Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Welcome back! The start of school is the most exciting time of year for all of us, administrators, teachers, students and parents. The anticipation and promise of a new year is like no other feeling in our profession and I wish you and your school communities the best during the 2010-11 school year.

The ACT scores for the graduating class of 2010 were released last week and show some mixed results. The statewide and national averages dropped one-tenth of a point from 2009 to 2010, but our 5-year trend still shows positive movement on the composite and in all four subject areas. I think it’s also important to note that Illinois leads the eight states that test more than 90 percent of their students. In addition, since 2001, when we became a universal ACT state, we have seen continued growth for our students after an initial drop.

ACT also has benchmarks for predicting student readiness to succeed in college. In Illinois, we’ve seen the percentage of students who meet those benchmarks increase from 20 percent in 2006 to 23 percent in 2010, just below the national average of 24 percent.

What’s amazing is that, when you look at the data, many Illinois students just narrowly missed the benchmark for being college ready in all subjects. In English, 10 percent of students were within 2 points of the benchmark; in math, 9 percent within two points; in reading, 13 percent; and in science, 14 percent were within 2 points of the college readiness benchmarks. Had these students taken one or more “core” courses their chances of meeting those benchmarks would have greatly improved.

I would anticipate that this positive trajectory will continue as we move forward with implementing the new Illinois Learning Standards incorporating the Common Core standards in English and math. We must also make sure that our students are in the right classes, providing rigor and relevance to them as they prepare for college and careers. ACT recommends a core curriculum of four years of English and three years of math, science and social studies. You can also review their Courses Count study at http://act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/CoursesCount.pdf.

Also, last week members of the State Board of Education approved for public comment a proposed administrative rule to clarify when high school students are required to take the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). No Child Left Behind requires that all schools test students at least once for accountability purposes while they are in high school. In Illinois, we are required by state statute to administer the PSAE to 11th-graders for accountability purposes.

The agency noticed, as did the federal government, that some districts were not testing a significant portion of their 11th-grade students. In our compliance audit by the U.S. Department of Education earlier this year they directed us to take action to ensure that all students are being tested for accountability purposes and that’s why we’re proposing this clarification.
Some districts were using local calculations of a specific number of credit hours or courses to define 11th grade, and, in some isolated instances, this was done in an exclusionary fashion, resulting in 8 percent of students not being tested. What we are proposing is that all students would take the PSAE the third year after they have successfully completed the eighth grade. An exception is being made for students with Individualized Education Programs.

We anticipate this clarification will result in more consistency of PSAE administration throughout the state. You may review the proposed rule change at [http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/1_11th_websumm.htm](http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/1_11th_websumm.htm). Public comments will be taken on the proposed rules through Oct. 18 and you may submit comments at rules@isbe.net. Once the public comment period ends, the State Board of Education will have a chance to review comments and may or may not make changes based on those comments. They will then send their final version of the rules to the Joint Committee on Administrative rules for their review.

I encourage you to review the rules and comment on them through the e-mail above or by working with your statewide associations.

Have a great week.

Chris

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### Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Last day to file an AYP status appeal for 2010** – Sept. 1
- **Affidavit of School Treasurer Bonds submitted by Regional Superintendents/Intermediate Service Centers** – Sept. 1
- **Before Sept. 1, the school board must publish a notice of the school budget availability for public inspection and hearing** (105 ILCS Section 5/17-1)
- **The board for joint agreements must hold a public meeting to adopt the joint agreement budget on or by Sept. 1** (105 ILCS Section 5/17-1)
- **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
- **The school board must hold a public meeting to adopt the school budget on or before Sept. 30. (end of first quarter)** (105 ILCS 5/17-1) Within 30 days of adoption, and any subsequent adoption, the annual budgets must be filed with the county clerk. (105 ILCS 5/17-1 and 35 ILCS 200/18-50)
- **Deadline to deliver the Annual Financial Report (AFR) /Audit to the Regional Office of Education/Intermediate Service Center (Cook County) (with the exception of an extension of time granted by the regional superintendent)** (105 ILCS 5/3.7 and 105 ILCS 5/3-15.1) – Oct. 15 (Dec. 15 with an approved extension)
- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 365 (Children’s Low-cost Laptop Program)** – Public comment period ends Oct. 18
- **Annual budgets must be filed with the county clerk within 30 days, Oct. 31, of adoption or any subsequent adoption** (105 ILCS 5/17-1 and 35 ILCS 200/18-50)
- **Annual Budgets must be submitted to ISBE** – Oct. 31, annually

