Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week, the High School to College Success Report was released at the “Using Data for Student Success” conference in Springfield. Each high school principal and superintendent was previously sent a copy of the report and it will soon be posted to the Illinois Interactive Report Card.

This report examines the post-secondary performance of graduates from 2006 through 2008. It’s intended to drive discussions between high schools and colleges and to support them in developing and aligning curriculum to improve student success. It will also assist you in your use of data to drive student outcomes.

The data from this report really does back up what we’ve been saying for a number of years; a rigorous curriculum in high school improves a student’s chances to success after they graduate. All principals and superintendents have been sent additional materials via IWAS accounts to assist you in disseminating this material to your communities.

I have received a number of questions about the change in the calculation of the state’s graduation rate for the 2011 Report Card which we will release publicly in October. The U.S. Department of Education changed the way states calculate graduation rates in 2008 when Secretary Spellings updated the rules for Title I (http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/reg/title1/index.html) to try and make them more uniform nationally. The new calculation goes into effect with this year’s report card that will be released in the fall.

I know this will impact high schools throughout the state as it is an adjusted cohort rate and only those students who graduate with a standard diploma within four years will be counted toward a district’s graduation rate. Previously, those who graduated or received a certificate of completion, even if it took longer than four years, were counted. Next year, Illinois will have the capacity to report a 5-year adjusted cohort rate because the Student Information System (SIS) will contain the data that are needed to complete the calculations. In order to use the extended year graduation rate, Illinois will need to request approval from USDE via changes in our Accountability Workbook.

There will be no column next week. I hope you enjoy your Fourth of July holiday!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Illinois New Teacher Collaborative Beginning Teacher Conference** – June 28
- **2010-11 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30
- **Dental Data Collection system** – Open for data entry through June 30
• 2011 Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report deadline – June 30
• Prekindergarten At-Risk Program Record and the Preschool For All Program Record deadline – June 30
• 2010-11 Early Childhood (Prevention Initiative and Parental Training Programs Only) – Parent Evaluations/Demographics survey deadline – July 15
• Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 25 (Certification), Part 75 (Incentive Grants for Agricultural Science Teacher Education), and Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education) – Public comment period ends July 25
• 2011 Illinois Immunization and Communicable Disease Conference in Bloomington – Aug. 8-9
• Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Fall ’11 – Aug. 12
• 2010-11 Teacher Service Record submission deadline – Aug. 15
• School Safety Conference in Hillside – Sept. 8
• 2010-11 High School Students Taking Community College Courses system district-level data submission deadline – Sept. 15
• ISBE’s Transition Institute in Bloomington – Sept. 19-21

Funding and Disbursements

Fiscal Year 2012 Federal Reimbursement Procedures Update – Cooperatives/EFE

After the FY 12 Federal Grant Cash Management Changes webinar conducted on May 5 (available at http://www.isbe.net/funding/ppt/2012_fed_reimb_webinar_pres050511.pdf), questions were received regarding whether a special education or education for employment cooperative could utilize the preferred reimbursement method by reporting the cash basis expenditures of their respective member districts on the cooperative’s expenditure report.

In consultation with ISBE audit staff, it was clarified that on a true cash basis of accounting, the cooperative must reimburse their member districts for eligible expenditures first before requesting reimbursement. This clarification may hamper the ability of some cooperatives to utilize the preferred reimbursement method and will result in moving to the modified advance method of funding. For more details as to the modified advance process, please see slides 12-16 of the May 5 webinar. Please keep in mind that ISBE will voucher FY 12 federal grant payments each Wednesday as expenditure reports are submitted. The time line for receipt of federal funds is three to five business days. This may assist cooperatives with their decision to report via the preferred reimbursement method.

If you have further questions regarding this issue, please contact Kim Lewis (klewis@isbe.net) or Sally Cray (scray@isbe.net) in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at (217) 782-5256.

