Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This week we celebrate Thanksgiving. I wish the best to you and yours and I hope you get at least a day or two away from the office.

As we prepare to celebrate, I would ask you to remember that our student demographics continue to evolve. Specifically, I would like for you to consider that this year 43 percent of our student population is considered low-income. This demographic has steadily increased over time, up nearly 10 points since the mid-1990s.

Teaching low-income students poses its own specific challenges, but I would encourage you to ask if your district is doing everything it can to help these students. If your schools are not taking full advantage of lunch and breakfast programs, please contact our nutrition division to see how to start or expand your efforts.

A child can’t learn if they’re hungry, and as we see our low-income numbers increase, the likelihood that you have a hungry child in your schools also increases. Our Nutrition Programs page is located at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/default.htm and you can also call 217-782-2491 or 800-545-7892.

I would also like to let you know that the Illinois State Board of Education will be working with Governor Quinn on a Holiday Cards for the Troops drive. Students throughout Illinois are being asked to create cards for our troops overseas.

We will be collecting the holiday cards that students create, and Gov. Quinn will deliver them to soldiers at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. Cards must be received at ISBE’s Chicago or Springfield office by Dec. 16, and we ask that you bundle cards from your schools or classes together. We ask that the cards be addressed to “Dear Hero” as they will be going to active duty service members, wounded soldiers, nurses, doctors, veterans and military support staff.

For more information on the Holiday Cards for the Troops, please visit http://www.standingupforillinois.org/homefront/holidaycards.php.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- FY 2010 NCLB Monitoring Instrument submission deadline -- Nov. 30
- ISAT Science and Math Item Presentation Pilot – Dec. 7-11
• 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.
• IAAE Service Recognition Awards nomination deadline – Jan. 4
• Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Spring 2010 – Jan. 8
• Immigrant Education Program Student Report deadline – Jan. 15
• 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

Innovation and Improvement

Improvement and Restructuring Plans
This is a general reminder about improvement and restructuring plans for 2009. The plan review process has begun for district and school plans.

District Improvement Plans: The deadline has passed for submitting district improvement plans for districts either “new” to academic status or those in status with expired improvement plans. If you have not already done so, please submit your district improvement plan with local board approval.

For a list of districts that should have submitted plans for 2009-11 by Nov. 16, visit http://www.isbe.net/board/archivemessages/2009/dip_log_112309.pdf.

School Improvement Plans: Also, remember that schools in academic status are also required to have a current, local approved improvement plan submitted via the Interactive Illinois Report Card.

Restructuring plans for schools in restructuring planning or academic watch 2 status are due six months following the initial notification of status. The 2009 Restructuring Webinar is available at http://www.isbe.net/sos/restructuring_webinar.ppt.


Final Note: Your initial notification of status at IWAS started the clock ticking for the submission of plans. The superintendent’s weekly newsletter in June reminded you to check for planning requirements. Failure to submit these plans will result in frozen Title I funds and/or recommendation for pending recognition.

Curriculum and Instruction

NextSteps Evolves Into the Illinois Data Portal
The Illinois Data Portal provides tools to help districts reach their technology integration and strategic planning goals. This portal has evolved from the 2001 NextSteps instruments that determined a student’s technology proficiency and the impact of technology on learning.

Most importantly, fifth grade and eighth grade technology proficiency tests were developed using released items (by permission) available from the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) test and district items from the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, and Tools for Real-Time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (TRAILS). The eighth grade technology proficiency test, available at no charge to districts, allows Illinois schools to easily meet the Title II-D requirements of assessing the technology literacy level of all eighth-grade students. All tools in the portal are aligned with the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS).

In addition, the Portal offers several School Reform Tools that are based on Washington State’s School Improvement Process (with permission) built on the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools.

