Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Members of the legislature are coming back to Springfield this week after a two week spring break. Budget discussions will be the focus of the legislature over the next several weeks, both developing a new budget for FY 2011 and also in dealing with shortfalls that are plaguing FY 2010.

Employees of the Illinois State Board of Education continue to send vouchers to the Comptroller’s Office in a timely manner, however, the backlog of unpaid bills continues to grow. We have sent over the third quarter Mandated Categorical payments and the current backlog of bills for education stands at nearly 25-thousand unpaid vouchers totaling nearly $1.25 billion.

While lawmakers here in Illinois continue to work on developing a budget for FY 2011 we are working to ensure our federal lawmakers understand the needs here in Illinois. We are working with the state’s Congressional delegation and national organizations to stress the need for additional federal dollars.

It is possible that we could see an extension of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund or some other jobs bill that would include an education component. We have provided information on potential jobs lost, the backlog of bills owed to schools and other financial information. I believe this is still somewhat of a long shot but wanted you to be aware of the possibility.

Additionally, it is becoming more and more likely that the Congress will act upon the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act this year. The Obama administration has presented their starting points for reauthorization at http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/publicationtoc.html.

There are any numbers of groups that have posted their own priorities for reform. I am the co-chair of the Council of Chief State School Officers Reauthorization Task Force and our guidance for reform can be found at http://www.ecsso.org/content/pdfs/ESEA%20Task%20Force%20Policy%20Statement%200310.pdf. The principles for reform include:

1. Promote College and Career Readiness
2. Maintain Focus on Equity and Core Investments
3. Ensure Meaningful Accountability
4. Encourage Innovation in State Policy
5. Ensure Coherence and Reduce Burden in and across Federal Law
6. Build Capacity to Support Comprehensive State Policy Reforms
7. Increase and Improve Investments in Research and the Dissemination of Knowledge

I value your input and am curious to see what specific ideas you may have for ESEA reauthorization. While I am hopeful that we will see ESEA reauthorized this year, I know that this will be a lengthy project. I want to offer you an opportunity to send your suggestions to me and if possible we can work them into our recommendations as the process continues. You can e-mail ideas for reauthorization at esea@isbe.net.
Finally, this week is the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s “Week of the Young Child.” As we celebrate our states’ youngest students I would like to recognize the 25th anniversary of Illinois’ Prekindergarten Program for Children at Risk of Academic Failure. Research tells us that as a result of participating in the program, these children are more likely to experience success in school and grow into productive citizens. Since it began, our at-risk prekindergarten program has provided 800,000 at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds a better chance at succeeding in schools.

Have a great week!

Chris

### Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) RFP deadline** – April 14
- **Gifted Advisory Council meeting** – (10 a.m. in the Board Conference Room) April 21
- **Title I Status Survey deadline** – May 3
- **Illinois School Wellness From A to Z Conference** – May 4
- **School Safety Conference in Schiller Park** – May 5 (Registration deadline May 1)
- **Investing in Innovation Fund grant deadline** – May 11
- **Illinois Young Authors’ Conference in Bloomington-Normal** – May 15
- **Part 24 (Standards for All Illinois Teachers) and new Part 210 (Illinois Hope and Opportunity Pathways through Education Program)** – Public comment period ends May 24
- **FY 2011 Regional Safe Schools Program application deadline** – May 24
- **2009-10 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30
- **2010 Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report deadline** – July 30
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2010** – Aug. 13
- **2009-10 Teacher Service Record spring data collection period deadline** – Aug. 15

### ISBE

**Blue Ribbon Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education Mandates**

House Joint Resolution 74, which was approved by the House and is expected to be adopted by the Senate, establishes the Blue Ribbon Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education Mandates. Here is a link to the resolution:


The Committee is scheduled to meet for the first time at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, April 13, at ISBE’s Springfield office. This meeting is open to the public.

In preparation, several documents have been sent to the members and also made available online at [http://www.isbe.net/blue_ribbon/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/blue_ribbon/default.htm). The documents include: an Excel database that contains the 119 submissions the State Board has received with suggestions of mandates that can be eliminated or modified; another database that summarizes the comments by topic and includes the name and size of the district represented by the individual making the submission; and a narrative summary of the suggestions received.

The Committee is being asked to make recommendations to the General Assembly on the elimination of unnecessary and costly mandates in the School Code and the Administrative Code by May 1, 2010.

### 2010 Board Meeting Schedule Revised

The Illinois State Board of Education has announced changes to its meetings schedule for 2010.

All State Board of Education meetings listed on this agenda will be accessible to persons with disabilities. Persons planning to attend who need special accommodations should contact the Board office no later than the day prior to the meeting. Contact the Superintendent's office at the State Board of Education,
Phone: 217-782-2221; TTY/TDD: 217-782-1900; Fax: 217-785-3972.