June 30, 2011, ARRA Jobs and Vendor Data Due July 5, 2011

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and vendor data for the quarter ending June 30, 2011, is due at the Illinois State Board of Education on or before Tuesday, July 5, 2011. We fully understand the challenge this due date places on local education agencies due to the Fourth of July holiday. Unfortunately, federal requirements have not been relaxed for states to collect and report ARRA data at the Federal level. You are therefore highly encouraged to submit your June 30 data before the holiday break.

ARRA data reporting includes two primary elements: the number of jobs funded in the reporting quarter with ARRA dollars and a single payment made to a vendor, using ARRA dollars, in the amount of $25,000 or more. All ARRA data must be reported via the ARRA Reporting System in IWAS. Please refer to the ARRA Reporting Instructions at http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf for detailed reporting procedures.

ARRA data must be reported regardless of whether any jobs were funded or any payments were made to a vendor of $25,000 or more in the reporting quarter. Please follow these three steps below to properly calculate the jobs FTE that must be reported for the period ending June 30.

• **Step 1:** Determine the number of hours in a full-time schedule for ARRA funded employees between April 1 and June 30 (i.e. an employee works 40 hours a week for 13 weeks, the quarterly hours in a full-time schedule is 520 hours). Note: This figure may change depending on the type of employee.
• **Step 2:** Determine the number of hours employees were paid with ARRA funds for the reporting quarter ending June 30.

• **Step 3:** Divide the number calculated in Step 2 by the quarterly hours in a full-time schedule calculated in Step 1. This calculation should be performed for each employee funded with ARRA dollars. The formula for reporting can be represented as:

\[
\text{Total Number of Hours ARRA Funded Within Reporting Quarter} / \text{Quarterly Hours in a Full-Time Schedule} = \text{FTE}
\]

June 30 ARRA data must be reported for the following ARRA programs if your LEA has been awarded or received funds:

- Title I Low Income – Revenue Code 4851, CFDA #84.394
- Title I Low Income Neglected – Revenue Code 4852, CFDA #84.394
- Title I Low Income Delinquent – Revenue Code 4853, CFDA #84.394
- Title I School Improvement – Revenue Code 4854, CFDA #84.394
- Title I School Improvement (1003g) – Revenue Code 4855, CFDA #84.388
- IDEA Part B Preschool – Revenue Code 4856, CFDA #84.392
- IDEA Part B Flow Through – Revenue Code 4857, CFDA #84.391
- Title II D Enhancing Education Through Technology – Revenue Code 4861, CFDA #84.386
- McKinney Vento Homeless Education – Revenue Code 4862, CFDA #84.387
- Education Jobs Fund Program – Revenue Code 4880, CFDA #84.410 (If compensation and/or benefits have been or will be requested for employees from April through June)

If you have further questions or concerns with the Ed Jobs program please contact Jim Mathes at jmathes@isbe.net or Marj Beck at mbeck@isbe.net. Both can be reached by telephone at (217) 782-5256.

---

**Innovation and Improvement**

**FY 2012 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program Grant**

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Innovation and Improvement Division is pleased to announce the release of the FY 2012 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program (21CCLC) Grants Request for Proposals (RFP). Applications must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 8, 2011.

Technical Assistance: The technical assistance bidder’s webinar will be conducted from 12:30 to 4 p.m. on Wednesday, July 6, 2011. This informational webinar will relate to the specific proposal requirements. Registration information is available at http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/webinar.htm#1003tech. The webinar will be archived after July 7 at http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/webinar_archive.htm.

A bidder’s conference will also be held from 12:30 to 4 on July 7, 2011 at the Illinois State Board of Education, 100 N. First St., Springfield. To register for the bidder’s conference, send an e-mail to 21stcclc@isbe.net indicating the names of who will be attending.

Background Information: Through a competitive grant process, approximately $15 million is available in FY 2012 to fund academically-focused after-school programs that will serve schools with a high concentration of low-income students (defined as not less than 40 percent of students being eligible for free or reduced-price lunch).

