I want to thank those of you who attended this year’s Superintendents’ Conference for making it a wonderful success. I appreciated the opportunity to meet with many of you individually and especially the chance to hear your feedback during the hot topics session. We had more than 500 of you attend and I am already looking forward to next year.

One issue that became apparent during the conference was the number of questions about Title I. John Perkins on my senior staff has agreed to serve as a point of contact to assist you with your Title I questions. You can reach out to John at 217-782-2221 or via e-mail at jperkins@isbe.net. He is very capable and if he does not know the answer to your question, he will make sure you get one.

I was disappointed I could only stay for the first day of the conference this year. On Wednesday, I went to Washington, D.C., to accept an award for Illinois from ACT. We were recognized for our efforts to graduate all students as college and career ready.

Illinois was singled out as one of two states to receive the first Systems of Excellence Awards. Our commitment to college and career readiness is an important one and it is encouraging to see others take notice that we are among the national leaders on this front.

Finally, on Friday I had the opportunity to attend the Common Core meeting in Chicago to discuss progress with those efforts. Representatives from 40 states attended and a great deal of support for this collective effort remains among states. I was asked to present on the process Illinois would use to adopt such standards. In doing so, I reviewed our rulemaking process that includes a 45-day public comment period, followed by adoption by the State Board of Education and a second review period by the appropriate Committee of the General Assembly, the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, before the rules become effective.

Have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- Illinois Dropout Prevention Summit – Nov. 4
- Assessment Network Webinar training session – 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)
• Assessment Network Webinar training session – Nov. 19
• FY 2010 NCLB Monitoring Instrument submission deadline -- Nov. 30
• FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Mundelein – Dec. 9
• Part 151 (School Construction Program) – Public comment period ends Dec. 28
• Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 252 (Driver Education) – Public comment period ends Jan. 4.
• Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Spring 2010 – Jan. 8
• Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education) and Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant) – Public comment period ends Feb. 15
• Illinois Young Authors’ Conference in Bloomington-Normal – May 15
• 2009-10 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline – June 30

Funding and Disbursement Services

FY 2010 School Safety and Educational Improvement Block Grant

Calculations for theFY 10 School Safety and Educational Improvement Block Grant, provided in Section 2-3.51.5 of the School Code, have been determined and can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/ADABlockGrantFY10.pdf. This year, the amount per ADA calculated to $9.09. Payments are made twice a year on or before Oct. 30 and April 30 respectively per statute. The revenue code assigned to these payments is 3775.

Funds for the School Safety and Educational Improvement Block Grant Program are distributed to school districts, laboratory schools and state-recognized non-public schools based on the prior year’s best three months average daily attendance. This information is gathered from the General State Aid claim for school districts and the Nonpublic School Attendance System for recognized nonpublic schools.

Funds are to be used to improve the level of education and safety of students from kindergarten through grade 12 in school districts and state-recognized, non-public schools. Funds are not intended to be used to supplement teacher salaries or salary increases.

School districts must utilize funding for school safety, textbooks and software, teacher training and curriculum development, school improvements, remediation programs under subsection (a) of Section 2-3.64, school report cards under Section 10-17a, and criminal history records checks under Sections 10-21.9 and 34-18.5. Expenditures should be linked to the School Improvement Plan.

State-recognized, non-public schools must utilize funding for secular textbooks and software, criminal history records checks, and health and safety mandates to the extent that the funds are expended for purely secular purposes. Costs for Automated External Defibrillators (AEDS) have been determined as an approvable health and safety expenditure.

For questions regarding this program, contact Jim Mathes at imathes@isbe.net or 217-782-5256.