Staff presentations and detailed Board discussion typically take place during committee meetings prior to the State Board taking action in the plenary session. Note that some committee meetings will begin at the conclusion of the previous meeting. The State Board of Education plenary session is always the morning of the second day of meetings.

State Board meetings held in Springfield are located in the 4th Floor Board Room at 100 N. First St. Please check the ISBE Web site (http://www.isbe.net/calendar) for final meeting postings. Here is a list of the remaining meetings for this year:

- April, no meeting scheduled
- May 19-20, Springfield
- June 23-24, Springfield
- July, no meeting scheduled
- Aug. 11-13, Board retreat in Bloomington
- Sept. 22-23, Springfield
- Oct. 27-28, Springfield
- Nov. 18, TBA
- Dec. 15-16, Springfield

No Child Left Behind

Strengthening No Child Left Behind: Early Notification to Parents Regarding Public School Choice

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

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

- Notify parents of eligible children of the availability of SES in a clear and concise communication that obviously distinguishes SES from other school-related information the parents receive.

School districts with Title I schools in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that can not exit status this year can implement Early Notification. Doing so will insure that school districts meet the 14-day notification requirement.

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

Assessment

PSAE Testing Dates for Spring 2011

PSAE testing dates have been established and are posted at http://www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm. Please note that for 2011, testing will still occur on Wednesday and Thursday. The projected move to a Tuesday/Wednesday schedule will not occur until 2012.

2011 PSAE Dates

- Initial Standard-Time Testing: Wednesday, April 27 and Thursday, April 28, 2011
- Accommodations Testing Window: Wednesday, April 27 until Thursday, May 12, 2011

Innovation and Improvement

Applications for Regional Safe Schools Program Available; Deadline May 24

The Illinois State Board of Education has released the application for FY 2011 Regional Safe Schools Program (RSSP), which offers alternative education to expulsion eligible or multiple suspended students in grades 6-12.

Eligible applicants are identified in Article 13A of the School Code. They are Regional Offices of Education, Intermediate Service Centers and Chicago Public Schools. The application can be found at http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/regional_safe_schools.htm.

The deadline for submission to ISBE is May 24, 2010. For more information, contact Sally Veach, Innovation
and Improvement division at sveach@isbe.net or 217-524-4832.

**Gifted Advisory Council Meeting Slated**

The Gifted Advisory Council will meet from 10 a.m. to noon April 21, 2010. The meeting will be held in the Board Conference Room. The agenda for the meeting can be found at [http://www.isbe.net/grants/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/grants/default.htm) under statewide gifted activities.

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**Special Education Services**

**Upcoming FACTS Race and Ethnicity Reporting Changes: 2010-11 School Year**

The U.S. Department of Education has issued new guidance on the collection and reporting of race and ethnicity data for public school students and staff. The federal government developed the new standards in order to provide a more accurate picture of the nation’s racial and ethnic diversity. The new data collection process will require individuals to indicate whether they are Hispanic and also one or more race(s). The new data reporting process will require districts to include individuals in one of seven mutually exclusive reporting categories based on their responses. The Illinois State Board of Education will implement the new standards starting with data to be reported for the 2010-11 school year. The changes will affect all programs that collect and report race and ethnicity data.

ISBE is working with Harrisburg Project to implement the new race and ethnicity standards for the 2010-11 school year in FACTS. Clients will receive warnings if the new race/ethnicity reporting categories are not used in the October 2010 FACTS transmission. However these warnings will not prohibit transmission. FACTS records that do not use the new race/ethnicity reporting categories in the December 2010 transmission will result in errors, prohibiting successful data submission.

In order to provide additional time to transition to the new federal reporting requirements, Harrisburg Project is updating the current version of iePoint>2010 to allow clients to begin reporting the new race/ethnicity codes in Data2011 after Start New Year has been performed. This update will be available in mid-April.

Your attention to detail throughout this transition is critical since race/ethnicity data are used in many of the data analysis, reporting and progress monitoring requirements of IDEA 2004. To this end, individuals reporting race/ethnicity data to FACTS need to keep in mind the following principles:

- Race/ethnicity reporting in FACTS and SIS must be based upon responses to a required two-part question, as defined in the new federal guidance.
  - Districts are required to collect race/ethnicity data using the two-part question, and parents must provide these responses for elementary and secondary school students.
  - Districts must use the data collected from a student’s parent(s) to in turn report the student’s race/ethnicity to ISBE through SIS and FACTS in one of the seven mutually exclusive race/ethnicity reporting categories.
  - Further information regarding each district’s responsibility regarding race/ethnicity data collection vs. reporting can be found in the resources available at [http://www.isbe.net/research/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/research/default.htm).

