Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

During the last several days, I attended the Council for Chief State School Officer’s meeting which, for the first time in history, was held with our state higher education counterparts from around the country. We are blessed in Illinois to have a strong partnership with our counterparts at the Boards of Higher Education and Community Colleges as well as our public and private institutions. This partnership is essential as we work together to ensure our teachers and administrators are prepared for the jobs before them. We are working together towards a goal of accountability, transparency and continuous improvement.

Our plan to connect student performance to teacher and administrator evaluation will not succeed without a strong support system to help individuals across a continuum of ability. We need teachers and administrators who reflect on their work, understand project-based learning and how to use data to improve instruction and who also work collaboratively, rather than in isolation. We all need to realize environments of continuous improvement, especially during difficult financial times. Across the country, teachers in schools are demonstrating an ability to turn around low performance. We are also doing so in Illinois, though we have much more work to do.

It was also of interest to find, at least a few states, which have taken seriously the responsibility to balance state budgets and are emerging from the recession. North Carolina and Virginia are two such examples. Virginia emerged from several years of deficits to realize a surplus for the first time in many years. They also took stabilization dollars, but put other measures in place so their citizens continue to receive critical state services and funds. As we watch our state education budget continue to founder, we are robbing our students, teachers and administrators of absolutely critical support. It is simply an injustice.

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- Maintenance of Effort (MOE) and IDEA Webinar – July 22
- Special Education Directors’ Conference in Peoria – July 28-30
- 2010 Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report deadline – July 30
- Amendments for grants with a Project End Date of Aug. 31, 2010 – Aug. 1
- Illinois Summer Reading Conference in Tinley Park – Aug. 10-13
- 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
- Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 22 (Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators) and Part 226 (Special Education) – Public comment period ends Aug. 23
- Physical education exemption report deadline – Aug. 30
- Illinois ASPIRE Middle School/High School RtI Summit in Collinsville – Sept. 27, 28
**Illinois ASPIRE Middle School/High School RtI Summit in East Peoria** – Sept. 28, 29
**Illinois ASPIRE Middle School/High School RtI Summit in Naperville** – Sept. 29, 30

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**Special Education Services**

**Educational Environment Code Changes for Early Childhood Special Education**

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has changed data reporting for preschool educational environments, beginning with the 2010-11 school year. ISBE is working with Harrisburg Project to implement the Early Childhood Educational Environment codes for the 2010-11 school year in FACTS. These new codes will be available to clients in iePoint>2011, scheduled to be released in fall 2010. Clients will receive warnings if the new categories are not used in the October 2010 FACTS transmission, however these warnings will not prohibit transmission. FACTS records for Early Childhood students that do not use the new categories in the December 2010 transmission will result in errors, prohibiting successful data submission.

In order to assist school districts/special education cooperatives in transitioning to the new reporting categories, ISBE and Harrisburg Project have gathered several resources, which are available at [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/ec_spaced_lre.htm](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/ec_spaced_lre.htm).

These resources include:

- A revised document describing the new reporting requirements
- A worksheet for determining the correct EC Educational Environment Codes
- A PowerPoint presentation
- A document describing scenarios
- A training video for the new EC Educational Environment Codes

School district/cooperative administrators, case managers and other staff who have responsibility for FACTS reporting should review the training and resources at this website. Please direct any policy questions to ISBE via ecce@isbe.net. This dedicated e-mail address has been established to ensure your questions receive appropriate attention and response. Questions regarding changes in iePoint> can be directed to Harrisburg Project at 800-635-5274 or support@hbug.k12.il.us.

**Maintenance of Effort and IDEA Webinar Scheduled for July 22**

Registration is under way for the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) and IDEA Webinar, which is set for 2-3 p.m. Thursday, July 22, 2010. Space is limited. Reserve a seat at [https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/136080936](https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/136080936).

In this webinar, presenters will discuss the newly revised process for determining compliance with federal MOE requirements. The presentation will include details regarding the revised MOE worksheets, ISBE calculation, relation to the Annual Financial Report (AFR) and the completion of the MOE page in the FY11 IDEA Part B application. Related issues will also be discussed and time will be allotted for questions and answers.

After registering, participants will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the Webinar.

System requirements for PC-bases attendees: Windows 7, Vista, XP, 2003 Server or 2000 required. For Macintosh-based attendees: Mac OS X 10.4.11 (Tiger) or newer required.

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**School Support for All Schools**

**Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program Announcement for Superintendents**

Per PA 94-1039, school districts are charged with the responsibility of ensuring each first year principal in Illinois is mentored by a qualified, highly-trained mentor. To guarantee new principals receive the mentoring needed, school districts may contract for mentoring services with an ISBE certified Mentoring Provider best suited to meet their needs.

A complete listing of certified Mentoring Providers approved to offer mentoring services as well as information about the INPM Program can be found at [http://www.ilprincipalmentoring.org](http://www.ilprincipalmentoring.org). Please note that mentoring is for those who will be in their first year as a building principal, not for experienced principals new to your district.