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### No Child Left Behind

**Title I Schoolwide Plan Evaluation Required Annually**

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires a school operating a schoolwide program to review and revise, as necessary, the Title I Schoolwide Plan. The federal regulation is more explicit in mandating that the evaluation occur annually. The purpose of the annual review is to ensure that the program outlined in the Schoolwide Plan was implemented as intended and that the implementation affected positive outcomes related to student achievement.

The non-regulatory guidance document released by the U.S. Department of Education further details a process...
for meeting the annual evaluation. In brief, it suggests that the school should identify the following:

- purpose of the review and the intended audience,
- issues and appropriate review questions,
- data collections instruments and the data collected,
- analysis and interpretation of the data collected, and
- components of the report.

ISBE recommends that the school file the annual evaluation with the Title I Schoolwide Plan and make it readily available for review by stakeholders and by the State Board’s Division of External Assurances.


**ARRA**

**Renewal of D-U-N-S Numbers With Central Contractor Registration**

Section 1512 federal reporting requirements under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) state that each local education agency (LEA) that receives ARRA funds must register their 9 digit Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) number with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) site. CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Federal Government.

Each LEA is responsible for keeping their D-U-N-S number and account current with CCR. CCR notifies the account owner of registration expiration. The e-mail message from CCR will look like this:

**Dear CCR Registrant:**

**Renewal Notification for DUNS Number:**

123456789

Your registration in Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is due to expire on DATE.

To maintain active status in CCR and to ensure continued payments on existing contracts, you must renew your registration. The maintenance and renewal of your registration is your responsibility.

It is critical that your LEA maintains active registration of your LEA’s D-U-N-S number with CCR to prevent suspension of ARRA funds. This is especially critical as new funds will be coming soon for the new Education Funds Jobs program.

The Illinois State Board of Education cannot assist you with registration or renewal. You must register or renew with CCR online at [http://www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov) or call the CCR help desk at 866-606 8220 between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Central Time if you need assistance.

### Special Education Services

**Space Available for Middle School and High School RtI Summit**

This is a reminder that Illinois ASPIRE is conducting a two-day Middle School/High School Response to Intervention (RtI) Summit in September, with Dr. Kevin Feldman and Dr. George Batsche as featured presenters. Batsche’s presentation will build and expand upon content he covered in his October 2009 workshops in Illinois. The summit is being held at the following locations:

- Sept. 27 and 28: Collinsville
- Sept. 28 and 29: East Peoria
- Sept. 29 and 30: Naperville (registration closed)

Although the Naperville location is full, space is available in Collinsville and East Peoria. Details about the summit and online registration can be accessed at [http://tworivers.pdaonline.org/WorkshopQuery.php?type=ASPIRE](http://tworivers.pdaonline.org/WorkshopQuery.php?type=ASPIRE).

Registration is open to school teams of up to five people, with a limit of one team per school. It is recommended that teams be comprised of one or more administrators, teaching staff and related services staff. Registrants must be able to attend both days of the summit. The registration deadline is Sept. 10, 2010, and the registration fee is $20 per participant for both days. Questions can be directed to Rhonda Mooberry at rmooberry@peoriaroe48.net (preferred) or 309-673-1040.

**2010-11 Planning Calendar for Special Education Directors Online**

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Special Education Services and Supports Division is pleased to announce the release of the 2010-11 Planning Calendar for Special Education Directors. This resource was
developed by ISBE, in collaboration with Dr. Gineen O’Neil, Director of Southwest Cook County Association for Special Education.

We hope that this resource will assist administrators by raising awareness of the various data reporting and submission requirements related to IDEA. This document does not replace any official notifications of deadlines and requirements. Instead, it is intended to be used as an additional resource to assist district and Special Education cooperative administrators. Several web-based resources are listed on the last page of this document to provide links to the official up-to-date information regarding deadlines/requirements across the agency.

