for summer school are:

(1) the pupil must be enrolled in one or more courses offered for at least 60 clock hours in the summer session;

(2) the pupil must be eligible pursuant to the requirements for continued summer school services per his or her Individualized Education Plan (IEP);

(3) there shall not be a tuition charge to families to insure a "free, appropriate public education."

Questions regarding completion of the Special Education Summer School claim should be directed to Jodi Whitlow, Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256 or jwhitlow@isbe.net.

Special Education Summer Individual Orphanage claims authorized under Section 14-7.03 must be transmitted electronically using iePoint >2009.2.1 or NetCheck via Harrisburg Project. Technical issues regarding iePoint>2009.2.1 or NetCheck should be directed to Harrisburg Project support staff at 800-635-5274.

Please note that the Special Education Summer Individual Orphanage claims may only be transmitted until midnight Nov. 2. Questions regarding completion of this claim should be directed to Jodi Whitlow, Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256 or jwhitlow@isbe.net.

Innovation and Improvement

Improvement and Restructuring Plans

District Superintendents: Remember that your initial notification of academic status started the clock ticking for the submission of improvement and restructuring plans. The submission of plans is now imminent for districts and many schools. Please see the Frequently Asked Questions at The Resource Manual, http://www.isbe.net/sos/pdf/improvement_manual.pdf, to determine if and when improvement and restructuring plans are due for your district and schools.

Note: Restructuring plans are required for schools in Federal "Restructuring" status and for schools in State Academic Watch 2 status. If you have questions, please contact the Innovation and Improvement Division at 217-524-4832.

Join the Illinois Advisory Council for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children

The Illinois State Board of Education is accepting applications to become a member of the Illinois Advisory Council for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children. There are three expired positions the agency will be filling. The terms are for four years, and the

advisory council meets three times a year. As required by P.A. 094-0151, members of the council will be appointed by the State Superintendent, Dr. Christopher A. Koch.

The Council is charged with advising the State Superintendent regarding all rules and policies to be adopted by the State Board relating to the education of gifted and talented children. Members will be selected on the basis of their knowledge of, or experience in, programs and problems of the education of gifted and talented students.

Deadline for submission of application is Nov. 6. Please send your letter of application along with your resume to Marci Johnson, Division Supervisor, Innovation and Improvement Division, 100 N. First St. N-242, Springfield, IL 62777. For additional information please call **Marci Johnson** at 217-524-4832 or e-mail marjohns@isbe.net.

Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

Health and Immunization Data Collection

The Student Health Data - Immunization data collection system will be open in IWAS starting Friday, Oct. 16. The deadline for submitting these data is Nov. 16.

URLs for important related documents are provided below.

User Guide:

http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/Immunization_user_guide.pdf.

Immunization and Compliance With State Law:

http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/immunization_requirements.pdf.

Data Entry Worksheet:

http://www.isbe.net/research/xls/immunization_worksheet.xls.

How to Calculate Actual Unduplicated Count:

<http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/UnduplicatedCount.pdf>.

Health and immunization questions and answers:

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27894/documents/SchoolHealth/FAQ09.doc>.

Please share this information with your school nurse or health technician and those responsible for submitting the Health/Immunization data to the Illinois State Board of Education. Questions can be addressed to Md. Shafiqul Azam in the ISBE Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at 217-782-3950 or mazam@isbe.net.

Eye Examination Data Collection

The Student Health Data – Vision data collection system will be open in IWAS starting Friday, Oct. 16. The deadline for submitting these data is June 30, 2010. URLs for two important related documents are provided below.

User Guide:

http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/vision_iwas_guide.pdf.

Data Entry Worksheet:

http://www.isbe.net/research/xls/eye_exam_wksht.xls.

Please share this information with your school nurse or health technician and those responsible for submitting the Eye Examination data to the Illinois State Board of Education. Questions may be addressed to Md. Shafiqul Azam in the ISBE Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at 217-782-3950 or mazam@isbe.net.

Curriculum and Instruction

Illinois Young Authors' Conference Set

The 36th annual Illinois Young Authors' Conference will be held May 15 at Illinois State University in Bloomington-Normal. Students in kindergarten through eighth grade are eligible to participate.

Conference information, including guidelines and registration materials, will be available at <http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/Default.htm> after Nov. 30.

Contact Christina Podraza of the Illinois Language and Literacy Council at cpodraza@lisle202.org if you are interested in volunteering for the conference or have any questions.

ISBE Joins Forces on Thinkfinity Site

The Illinois State Board of Education is collaborating with the Illinois Office of Educational Services to increase knowledge and awareness, and provide training toward the use of Verizon Foundation's Thinkfinity

online K-12 free education portal at <http://www.thinkfinity.org/>.

This Web resource houses more than 55,000 standards-aligned educational resources created by consortium partners, including leading educational organizations, (applicable for use by) educators, after-school program leaders and instructors, students and parents.

A link to a video overview of this valuable technology integration resource is available online at <http://www.thinkfinity.org/tour/thinkfinitytour.aspx>.

For more information about this resources site and related professional development or training opportunities, contact **Debbie Potts** at dpotts@ioes.org or 217-786-3010, ext. 233, or Faith Bishop at fbishop@isbe.net or 217-557-7323.

Nutrition

Summer Breakfast and/or Lunch Program Mandate

Public Act 096-0734 (amends Public Act 095-0155), amends Section 20 of the Childhood Hunger Relief Act (105 ILCS 126/20). This amendment requires a school district to implement a summer breakfast and/or lunch program for the duration of the summer school program in all schools where 50 percent or more of the student population is eligible for free or reduced-price meals and that have a summer school program. This amendment applies to all schools that meet the above criteria, including those schools not currently participating in any federal Child Nutrition Program.

