Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week, the Illinois State Board of Education, Attorney General and Governor’s offices kicked off the Youth Internet Safety contest. The contest is open to all students in grades first through 12th and it encourages students to help us spread the word to their peers about Internet safety.

Students are encouraged to create a poster, video, podcast or slideshow addressing Internet safety, and specifically cyberbullying. Many schools have taught online safety for years but starting with this school year, 2009-10, school districts are required to incorporate Internet safety at least once each school year in all grades from 3 through 12. The full text of the law can be found in the School Code, Section 27-13.3.

http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/iles/ilcs4.asp?DocName=010500050HArt%2E+27&ActID=1005&ChapAct=105%26nbsp%3BILCS%26nbsp%3B5%26nbsp%3B&ChapterID=17&ChapterName=SCHOOLS&SectionID=49363&SeqStart=148300000&SeqEnd=154800000&ActName=School+Code%2E

Each local school district can determine how to incorporate the lessons into curriculum but some recommended topics include safe and responsible use of social networking Web sites, chat rooms, bulletin boards and other means of communication on the Internet. It is also recommended that instruction includes information on recognizing, avoiding and reporting online solicitation by sexual predators, recognizing and reporting online harassment and cyberbullying, and knowing the risks of transmitting personal information on the Internet.

The agency has Internet safety resources and best practices for schools posted to its Web site and contest rules, terms and conditions, can be found online at the same page:

You may have noticed that we have changed the name of one of our divisions. The Federal Grants and Program Division is now Innovation and Improvement. This is being done to better reflect the responsibilities and expectations of this division. Innovation and Improvement doesn’t just administer grants; it also coordinates our school assistance initiatives through the Statewide System of Support. The division also has the primary responsibility for programs targeted to driving improvements in schools that are performing in the lowest five percent in the state. The US Department of Education is placing a new emphasis on school improvement, breaking the mold and using new ideas to increase student performance. This new name better reflects what is now being expected of this area.

Finally, Wednesday is Veterans Day. About 40 percent of our districts have the ability to hold class and provide instruction to students about the significance of the contributions made to our country by the men and women who served and continue to serve, and the sacrifices they and their families make on our behalf.
It’s important to remember our country is still at war. Even though we are safe at home, many of our soldiers are putting their lives on the line for us every day and some of our colleagues and students live each day wondering about the husband, wife, parent or child who may be in harm’s way. Whether or not your school is in session on Wednesday, please take a few moments to thank veterans on your staff for their service and also to let those colleagues or students who have loved ones serving our country know that we understand and appreciate their sacrifices.

Have a great week.

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- Illinois Arts Education Week Poster Contest deadline – Nov. 9
- Veterans Day – Nov. 11
- 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 the FY 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](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 jmathes@isbe.net or 217-782-5256.

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**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 to 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 was one training session Nov. 4 and another Webinar training sessions for the Assessment Network will be offered:

- 10 a.m.-11 a.m. Nov. 19

Information about registering for these Webinars can be found at 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.

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; 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.

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.

### Curriculum and Instruction

#### Congressional Medal of Honor Film

Public Act 096-0099, effective July 1, 2009, amends the School Code adding Section 27-3.5. This amendment requires all grade 7 students and all high school students enrolled in either a United States history or combination United States history and American government class to view the Congressional Medal of Honor film. The film, “Medal of Honor – In Their Own Words 2009,” is approximately 11 and one-half minutes in length. It is available in Real Media Player and Windows Media through the Curriculum & Instruction webpage. The video link is [http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/html/medal_of_honor.htm](http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/html/medal_of_honor.htm)

#### 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.

**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.

**Illinois School Breakfast Week/American Education Week- November 16-20**

This year marks the 20th Illinois School Breakfast Week (ISBW), November 16-20 originating in 1989. It is celebrated in conjunction with American Education Week. Take advantage of this great opportunity to educate students, your school community and faculty on the importance of eating breakfast and academic performance.

**Student Opportunities**

**Entries sought for John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Essay Contest**

High school students across the country have the opportunity to enter the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Essay Contest. Organized by the library’s foundation, the contest asks students to write about the political courage of a U.S. elected official who served since 1956.

Winning essayists will receive awards totaling up to $13,500, and the first-place winner will be invited to accept the award at the Profile in Courage Award Ceremony in May at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston. In addition, the nominating teacher of the first-place winner will receive a $500 grant.

For complete contest information and resources, visit http://www.jfklibrary.org. Under “Education & Public Programs,” click on “For Students” to find links to the essay contest. Resources include lesson plans for teachers and video footage for classroom use.

Students must register at the Web site and submit essays by Jan. 9.

**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](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.

**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).

**Early Literacy and Illinois Reading Recovery Conference Scheduled**

The 2010 Early Literacy and Illinois Reading Recovery Conference is set for Jan. 20-22 in January in Chicago.

Sponsored by the Illinois Reading Recovery Center and National-Louis University, the conference offers up to nine hours to eligible Illinois-certified administrators and teachers who are working on their certificate renewel.

For more information and registration, visit [http://www.nl.edu/rrconf/](http://www.nl.edu/rrconf/). For questions, contact Claudia Katz at ckatz@17755@aol.com or 847-236-1164. Early registration is under way until Nov. 15.

**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**