The 2010-11 Planning Calendar for Special Education Directors is available under the “What’s New” section at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed.

Indicator 13 Data Verification Process

The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires each state to submit a six-year State Performance Plan (SPP) designed to evaluate the state’s efforts to implement the requirements of IDEA and describe how the state will improve its implementation.

As a part of the SPP, states are required to list improvement activities for each indicator. One of the improvement activities under Indicator 13, or Secondary Transition, is implementation of a data verification process to address the completeness and accuracy of these data. These data are submitted to the ISBE through the Funding and Child Tracking System (FACTS) for students with IEPs ages 14½ and above.

Beginning with data for the 2008-09 school year, ISBE began implementation of the data verification process with a randomly selected sample of districts reporting 100 percent compliance for Indicator 13. Districts selected for the 2009 – 2010 data verification were notified by August 1 and will be required to submit IEPs for a randomly selected sample of students. The transition plan components of these IEPs will then be reviewed, and ISBE will follow-up with these selected districts.

For more information regarding Indicator 13 and secondary transition planning, please review the technical assistance resources available at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/indicator13.htm.

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Educator and School Development

Physical Education Exemption Report No Longer Required to be Submitted

Effective 8/3/10, PA 96-1423 repealed section 105 ILCS 5/2-3.97 of the School Code and as a result the PE Exemption report is no longer required to be submitted. If you have any questions about this new legislation contact Patrick Murphy in the Educator and School Development Division at 217-782-2948 or pmurphy@isbe.net.

Legal

Registration Guidance for the 2010-11 School Year

Visit http://www.isbe.net/pdf/guidance_reg.pdf for registration guidance for the 2010-11 school year and take time to review four areas that traditionally have generated confusion: Residency; Immigrant Pupils; Homeless Pupils; and School Fees and Waivers.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Two 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)

Defines “grade 11” for the purposes of the administration of the Prairie State Achievement Examination or the Illinois Alternate Assessment, as applicable, and deletes language specific to the consumer education proficiency examination, which was eliminated by P.A. 96-1061, effective July 14, 2010. Deadline for Public Comment: Oct. 18

Part 365 (Children’s Low-cost Laptop Program)

Sets forth the requirements for applying for and criteria for review of proposals submitted for grants under the Children’s Low-cost Laptop Act [105 ILCS 65]. Deadline for Public Comment: Oct. 18
Nutrition

School-based Child Nutrition
Sponsor Applications Due Sept. 15

The Sponsor/Site Applications to participate in the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program and/or After-School Care Snack Program during the 2010–11 school year is accessible through IWAS/ACES.

Applications will cover operating months of October 2010 through September 2011 and are due no later than Sept. 15. For instructions on completing the applications, see http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/instructions.htm.

New Illinois Learning Standards
Incorporating the Common Core

Back to School Materials Available

The new Illinois Learning Standards incorporating the Common Core were adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education at its June meeting. The new standards are in Math and English/Language Arts. We have developed a resource page to assist you and your staff as you spend the next year familiarizing yourselves with the new standards, which you can find at http://www.isbe.net/ADP/default.htm.

As you prepare for the new school year, we have developed some Back to School materials that you may use in speaking with faculty and parents about the new standards. We’ve developed some key PowerPoint slides, as well as information about the design and organization of the new standards, assessments and local expectations. You can access this Back to School information at http://www.isbe.net/ADP/htmls/back_to_school.htm.

We are currently developing some additional tools that will be useful to you and your teachers as you work through this transition to the New Illinois Learning Standards. Once new tools are developed, we will post them to the Realizing Illinois web page.