Legal

Advisory on Illinois Student Records

We have received questions as to the relationship between the Illinois School Student Records Act (ISSRA) (105 ILCS 10/1 et seq., 23 Ill. Administrative Code Part 375) and the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. §1232g, 34 C.F.R. Part 99) as it relates to a student’s exclusive right to his or her records once he or she reaches the age of majority.
While ISSRA permits a “parent” access to school student records, its definition of “parent” states that “[a]ll rights and privileges accorded to a parent under this Act shall become exclusively those of the student upon his 18th birthday, graduation from secondary school, marriage or entry into military service, whichever occurs first.” 105 ILCS 10/2(g).

Based on the statutory language in ISSRA, it is the position of the Illinois State Board of Education that, with limited exceptions, a school district may not provide access to school student records for a student age 18 or older, without the student’s consent. While the Illinois State Board of Education does not administer FERPA (or ISSRA for that matter), we believe that this interpretation is consistent with FERPA.

Guidance to the Field

We have been contacted by the Department of Children and Family Services regarding a concern that DCFS investigators are being asked to provide driver’s licenses to school personnel so that background checks can be conducted and, further, that copies of these driver’s licenses are being maintained in students’ records.

While DCFS understands the need for school districts to carefully insure that all visitors who enter school buildings, including DCFS investigators, are properly screened, neither DCFS nor the Illinois State Board of Education is aware of any requirement, in the Illinois School Student Records Act or otherwise, that a copy of the visitor’s driver’s license be retained in a particular student’s record. Thus, for those school districts and schools that choose to use a driver’s license for purposes of conducting a background check of DCFS investigators, we strongly encourage you to place in the relevant individual student’s record no more than the investigator’s name and number/employee ID, as opposed to a copy of the driver’s license. Please note, this is not to imply that ISBE believes driver’s license information should be collected on third parties who visit schools. This clarification has been made at the request of DCFS, which has encountered this issue at some school districts.

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 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.

Student Assessment

2010 Illinois Alternate Assessment

The Illinois State Board of Education has posted information regarding the spring 2010 Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA). The latest updates are available at http://www.isbe.net/assessment/iaa.htm. The IAA Calendar of Events, Teacher Training location and dates, Teacher Training Refresher Webinar dates, Assessment Network Reference Guide and Implementation Manual are a few of the available documents that can be found for the spring 2010 IAA administration.

New for 2010: The IAA 2010 test administration window will be one four-week window (Feb. 22-March 19) for all districts. Please note: The expectation is that districts will still complete testing in three weeks. This change simply has eliminated the need to apply for a modified testing window.

If you have attended Teacher Training in the past, there will be Teacher Training Webinars in December to refresh coordinators and teachers on the IAA. Following the Webinars, the presentation will be posted to the ISBE Web site.

If you have questions regarding the Illinois Alternate Assessment, contact Pearl Schneider at pschneid@isbe.net or Jessica Dare at jdare@isbe.net or call 217-782-4823.

Assessment Network Training – 2010 ISAT and IAA

The Assessment Network Web site hosted by Pearson will be open from Oct. 31 Dec. 21. This is the Web portal that allows districts and Chicago schools to do the following for the 2010 administration of ISAT and IAA:

- verify ISAT and IAA test material quantities,
- order ISAT special format tests like reader scripts and Braille forms,
- verify or correct the District/Chicago school ISAT Coordinator information,
- verify or correct the mailing address for receipt of ISAT and IAA test materials,
- place additional orders after receipt of initial shipment of test materials.
There will be two Webinar training sessions for the Assessment Network:

- 2-3 p.m. Nov. 4
- 10-11 a.m. Nov. 19

Information about registering for these Webinars can be found at [http://www.isbe.net/assessment/webinar.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/webinar.htm).

You will be receiving a letter from Pearson containing your login ID and password (which allows you to get into Assessment Network) and a copy of the Assessment Network Reference Guide. The guide is available at [http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/2010/reference_guide.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/2010/reference_guide.pdf).