Also, please e-mail the name(s) of any first year principal(s) new to the profession you have hired to Lynne Woodrum at lynne@ilprincipals.org by July 30, 2010. Thank you for your leadership and assistance to ensure that new principals receive the support they need to be successful in their first year and beyond.
Sign Up for Charter Starter Webinar From the Illinois Network of Charter Schools


This interactive webinar will provide the information you need to begin planning a high-performing charter public school in an Illinois community.

- Understand the process and requirements for charter school start-up in Illinois.
- Gain a roadmap for designing an excellent school.
- Learn about common stumbling blocks and how to overcome them.
- Get answers to your pressing questions.

This session is designed to complement Paving a New Path: A Guidebook for Illinois Charter Public School Development. Filled with examples, best practices and practical advice, Paving a New Path is an essential guide for every step of the charter development process. Visit the Web site above to download a free PDF version or order a hard copy in conjunction with webinar registration.

Questions? Contact Anne Levy Brown at alevybrown@incschools.org or 312-235-0798, ext. 18.

Assessment

Budget Crisis Forces Suspension of ISAT Writing Assessment for 2010-11

Due to the historic budget crisis facing Illinois, the State Board of Education decided at June’s meeting to not administer the ISAT writing assessment for grades 3, 5, 6 and 8 during the 2010-11 school year. The ISAT writing assessments are not part of the No Child Left Behind federal mandate, and Illinois receives no federal dollars to support the writing assessment.

A writing assessment will still be a component of the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) given to 11th-graders in Illinois. Many universities require the writing test for admission.

The writing assessments for grades 3, 5, 6 and 8 will be re-evaluated for the 2011-12 school year, with hopes budget levels will return to fund vital education programs.

Rules and Waivers

Friday, Aug. 13, Deadline for Fall 2010 Waiver Report

The fall deadline for submission of waiver requests to the Illinois General Assembly is Oct. 1, 2010. In order to meet that deadline, applications for waivers of School Code mandates to be considered by the General Assembly during the Fall 2010 session must be sent to the State Board postmarked by Friday, Aug. 13, 2010.

Note: Requests to modify the School Code, or to waive or modify rules of the State Board of Education, are not subject to this deadline. Such applications are reviewed for approval or disapproval by the State Board of Education. Moreover, in the majority of cases holiday modifications are no longer required, nor are most waiver requests for parent-teacher conferences. Please call up the link below for more details.

For detailed information on the waiver process, please go to http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm or call Winnie Tuthill at 217-782-5270.

Educator and School Development

Physical Education Exemption Report Deadline Coming Up

105 ILCS 5/2-3.97 of the School Code requires the State Board of Education to submit a physical education exemption report to the Illinois General Assembly and Governor on or before Jan. 30 of every odd-numbered year for the immediately preceding school year ending on June 30. This report is to include the general nature and manner of operation of the individual physical education exemptions granted by each local board of education for public school students as stated in 105 ILCS 5/27-6. These allowable exemptions include:

- Ongoing participation in an interscholastic athletic program (grades 11 and 12);
- enrollment in academic classes that are required for admission to an institution of higher learning, provided that failure to take such classes will result in the pupil being denied admission to the institution of his or her choice (grades 11 and 12);
• enrollment in academic classes that are required for graduation from high school, provided that failure to take such classes will result in the pupil being unable to graduate (grades 11 and 12);
• enrollment in an ongoing marching band program for credit (grades 9-12);
• enrollment in a Reserve Officer’s Training Corps (ROTC) Program sponsored by the school district (grades 9-12); and
• utilization of the time set aside for physical education for special education support and services if the student’s parent or guardian agrees this is needed (grades 3-12).

The form is now available via IWAS for your use in documenting this information for the school year that ended June 30, 2010.

If you have questions regarding this report, please contact Patrick Murphy in the Educator and School Division at 217-782-2948 or by e-mail at pmurphy@isbe.net. The deadline to complete the form is Aug. 31, 2010.

Nutrition

Electronic Direct Certification System Now Available for 2010-11 School Year

The Electronic Direct Certification System is available for school year 2010-11. All schools participating in the National School Lunch Program must access this system. Once enrolled, students are located in the Electronic Direct Certification System, households must be notified. Schools may use the Direct Certification Sample Letter (ISBE 69-15) available in both pdf or Microsoft Word on the website listed below. Households that have been notified of free meal benefits due to direct certification are not required to be provided a Household Eligibility Application (HEA). Completing the required direct certification of students before the distribution of HEA will help to minimize duplicate applications from households already approved for free meal benefits.

All public schools should access their annual file as soon as possible. All LEAs (public and non public) participating in the School-Based Child Nutrition Programs can complete sponsor upload files or single child lookups at this time.

Further guidance on the direct certification system, including a recorded webinar, guidance document and sample forms for school year 2010-11, including the Direct Certification Sample Letter (ISBE 69-15), are available at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/dcs.htm.