Funding and Disbursement Services

Extension of FY 2010 State Liquidation Period

Local Education Agencies (LEA) with FY 2010 State funded projects that ended on June 30, or will end Aug. 31, may have outstanding obligations that have not been paid due to the continued delay of State funds from the Office of the Comptroller. Per our State and Federal Fiscal Policy and Procedures, which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbook.pdf, obligations should be liquidated within 90 days from the end date of the project. However, due to the current delay of state funds, the liquidation date will be suspended until Jan. 7, 2011, for FY 2010 projects that ended on June 30 or will end Aug. 31. The General Assembly passed legislation earlier this spring which allows the Office of the Comptroller additional time to release FY 2010 funds by Dec. 31, 2010. The new liquidation date will allow all LEAs sufficient time to fulfill their obligation payments once funds are released by the end of this calendar year. The liquidation extension is only applicable for FY 2010 state projects that have not submitted their final expenditure reports. If an LEA has submitted their final expenditure report with no outstanding obligations, this extension does not apply.

In addition, FY 2010 notices to return unexpended state grant funds are being suspended until funds have been distributed by the Office of the Comptroller. Once funds have been released, refund due notices will resume. Upon receipt of the notice, LEAs must return unexpended funds to the Illinois State Board of Education within 45 days per requirements of Grant Funds Recovery Act [30 ILCS 705/5]. Unexpended FY 2010 State funds cannot be carried over and used for FY 2011 project grant activities.

If you have questions regarding these issues please contact Kim Lewis (klewis@isbe.net) or Sally Cray (scray@isbe.net) at 217-782-5256.

FY 2010 Illinois Free Breakfast/Lunch Program Funding Announcement

In late June, ISBE became aware of the fact that there was not going to be sufficient state funding to pay all Illinois Free Breakfast and Lunch Program claims for State Fiscal Year 2010 (July 2009-June 2010) at the established rate of $0.1275 per meal. Illinois Free Breakfast and Lunch Program claims that were vouchered by ISBE on June 2, June 8 and June 15 were cancelled at the Comptroller’s office and voided by ISBE and will be reissued.

After thorough analysis of remaining fund balances, it was determined that all April and prior claims could be paid at the established rate of $0.1275 per meal. May and June claims would be paid at a lower rate of $0.0964 per
meal. This was done to ensure that all claims were paid equitably and not paid on a first-come, first-serve basis. All replacement vouchers will be sent to the Comptroller by the end of August to be processed for payment. Keep in mind that payment of the voucher by the Comptroller’s Office will likely be delayed similar to other state funded vouchers.

Due to this funding issue, there will be no pro-ration of remaining funds for the Illinois Free Breakfast and Lunch Programs as has been done in the past.

If you have any questions regarding this situation or difficulty locating payments in our online reporting systems, please contact Beth Burkhalter or Dara Strode in Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256 or via e-mail at bburkhal@isbe.net or dstrode@isbe.net.

Interrupted School Days/Heat

The health and safety of students are a primary concern for every school superintendent. Section 18-12, of the School Code allows the use of Interrupted School Days for “adverse weather conditions,” including extreme heat as well as extreme cold. The Illinois State Board of Education allows four options with regard to extreme heat:

- Amend the public school calendar to start school at a later date
- Dismiss after 5-clock-hours of instruction
- Utilize an Emergency Day
- Utilize an Interrupted Day

If an Emergency Day is utilized it is recommended that an Amended Calendar be submitted electronically through IWAS to the Regional Office of Education (ROE) for approval, to assure that the most up to date Public School Calendar is available online via the School Calendar Inquiry. If an Interrupted Day is utilized an Amended Calendar must be submitted electronically through IWAS, within 30 days of occurrence, to the ROE, who will forward it to ISBE for approval as required by statute. The Calendar Code for Emergency Day is ED. The Calendar Code for an Interrupted Day is XID. When amending the calendar code to XID, Student Attendance Time is required to verify a minimum of 1 instructional clock hour was conducted as well as a brief explanation of why the day was interrupted.

ISBE’s policy further states that if the announcement is made in advance (i.e., on the previous day) that school will be closing on any day or days after less than 5 clock hours because of heat, you must use an emergency day(s). You cannot count that shortened day as a full-day of attendance under those circumstances.

At this time, all 2010-11 Public School Calendars should now have ROE approval, making the calendar available for interested parties to view on the ISBE’s School Calendar Inquiry. Per Section 10-19 of the School Code, any changes to the calendar must be approved by completing and submitting an amended calendar via IWAS prior to the change taking effect.