- Clients reporting race/ethnicity data in FACTS need to ensure consistency in reporting between the FACTS and SIS systems.
  - Districts and cooperatives should utilize the SIS “Student Demographics” report to ensure consistent reporting between systems.
  - To assist in the transition to the new race/ethnicity data standards, Harrisburg Project and ISBE will make an optional FACTS/SIS matching process available to clients, which will match FACTS student records to SIS student records and update the race/ethnicity data in iePoint>2011, as appropriate. This optional matching process will be available after the new race/ethnicity categories are reported in SIS for the 2010-11 school year (Oct. 15, 2010, is the deadline by which districts must enroll in SIS all students enrolled the district as of the last school day in September). Clients choosing to take advantage of this matching process will have an opportunity to review the matched records to ensure the validity and reliability of these matches prior to
the December 2010 FACTS transmission.

- While the match between the FACTS and SIS systems is not fully congruent at this time, ISBE continues to work on the full integration of these systems and appreciates the effort made by districts and cooperatives to ensure consistent reporting.

**Social Emotional Learning Survey**

The Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership are seeking information from as many educators as possible to assist in guiding state and local efforts to support Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programming by conducting a survey.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. We ask that you provide the Survey Monkey link to your district teachers and staff so that those interested in completing the survey may do so. The survey will be available from April 12, 2010, through May 14, 2010, at [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NW8BBRB](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NW8BBRB).

If you have any questions regarding the content of the survey, please contact Michele Carmichael in the Special Education Services division at mcarmich@isbe.net or via phone at 217-782-5589.

Thank you in advance for participating in this survey.

**Nutrition**

**Illinois School Wellness From A to Z Conference Coming Up**

The third annual Illinois School Wellness From A to Z Conference at the Decatur Conference Center is just around the corner. Attend the conference on May 4 to learn about the latest school wellness strategies and resources.

Register by April 19 to take advantage of the early bird rate of $35 for adults and $25 for students. Go to [http://www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org), click on the “In Your State” tab and select Illinois to find more information about the conference.

The conference is geared for wellness team planners, administrators, educators, school food service staff, nurses and student advocates. The registration fee includes meals, conference materials, opportunity to visit the exhibits and expert presentations.

The conference is presented jointly by the Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Action for Healthy Kids Team to fulfill Public Act 094-0190, House Bill 1541 School Health Recognition Program.

**School Food Service Equipment Grant Application Now Available**

The secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded a one-time appropriation to Illinois of $902,953 for equipment assistance to eligible school food authorities (SFA).

Funds will be distributed via a competitive grant to SFAs who participate in the National School Lunch Program and did not receive an FY09 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Equipment Grant. An SFA is ineligible to apply if even one of its sites received ARRA equipment funding. Sites for which funds are sought must have at least 50 percent of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Minimum awards of $500 will be made starting May 7, 2010, and funds must be expended by Aug. 31, 2010.

To apply, go to [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/) and under What’s New, click on FY10 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant Application. For questions, contact the Nutrition Programs Division at 800-545-7892.

**Curriculum and Instruction**

**High School Students Invited to Join ISBE Advisory Council**

The Illinois State Board of Education is accepting applications for the Student Advisory Council for the 2010-11 school year. There are eight openings on the 15-member council. Any Illinois public school student who will be a sophomore, junior or senior is eligible to apply.

The Student Advisory Council was created in 1975 to bring student concerns to the attention of ISBE. Each year, the Student Advisory Council presents research and makes policy recommendations to the board. Council members attend board meetings and sessions of the General Assembly. Through this experience, students will gain an understanding of the educational issues facing Illinois schools.

An application is available online at [http://www.isbe.net/SAC/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/SAC/default.htm). It must be returned...
to the State Board of Education by 4 p.m. Friday, May 14, 2010. The mailing address is: Illinois State Board of Education, Curriculum and Instruction, 100 N. First St, C-215, Springfield, IL 62777.

Activities of the Student Advisory Council in 2010-11 are contingent upon final state budget allocation. For more information, please contact the division of Curriculum and Instruction at 217-557-7323.

**Educator and School Development**

**School Safety Conference Set for May 5**

The Illinois State Board of Education, the Archdiocese of Chicago Office of Catholic Schools, RETA Security, the Illinois Terrorism Task Force and East Aurora School District invite you to heighten your safety awareness by attending a gathering of experts in the field of school safety and crisis prevention. At no cost to you, you can learn how to enhance the safety and security of your school facility on a day-to-day basis and long term. This vital information will be practical and easy to apply, and there will be ample time for you to ask questions.

The conference will be held May 5, 2010, at Victoria Beau Jolie in Schiller Park. The registration deadline is May 1. For more information, including registration information, please see the following link: [http://isbe.net/esd/pdf/safety_conf_flyer_may2010.pdf](http://isbe.net/esd/pdf/safety_conf_flyer_may2010.pdf).