Reports are available for all tests and surveys as raw data in pdf, rtf, .doc, and .csv formats, in a user-selected custom report or preformatted templates aligned with Illinois Technology Integration Plan requirements. There are currently five pre-formatted reports.
1. Implementation Effectiveness/Teaching and Learning
2. Student Technology Proficiency
3. Policy and Resource Infrastructure
4. Educator Qualifications
5. Parent and Community Involvement

Data from tests and surveys are available within 30 minutes of the completion of the data collection. Items are aggregated across instruments and graphically displayed with labels that indicated strength/weaknesses based on the Grappling with Accountability rubric rating scale: Not in Place, Developing, Emerging, and Optimal.

For additional information, please contact your district Learning Technology Center (http://www.ltcillinois.net/index.htm).

**Nominations Sought for Arts Education Awards**

Nominations for the 2010 IAAE Service Recognition Awards are available. This is a wonderful opportunity to recognize individuals and groups who have contributed to arts education in Illinois. Individual arts educators can be nominated, as well as individuals and organizations in the areas of public and community service, industry and business and more.

Deadline for nominations is Jan. 4. Visit http://www.isbe.state.il.us/curriculum/default.htm for more information.

**Legal**

**Clarification on the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act**

We have been contacted by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) regarding a concern that student teachers have not been considered by school officials as mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect pursuant to the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA).

DCFS has raised a concern that student teachers may not believe they are mandated reporters. ANCRA requires all “school personnel,” including administrators and both certified and non-certified school employees, to be mandated reporters. Student teachers are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect when acting in their professional or official capacity. Student teachers are required to fill out the appropriate Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form, which is available on the DCFS Web site, http://www.state.il.us/ddfs/index.shtml.

**Assessment**

**ISAT Science and Math Item Presentation Pilot Coming Up**

In December, there will be a special pilot looking at the impact of different presentation accommodations on ISAT science and math item performance. Schools selected for participation will be receiving notification within the next week.

Students in grades 3 and 5 will be taking one (approximately 55 minute) math session. Students in grade 8 will be taking both a math and science session. Materials should arrive during the week of Nov. 30. In the notification letters, the groups of students who should be assessed will be identified. Participation of students with disabilities and students identified as limited English proficient, as specified in the letters, is critical.

The window for the administration is Dec. 7 through Dec. 11. Additional information regarding administration will be provided in the notification letters and with the assessment materials.

Your full cooperation and support of this effort is appreciated and will allow us to continue and to expand the accommodations made available with ISAT. If you have questions regarding the pilot, please contact Student Assessment at 217-782.4823.

**English Language Learning**

**Immigrant Education Program Student Report Due Jan. 15**

Illinois school districts are reminded to complete and submit the Immigrant Education Program Student Report by Jan. 15.

Authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110), local school districts are asked to identify immigrant students enrolled in both public and nonpublic schools within their attendance boundaries. The immigrant student count submitted in this report will be used to determine FY11 Immigrant Education Program funding eligibility.

To access the memo, report form, directions for submitting the report and other critical details, see
For additional information regarding this program, contact Gerardo Cepeda at 312-814-5583 or gcepeda@isbe.net.

### Special Education and Support Services

#### Early Intervention to Early Childhood Tracking Forms Change

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Special Education Division is continuing to receive Early Intervention to Early Childhood Tracking Forms despite clarifications and updates that this step is no longer needed. We have also been notified by the Illinois House of Representatives Office that they, too, have been inadvertently receiving faxes of Early Intervention to Early Childhood Tracking Forms. Please be advised that as of Aug. 1, 2008:

- Districts are no longer required to fax these Tracking Forms to ISBE.
- These data are to be reported to ISBE through the Student Information System (SIS).
- Districts are, however, still required to submit the tracking form to the Child and Family Connections (CFC) office.

The updated tracking form can be found at [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/docs/EIEC_tracking.doc](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/docs/EIEC_tracking.doc). If you have any questions, please contact the Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835.

### Rules and Waivers

#### Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that several sets of amendments recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education are in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s Web site at [http://www.isbe.net/rules](http://www.isbe.net/rules). Please choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to Part number.

- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision)**
  - Amends various sections of these rules addressing accountability, equal opportunities, curricular mandates, support services and personnel.
  - **Affected Sections:** 1.20, 1.30, 1.88, 1.100, 1.240, 1.420, 1.450, 1.465, 1.480, 1.510, 1.530, 1.630, 1.720, 1.737, 1.770, 1.Appendix A
  - **Effective Date:** Oct. 20, 2009

- **Part 65 (New Teacher Induction and Mentoring)**
  - Eliminates the focus of the program as a pilot program; makes changes in program requirements addressing certificates, mentor-teacher contact hours and mentor stipends.
  - **Affected Sections:** 65.20, 65.130, 65.140, 65.160
  - **Effective Date:** Oct. 20, 2009

- **Part 180 (Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools)**
  - Incorporates by reference the newest editions of the International Building Code and its sub-codes as the requirements for school construction in Illinois, effective on or after January 1, 2010. Also, makes a technical correction to eliminate an outdated reference to the Fall Enrollment and Housing Report.
  - **Affected Sections:** 180.60, 180.540
  - **Effective Date:** Oct. 20, 2009

- **Part 252 (Driver Education)**
  - Makes allowances for a school district’s contracting of behind-the-wheel instruction when adaptive driver’s education is required; aligns teacher qualifications with requirements in Part 25 (Certification) and Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision).
  - **Affected Sections:** 252.20, 252.30, 252.40
  - **Effective Date:** Oct. 20, 2009

- **Part 401 (Special Education Facilities Under Section 14-7.02 of the School Code)**
  - Makes two technical corrections.
  - **Affected Section:** 401.270
  - **Effective Date:** Oct. 20, 2009

- **Part 675 (Providers of Supplemental Educational Services)**
  - Eliminates the requirement that providers have experience serving youth in the same community where supplemental educational services will be offered. Also aligns two places within Appendix B (Evaluation Rubric) with a change made as part of a previous rulemaking.
  - **Affected Section:** 675.50, 675.APPENDIX B
  - **Effective Date:** Oct. 20, 2009
**Nutrition**

**National School Lunch Program Verification Summary Report Deadline**

Verification is the confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). Annually, each local educational agency (LEA) participating in the NSLP and/or SBP must select and verify a sample of household applications approved for benefits. The LEA must submit a Verification Summary Report (VSR) summarizing the results of verification efforts. The VSR must be submitted electronically through IWAS, to the Illinois State Board of Education by Dec. 15.

Instructions on accessing and completing the VSR are available at [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/vsr.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/vsr.htm). Basic information regarding the verification process can be found at [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/verification_process.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/verification_process.pdf).

**School Opportunities**

**Nominations Sought for Annual National School Change Awards**

Applications are available for the National Principals Leadership Institute’s National School Change Awards. The annual awards, co-sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators, go to six schools across the country that have “significantly changed.” Schools are asked to measure themselves against criteria and consider the degree to which they have improved and grown. Schools may nominate themselves. Winners will receive a $5,000 grant and will be honored with a ceremony at their individual schools. An awards presentation by the U.S. Department of Education in July will also recognize the winners.

The deadline is March 4 for nominations. For more information and applications, visit [http://npli.org/nsca](http://npli.org/nsca).

**Professional Development**

**Teaching the Science and History of Global Warming Workshop Set**

A workshop on teaching the science and history of global warming is scheduled for Feb 20 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The workshop is organized by the school’s Department of History and the Center for Global Studies, and is designed for K-12 science and social sciences educators.

Presentations by U of I professors include “Confronting Human-Driven Global Climate Change” by Donald Wuebbles and “Is It Getting Hot in Here? The History of Global Warming” by Lillian Hoddeson.

The registration form is available at [https://illinois.edu/fb/sec/4418041](https://illinois.edu/fb/sec/4418041). Participants are asked to arrive before 9 a.m. to register to receive CPDUs. The conference is set for 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the College of Education Building, Room 2, 1310 S. Sixth St., in Champaign.

For more information, contact Karen Hewitt of the Center for Global Studies at 217-244-0288 or khewitt@illinois.edu.

**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**