The Certification and Verification workshops (July 2010) and Basic Training workshops (September and October 2010) will provide training on the electronic direct certification system. To register, visit http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnschedule/asp/EventList.asp.

If you have any questions regarding the direct certification process or the direct certification system, contact the Illinois State Board of Education, Nutrition Programs Division at (800) 545-7892 in Illinois or (217) 782-2491. Staff can also be reached via electronic mail at cnp@isbe.net.

HealthierUS School Challenge Applications Available Online

Consider taking the HealthierUS School Challenge this school year. With recent modifications to the criteria, more schools are realizing they meet the nutrition and physical activity requirements that make them eligible for the monetary incentives, which are: $2,000 for the Gold of Distinction level, $1,500 for the Gold level, $1,000 for the Silver level and $500 for Bronze recipients.


Kudos to Illinois’ two Silver level HealthierUS School Challenge recipients: Ridgeview Elementary School from Ridgeview Community Unit School District 19, and Bushnell-Prairie City Elementary School from Bushnell-Prairie City Community Unit School District 170.

Department of Central Management Services

Mandatory Software Update Announced for Automated External Defibrillators

On June 21, the Illinois Department of Central Management Services made a blanket notice to all State of Illinois Joint Purchasing registrants of a voluntary recall notice related to automated external defibrillators (AEDs) available through the State of Illinois’ contracts with Cardiac Science. The involved contract numbers are 4013248 and 4015895.
Within the last few days, Cardiac Science released a mandatory software update for all affected models:

If you purchased any units under either of these contracts, it is strongly recommended that you act in accordance with Cardiac Science’s recommendations.

Devices included in the initial medical recall were those manufactured between August 2003 and August 2009. To identify whether any of your devices were affected, you can visit http://www.cardiacscience.com/aed175. If so, you will be able to download a software update that will enhance the device’s self-test capability and further reduce any risk associated with this issue (according to Cardiac Science, reducing the risk of malfunction to 1 in 1,800,000).

Cardiac Science can be contacted at 877-901-1788.

### Funding and Disbursement Services

**State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Procedures Handbook**

The Division of Funding and Disbursement Services has updated the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Procedures Handbook. You are encouraged to access the new handbook at [http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbook.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbook.pdf) and distribute to all staff who handle grant programs. Please pay special attention to the policy statements on pages 3-4 as they seem to generate the most questions each year. The primary changes in this version include:

- New language and procedures for calculating and returning interest income on Federal grant programs. (Page 7)

- Per Public Act 96-0795 effective July 1, 2010, state grants in excess of $25,000 must have quarterly expenditure reports filed to reflect the progress of the grant program. For program consistency purposes, all state grants that currently require an expenditure report will be expanded to quarterly reporting. (Page 12)

- New deadlines for submitting quarterly expenditure reports has been moved up from 30 days to 20 days following the end of each quarter. (Page 12)

If you have questions regarding the new handbook please contact Kim Lewis or Sally Cray in the Division of Funding and Disbursements at 782-5256.

### Curriculum and Instruction

**New Guidance on Financial Aid for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth**

The U.S. Department of Education’s Application and Verification Guide (AVG) provides instructions and guidance to financial aid administrators and counselors who assist students in filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

The 2010-11 edition of the AVG, which was published June 21, contains important new information regarding unaccompanied homeless youth who wish to pursue an education beyond grade 12. A summary of the unaccompanied homeless youth provisions is available on the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth website at [http://www.naehcy.org/higher_ed.html](http://www.naehcy.org/higher_ed.html).


### Career and Technical Education

**Students, Educators Bring Home Awards From National Leadership Conference**

Illinois student members of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America brought home 33 gold medals, 27 silver medals and six bronze medals in competitions held in association with FCCLA’s National Leadership Conference, which was held July 4-8.

In addition, Illinois FCCLA had the national first-place culinary arts team: Brian Francis of Lyons Township North High School in LaGrange, Collin Bumber of Lockport Township North High School and Alex Tondu of York High School in Elmhurst. Jordan Hutton of Casey Westfield High School was the first-place entrepreneurship winner. And the second place hospitality team was composed of Brenda Martinez and Miguel Pantoja of Wilco Area Career Center in Romeoville.

Nicole Wenger of Prairie Central high School received the Wiley Publishing Company Scholarship for outstanding leadership. And Charlotte Goetz of Campbell
Hill High School in Trico received the Spirit of Advising Award, which recognizes one family and consumer sciences teacher/FCCLA adviser from each state. Illinois FCCLA executive director Marta Lockwood received the national FCCLA State Adviser of the Year Award.

The Oakland High School FCCLA chapter was named the national winner of the Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety (FACTS) Award for its “Operation Teen Safe Driving Project.”

For more information, visit http://www.fcclainc.org/.

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**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.

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**In the News**

**Weekly News Clips**