**Data Analysis and Progress Reporting**

**Title I Status Survey on IWAS**

The Title I Status Survey is now available on IWAS. The purpose of this survey is to identify Title I schools for 2009-10 AYP computations and school report cards. The deadline to complete this survey is May 3, 2010.

If you have any questions, please call Richard Yong in the Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at 217-782-3950.

**Professional Development**

**Educators Invited to Financial Fitness for Life Rollout Conference on April 19**

The University of Illinois Center for Economic and Financial Education will hold the Financial Fitness for Life Rollout Conference on April 19. The event is set from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the McLean County Extension Office in Bloomington.

The conference is aimed for K-12 teachers specializing in economics, business, math, consumer economics, consumer and family sciences, social studies, history and reading; and counselors and educators specializing in career and life skills. The event features free training materials professional development credits and lunch and refreshments.

Registration deadline is April 14. The fee is $25, which is refundable if you attend the entire day of the conference. For more information, call 217-244-2612 or visit [http://www.cefc.illinois.edu/calendar/event_04_19_10.html](http://www.cefc.illinois.edu/calendar/event_04_19_10.html).

**Best Practices Day at Conference on Biotechnology Education Coming Up**

The Biotechnology Institute’s annual Best Practices Day at the Conference on Biotechnology Education is set for May 2 at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

Educators at middle schools and high schools who are actively engaged in teaching students life science and biotechnology are eligible. Registration cost is $25.

The program highlights exemplary biotechnology education curriculum, labs and programs. It will include panels on leading issues in biotechnology presented by renowned scientists.

For more information and to register, visit [http://www.biotechinstitute.org/programs/bestpractices.html](http://www.biotechinstitute.org/programs/bestpractices.html) or call Rowena Douglas at 703-248-8681 or e-mail rdouglas@biotechinstitute.org.

**Classroom Opportunities**

**Take a Virtual Tour to Bryce Canyon National Park**

The National Park Service and the National Park Foundation are planning an electronic field trip to Bryce Canyon National Park. The program couples a live one-hour broadcast from the park along with a Web site for teachers and students.

Two “trips” to Bryce Canyon in Utah are scheduled for 9-10 a.m. and noon to 1 p.m., Tuesday, May 18. The Web site, which includes lesson plans for teachers and
interactive challenges for students, will go live in mid-
April.

For more information or to register, visit
http://www.brycecanyoneft.org. For questions, contact
Carolyn Hill at chill@nationalparks.org.

Student Opportunities

Latino Art Beat Offers Competition for High School Juniors and Seniors

Latino Art Beat, a national not-for profit arts organization, has announced its 13th annual art competition will be themed “What Hispanic Heritage & Culture Means to Me?” The competition is available to all high school juniors and seniors currently enrolled in an Illinois high school.

Competition entries will include drawing, painting, film and animation. Students can submit artwork entries in all media. In the categories of drawing or painting, such entries must be either mounted or matted on white or black board. All canvas entries must be stretched and mounted to a wood stretcher. Film entries must reflect the student’s Hispanic heritage and be a VHS or DVD of 5 minutes or less total running time.

Scholarship awards will be given to select winners of the 2010 competition. To date, Latino Art Beat has awarded more than $3 million in scholarships to students on a national basis. The Illinois deadline for entries is Friday, May 28, 2010.

For full competition information, applications and the 2010 Rules & Guidelines booklet please e-mail your request to: latinoartbeat@hotmail.com or telephone 773-291-6901.

Organization Offers Free Camps for Military Children

Military children ages 15-17 years old are eligible for the National Military Family Association’s Operation Purple Leadership Camps.

The camps include a commitment to complete a community service project that teens will be required to document progress on throughout the year.

The camps are free to selected participants with travel expenses up to $500 reimbursed. They are planned in five different locations across the country. For more information, eligibility requirements and to apply, visit http://www.militaryfamily.org/leadership or call 703-931-6632.

Poster Contest for High School Students Offers Chance to Win Scholarship

The deadline for the Human Trafficking Awareness Poster Contest for Illinois high school students has been extended to April 16. The winner of the Department of Human Services and Illinois Rescue and Restore contest will receive a $1,000 scholarship.

Contestants are asked to design a poster that creatively portrays a message about the injustice of human trafficking. Students will design a poster on poster board no larger than 22”x14” using appropriate images, drawings, pictures and/or symbols. Text should not be included in the design.

Visit http://www.dhs.state.il.us/rescueandrestore for more information regarding the poster contest, including poster criteria, evaluation categories, mailing information, and details regarding the winning posters. Contact Rachael Burke at rachael.burke@illinois.gov or 312-793-7342 with any questions regarding the Illinois Rescue and Restore Outreach Day Poster Contest.

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