Eligible applicants are public and private entities, including local education agencies (LEAs), such as public school districts, public university laboratory schools approved by ISBE, charter schools, area vocational centers, regional offices of education and intermediate service centers; community-based organizations (CBO), including faith-based organizations (FBO); and other public and private entities.

A consortium of two or more eligible applicants may also submit a proposal as a joint application. Previously funded grantees are eligible to apply as well as new applicants.

A competitive priority will be given to applicants that propose to serve students in poverty who attend schools in need of improvement, are one of the persistently lowest performing schools from the Tier I or Tier II list at http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/sip_1003.htm and that submit a joint application between at least one LEA receiving funds under Title I, Part A and at least one public or private community organization, propose to implement innovative best practices, and propose to serve middle and high school students.

More information is available at www.isbe.net/21cclc. Deadline is 5 p.m. on Aug. 8, 2011. For more information on the 21st CCLC grant, contact Tammy Greco at (217) 524-4832 or 21stcclc@isbe.net.

School Business Services

The FY 2011 School District/ Joint Agreement Annual Audit

For the year ending June 30, 2011, the Illinois State Board of Education provides the Illinois School District Annual Financial Report (AFR) (Form 50-35) and Joint Agreement Annual Financial Report (Form 50-60) electronically and is supported in Excel version 97-Excel 2003 workbook version. These forms are used for the financial reporting requirement by all Local Education Agencies (LEA).

Section 3-7 of the School Code sets forth the duties and responsibilities needed to meet the audit requirement.

There are several items regarding the FY11 AFR that we would like to bring to your attention.

- Filing deadline for the AFR. Statute requires that the AFR and attachments be filed this year on or before Friday, Oct. 14, 2011, with the appropriate Regional Office of Education/Intermediate Service Center (ROE/ISC). In extenuating circumstances, the Regional Superintendent may grant up to 60 days extension per Section 3-7 of the School Code. If an extension has not been granted, the AFR must be forwarded by the ROE/ISC to ISBE on or before Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2011 (Cover Page through Page 8 with all signatures, is required to be mailed to the ROE/ISC by Oct. 14, 2011, and the ISBE by Nov. 15, 2011).

- When filing the AFR electronically to ISBE, the CPA firm and LEA are required to file using the Attachment Manager website at the links provided below. From the Annual Financial Report FY11 webpage, select “Submit Your Completed AFR” then complete all required sender information. In the ISBE Receiver Name, select “Annual Financial Report Group.”

Note: The Audit, Management Letter, Opinion Letter, Compliance Notes, Financial Notes, etc., all must be embedded into the Opinion letters page of the AFR. To be consistent all copies of documents must be filed with the LEA and the ROE/ISC.

- The A-133 Single Audit must be completed if total federal expenditures are $500,000 or more. This report must be submitted electronically.
using the forms included in the AFR, if applicable. The sheets are unprotected for any necessary alterations. Note: All opinion letters must have the CPA Firm’s signature.

- The “Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet” is included with the AFR and must be filed directly with ISBE on or before Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2011. (No provisions exist for extension of time or submission to the ROE.)

- The Estimated Financial Profile Summary is included in the AFR on Page 4 and provides the district with a preliminary score/designation. The final profile score/designation will be released for viewing in the spring of 2012.

The AFR and related material can be obtained at http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/afr.htm or go to the ISBE homepage (http://www.isbe.net), select “Division Links,” select “School Business Services Division,” select “Forms” and then “Annual Financial Report FY11.”

If you have any questions or need assistance, contact the School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779.

Be Sure to Check Qualifications of Auditing Firm for LEA Audits

It is that time of year to begin preparing for the Local Education Agencies (LEA) audit. When accepting bids from a Certified Public Accounting (CPA) firm, please be sure to verify the qualifications of the firm as part of the decision making process by performing the following:

1) Request the most current review and acceptance/completion letter from the audit firm.
2) Obtain the firm’s license number and review the expiration date. Determine if the firm’s license is still in effect. Determine if there has been any disciplinary action.