It is our hope that this information is helpful for the upcoming school year. If you require technical assistance or have further questions regarding the public school calendar please contact your Regional Office of Education or Marj Beck at mbeck@isbe.net or 217-782-5256.

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**Early Childhood**

**Early Childhood Block Grant Allocations Finalized**

FY11 allocations for all four Early Childhood Block Grant programs are now available through IWAS for school year 2010-11 (FY11). Recipients of all Early Childhood Block Grant programs funded in FY10 and earlier should now revise and resubmit their FY11 continuation grant applications.

Program names in IWAS are as follows:

- Preschool for All-Cont. 3-5 Early Childhood
- Preschool for All-3-5 Early Childhood
- Preschool for All-Cont. 0-3 Early Childhood
- Preschool for All-Prev. Initiative 0-3 Early Childhood

If you have questions, please call the Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835.

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**Professional Opportunities**

**National Assessment Governing Board Seeking Nominations**

The National Assessment Governing Board invites nominations of qualified individuals to serve as members of the Governing Board, established by Congress to set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) — also known as The Nation’s Report Card. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan will appoint the members from a list of finalists submitted by the Governing Board.
The Board is seeking the broadest representation to fill positions in six categories: Testing & Measurement Expert; Local School Superintendent; 12th Grade Teacher; Curriculum Specialist (2 openings); Chief State School Officer; and State School Board Member. The term for each of the seven positions is Oct. 1, 2011, to Sept. 30, 2015.

For more information, visit http://www.nagb.org. The deadline for receiving nominations is Sept. 30, 2010. Nominations can be submitted via mail to Dr. Mary Crovo, Deputy Executive Director, National Assessment Governing Board, 800 N. Capitol St., NW, Suite 825, Washington, DC 20002-4233. Or fax to 202-357-6945 or e-mail mary.crovo@ed.gov.

Department of Transportation

Webinar Series on Illinois Safe Routes to School Coming Up

The Illinois Department of Transportation has scheduled a series of upcoming webinars to give an overview of the Illinois Safe Routes to School program. The webinars are open to all interested participants.

Registration information is available on the IDOT website at www.dot.il.gov/saferoutes. After registering you will receive confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the Webinar. Here is a list of the webinars:


The National Center for Safe Routes to School and America Walks will host a free webinar, “Safe Routes to School 101,” on Aug. 24. Register at http://www.americawalks.org/srts/ or e-mail mgulley@americawalks.org.

A daylong Safe Routes to School seminar will be held Sept. 1 in Woodridge. For more information or to register, contact Edward Iancu of Pedestrian Safety Solutions at eiancu@trafficcontrolcorp.com or 630-754-4434.
International Walk to School Day is slated for Oct. 6 this year. Walk to School 2010 is an international event where communities from more than 40 countries join together to walk and bicycle to school. Many schools celebrate October as Walk to School Month. Registration is free at http://www.walktoschool.org/register.

Illinois Commerce Commission

Federal and State Telephone Assistance Helps Those in Need Stay Connected

AARP and the Illinois Commerce Commission want residents to “stay connected” and are encouraging those who need phone service but can’t afford it to contact their local phone company to sign up for the federal Lifeline or state Link-Up telephone service assistance programs.

Under the federal Lifeline program, telephone customers who participate and are eligible for certain public assistance programs are entitled to receive a basic telephone service discount of $10 a month. The federal Link-Up America program will pay one-half (up to $30) of the initial installation fee for traditional land-line telephone service or activation fee for a wireless service for a primary residence. It also allows participants to pay the remaining amount owed on a deferred schedule, interest-free. The state’s Link-Up program provides an additional benefit of up to $12 on installation charges for telephone service to eligible program participants in Illinois.

Lifeline Awareness Week is Sept. 12-18. AARP is joining with the Governor of Illinois, the Illinois Commerce Commission, state agencies and other advocacy groups to remind those who don’t have access to local telephone service, help is available.

For more information on the Lifeline and Link-Up telephone assistance programs, visit the Illinois Commerce Commission website at http://www.icc.illinois.gov/consumer/lifelineandlinkup.

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