Two federal Child Nutrition Programs administered by the Illinois State Board of Education, the National School Lunch Program's Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) assist school districts in implementing a successful program and in supplementing the costs of providing meals to students during the summer. The legislation, along with question and answers, is accessible at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition> on either the National School Lunch Program or Summer Food Service Program Web page under Public Act 096-0734— Summer Food Service Program. Public Act 096-0734 (accessible at <http://www.ilga.gov/>) also includes information regarding an opt-out provision.

Public Act 096-0734 is an important piece of legislation for Illinois children. Staff from our Nutrition Programs

Division is available at 800-545-7892 or 217-782-2491 for technical assistance with reimbursement or program operations.

America Recycles Day Coming Up

Celebrating its 11th year, America Recycles Day encourages people to recycle. Plan now to get your school community, students, faculty and administration involved. At the school community level, investigate recycling of the following: aluminum, cardboard, plastic, steel, organic waste and paper.

Did you know that we only recycle 1.5 pounds of the 4.6 pounds we generate daily, as individuals? Visit <http://www.resourcefulschools.org> and <http://earth911.com> for more ideas to help improve recycling efforts, such as finding recycling centers and much more.

Social and Emotional Learning

ISBE Teams Up With Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership on SEL

The Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership (ICMHP) are using lessons learned from its current three-year pilot to expand its efforts to help schools implement the SEL Standards and embed SEL into school culture.

Come visit the ICHMP exhibit at the upcoming Superintendent's Conference or contact Linda Delimata at ldelimata@leeogle.org to find out how to enhance your district's opportunities to develop thriving, successful students!

Student Opportunities

Web Design Contest Offered for High School Students

Illinois high school students are invited to compete in a Web design contest sponsored by Microsoft. Using the company's Expression Web software, students can participate in teams of two to four people in the "blink" competition.

Registration for the contest is under way until Feb. 17, with final Web site submissions due by March 17. Microsoft is providing the software to qualifying schools. See <http://www.bliinkcontest.com> for details and to register.

The theme for the competition is "I Imagine a Green Future." Prizes include MP3 players, up to \$300 and a trip to Washington, D.C., in April. In addition, winning Web sites will be featured on a Microsoft site.

Free tutorials and learning materials on Web design are available at <http://expression.microsoft.com/education>. For questions, e-mail ew4hs@innovativeteachers.us.

Video Contest Under Way for Students

In 2 minutes or less, America's students have an opportunity to show the nation and the world how far education can take them and how they will achieve their dreams. The U.S. Department of Education is asking students to participate in a national video contest titled "I Am What I Learn."

The contest is open to active middle, secondary and college students, ages 13 and older. Through Nov. 2, students can submit their videos up to 2 minutes long at <http://www.Ed.gov/IAmWhatILearn>. There are no restrictions on the style of the video, as students are encouraged to be creative.

Video submissions will be reviewed by a panel of judges, including Secretary Duncan. Judges will choose 10 finalists to promote on the U.S. Department of Education's official YouTube channel. The public can then view the finalists' videos and vote on their favorites. The top three finalists with the most votes will each win \$1,000 prize issued by the U.S. Department of Education. Winners will be announced the week of Dec. 1.

Winning videos will be chosen based on the following criteria: use of creativity, strength and originality of content, and ability to inspire.

For more information and complete contest rules, visit <http://www.Ed.gov/IAmWhatILearn>.

Illinois Arts Council Promotes 2009 Poetry Out Loud Contest

The Illinois Arts Council invites all Illinois high schools to participate in the 2009 Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest, a free national program created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. Now entering its fifth year of national competition, Poetry Out Loud has inspired hundreds of thousands of students to discover a broad spectrum of classic and contemporary poetry.

Poetry Out Loud will award more than \$100,000 to state- and national-level winners in total this year. National Finals will award a total of \$50,000 in cash awards and school stipends for the purchase of poetry books, and each state-level contest awards \$1,000 in cash prizes to the champion, runner-up and their schools.

Hard copies of all Poetry Out Loud materials are free for participating schools, including print and online poetry anthologies, a teacher's guide to help instructors teach recitation and performance, an audio CD featuring distinguished actors and writers, promotional and media guides, and a Web site. Read the full release at <http://www.state.il.us/agency/iac/NEWS/PR%2010%20P OL%20Deadline%20Announcement.html>.

School Opportunities

Green Thumb Challenge Slated for Spring

The Green Education Foundation is teaming up with Lowes for the Green Thumb Challenge, an initiative to get schools to plant gardens in the spring. The goal is to get 10,000 schools and youth groups from across the country to plant indoor and outdoor gardens in the spring.

Sign up at <http://www.greenthumbchallenge.com>. Those who sign up by Dec. 15 will be eligible to win gardening kits. The Web site includes a curriculum section that will link gardening to standards in science, math, language arts, creative arts and technology. Other resources include directions and tips on planting a garden, including plot location guidelines, vegetable and flower suggestions, and more.

The Green Education Foundation is also promoting National Green Week, which is set for Feb. 1-5. The free program includes environmental educational content and curriculum.

For questions or more information about the Green Thumb Challenge and National Green Week, visit <http://www.greeneducationfoundation.org> or call 888-668-2268.

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>.

In the News

Weekly News Clips

ISBE has posted highlights from last week's education news clips at <http://www.isbe.net/news/2009/newsclips/091023.htm>.