**Rules and Waivers**

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

Several proposed rulemakings recently reviewed by the Illinois State Board of Education are available for public comment. The proposals have been posted on the agency’s Web site at [http://www.isbe.net/rules](http://www.isbe.net/rules); choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

**Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision)**

Makes several changes in accountability procedures, and in response to recently enacted legislation, addresses school fee waiver verification, process for determining general state aid under certain circumstances, and curricular mandates.  
*Deadline for Public Comment: Jan. 4*

**Part 151 (School Construction Program)**

In response to recently enacted legislation, sets forth application procedures and award criteria for School Energy Efficiency Project grants and addresses the types of applicants eligible for school construction and school maintenance grants; provides for electronic submission of applications for both school maintenance and energy efficiency grants.  
*Deadline for Public Comment: Dec. 28.*

**Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education)**

Makes requirements relative to preschool education programs’ provision of bilingual education services, as required under Article 14C of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/14C), addresses school districts’ responsibilities relative to the federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act; establishes consistent statewide exit criteria for determining English proficiency; requires bilingual education programs that serve Spanish-speaking students to align applicable instruction to the Spanish Language Arts Standards; and clarifies requirements for personnel serving in bilingual education programs.  
*Deadline for Public Comment: Feb. 15.*

**Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant)**

Addresses the responsibility of and the requirements for the provision of bilingual education services by school districts offering preschool education programs.  
*Deadline for Public Comment: Feb. 15.*

**Part 252 (Driver Education)**

*Deadline for Public Comment: Jan. 4.*

**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 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 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.

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.

Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

Health and Immunization Data Collection

The Student Health Data - Immunization data collection system opened in IWAS on Oct. 16. The deadline for submitting these data is Nov. 16.

URLs for important related documents are provided below.


Data Entry Worksheet: http://www.isbe.net/research/xls/immunization_worksheet.xls.


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.

Curriculum and Instruction

Elementary School Earns National Honor for Physical Education Program

Ben Franklin Elementary School in Glen Ellyn is one of only 44 schools in the country to receive national acclaim as a National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) STARS school. The NASPE STARS program honors physical education programs that model the essential elements for quality physical education and provide meaningful learning opportunities for all students. In addition, STARS schools exemplify excellence in teaching students the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for motor development to achieve movement competency, health-related fitness and promote lifelong physical activity. To earn that distinction, the Ben Franklin physical education staff compiled documentation over nearly a year, which was
then submitted to NASPE as an efolio and rigorously reviewed by an independent panel of judges.

Ben Franklin Elementary will be recognized in March during the 125th national convention of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) in Indianapolis. Principal Kirk Samples and physical education teachers Debbie Rausch and Gay Murray will be honored at the NASPE Hall of Fame Banquet. A STARS banner will be presented to the Ben Franklin staff as well as certificates of recognition and product coupons from FlagHouse, the official physical education equipment sponsor of the NASPE STARS program.

Ben Franklin Elementary, located in a western suburb of Chicago, has 620 students in pre-K through fifth grade. The curriculum is taught by two full-time physical education teachers and a part-time traveling adaptive physical education (APE) teacher, who assists the full-time teachers in classes where APE students are mainstreamed.

Parent involvement is integral to many of the physical education activities, including Cross Country Skiing; a Physical Education Challenge; Punt, Pass and Kick; and the Junior Olympic Skill Programs. The award-winning Survivor Unit and the annual Food Pantry Run are highlights of the school year. A recent Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) grant allowed for the purchase of new technology such as a PlayStation and “Dance Dance Revolution” to supplement the physical education program.

For more information about quality physical education programs and how your physical education program can apply to become a STARS school, visit the NASPE Web site at http:www.naspeinfo.org/stars. Physical education departments can download information for administrators on the STARS program, a STARS application, criteria and suggestions for providing evidence that the criteria have been met. The next deadline to apply for STARS is in October 2010.

**Fine Arts Conference Coming Up**

Meeting the Challenge XX, a fine arts conference for all educators, is set for Nov. 17 at Sauk Valley Community College, outside Dixon. The theme of this fine arts conference, which is arranged by the Whiteside Regional Office of Education and Sauk Valley Community College, is “Integrating the Fine Arts into the Core Curriculum.”

Four workshop sessions will be available to each participant in the areas of drama, visual arts, music and dance. Many of the sessions are hands-on and will provide curriculum that participants should be able to duplicate in their classrooms. The full day of activities will be awarded six CPDUs.

Registrations postmarked by Nov. 6 will be eligible for an early-bird discount and confirmations of registrations will follow by fax. Full conference information, including a registration form, can be accessed on the Whiteside Regional Office of Education Web site at http://www.whitesideroe.org/documents/Meeting%20the%20Challenge%20Brochure.pdf. For further questions or to request a flyer, call 815-625-1495.

**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.

**Nutrition**

**Nutrition Education Curriculum Available**

Attention principals: The Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program is offering one free nutrition education curriculum per Illinois school on a first-come, first-served basis. Visit http://www.kidseatwell.org to complete the simple one-page application, select the curriculum from eight choices representing K-12th grade, and complete the 10 question presurvey. ILNET requires that you implement the curriculum during SY 2010, and complete a short post survey by May 15.

**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

Illinois Brings Home Awards From National FFA Convention

Illinois students and teachers brought home many awards from last month’s 82nd annual National FFA Convention, including the Outstanding Agriscience Teacher of the Year award. Mindy McDermott of Waterloo won the honor.

Four students were named winners in the National Proficiency Awards in their area of expertise: Caroline Bremer of Vienna for agricultural communications, Brian Haas of Mascoutah for agricultural mechanics, Tyler Loschen of Tri-Point for diversified crop production and Naomi Harper of Chicago Ag Science for food science and technology. Illinois had 12 national finalists.

Clayton Carley of the Crescent-Iroquois FFA was one of 10 students from across the country to earn the National Agri-Entrepreneurship Award. He has a sweet corn business. Alexis Clinebell of the Waterloo FFA Chapter placed first in an engineering division of the National Agriscience Fair. Another 88 students earned the American FFA Degree, which recognizes member’s leadership ability; outstanding achievements; and rewards years of academic and professional excellence in agricultural business, production, processing or service programs.

The Sullivan student team was a winner for parliamentary procedure, and the Prairie Central student team won for dairy cattle evaluation. Eleven state chapters were awarded three stars, the highest chapter award: Goreville, Chicago Ag Science, Eastland, Marissa, West Carroll, Newark, Paxton-Buckley-Loda, Pinckneyville, Pontiac, Seneca and Urbana. Another 21 chapters in Illinois earned two stars.

Radon Poster Contest Under Way

For students in science, art and health classes, after-school programs and school organizations, as well as home schools and youth groups, there’s an opportunity for those ages 9-14 to win $50 and $100 savings bonds and a trip to Washington D.C. for the National Radon Poster Contest. Radon is a dangerous, naturally occurring radioactive gas.

Visit http://www.TakeActionOnRadon.uiuc.edu for more contest information. Click on “Teacher Resources” and ‘National Radon Poster Contest.” Posters are due to any local University of Illinois Extension office on or before March 1. For more information, e-mail cindy.ladage@illinois.gov or phone (800) 325-1245.

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.blinkcontest.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 a $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.

### School Opportunities

#### Green Thumb Challenge Slated for Spring

The Green Education Foundation is teaming up with Lowe’s 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](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](http://www.greeneducationfoundation.org) or call 888-668-2268.

### Professional Development

#### Raising Student Achievement Conference Coming Up in St. Charles

The annual K-12 Raising Student Achievement conference will be held Dec. 7-8 at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles. The event is promoted by the Regional Offices of Education in collaboration with Intermediate Service Centers. For more information or to register, visit [http://www.roeachievementconference.org](http://www.roeachievementconference.org).

### 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).

### In the News

#### Weekly News Clips