Information regarding the status of the license is available from the Illinois Division Professional Regulation (http://www.idfpr.com/dpr/default.asp). An LEA knowingly or unknowingly engaging an unqualified auditing firm for the audit of the Annual Financial Report (AFR) will have the LEA’s AFR returned. The LEA will be required to engage a qualified auditing firm to complete an audit. The additional cost for the audit will be the responsibility of the LEA.

If you have any questions regarding this requirement, please contact Toby Turek or Debbie Hemberger in the School Business Services division at (217) 785-8779 or e-mail them at rturek@isbe.net and dhemberg@isbe.net.

---

PARCC

Survey Aims to Keep Educators Involved in Development of New Assessments

Educators are invited to participate in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers K-12 Engagement Survey. The PARCC survey aims to keep the K-12 community engaged and informed throughout the process of developing and implementing new assessments. Go to http://www.tinyurl.com/PARCC-K-12-Survey to get started.

Illinois is one of 13 states serving on the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers’ governing board, which is providing leadership and oversight to the development of new assessments for use by states that have adopted the Common Core State Standards. In all, PARCC has 25 member states which coming together to create an internationally benchmarked assessment system to be ready for the 2014-15 school year. For more information, go to http://www.PARCConline.org.

---

Nutrition

Illinois Selected for USDA’s Community Eligibility Option for School Year 2011-12

The Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Programs Division was notified on June 15, 2011, that the Community Eligibility Option (CEO), as authorized by Section 104(a) of the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, will be available to Illinois schools for school year 2011-2012. CEO is an alternative to collecting, approving and verifying household eligibility applications for free and reduced price eligible students in high poverty local educational agencies (LEAs) for schools participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee are the only states that were awarded this option through a competitive application process for school year 2011-12. As ISBE awaits further instruction from the USDA, we encourage schools to review the information, including recorded webinar and CEO worksheets, at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/hunger_free.htm.
For a LEA to be eligible to use the CEO for school year 2011-12, the LEA must have one or more schools that have directly certified 40 percent or more of their students for free meals in school year 2010-11. The LEA and school must also agree to offer all students in the school breakfasts and lunches at no cost (free) and cover any cost above the federal reimbursement received with non-Federal funds for four successive school years. Reimbursement for schools participating in CEO will be based on claiming percentages derived from the percentages of students directly certified.

As soon as more information, including application requirements and deadlines, are known, we will be updating all schools. If you have questions related to this new Community Eligibility Option, please contact ISBE’s School-Based Child Nutrition Program staff at (800) 545-7892 or by e-mail at cnp@isbe.net (type “CEO” in the subject line).

Illinois Emergency Management Agency

Counties Eligible for Public Assistance Program After Spring Storms, Flooding

President Barack Obama declared the FEMA-1991-DR-IL major disaster for Illinois on June 7 as a result of the severe storms and flooding that occurred this spring. FEMA designated Alexander, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Marion, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Saline, Union, Wabash, Washington, Wayne, White and Williamson counties as eligible for Public Assistance Program funding on June 10. The Public Assistance Program may provide federal disaster assistance to the states, local governments and certain private non-profit organizations for debris removal, emergency protective measures and the permanent restoration of public facilities.

If your organization incurred at least $1,000 of extraordinary uninsured costs as a result of the severe storms and flooding that occurred this spring, your organization should contact Lois Anne Huffman at (217) 782-8719 to complete a Request for Public Assistance (RPA) and forward the remainder of the application package to your organization. The incident period is for severe storms occurring on April 19, 2011, and April 22 to May 2, 2011, and flooding resulting from those storms beginning on April 19 and continuing. The deadline for organizations to submit RPAs to IEMA is July 15, 2011.

For questions, contact Curtis Caldwell of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency at (217) 782-8719 or curtis.caldwell@illinois.gov. Additional information on the Public Assistance Program is available at http://www.iema.illinois.gov/iema/disaster/pa.htm.

Rules and Waivers

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that new rules adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s website at http://www.isbe.net/rules. Please choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to Part 30.

Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois): These rules implement Public Act 96-903, which added Section 21-7.6 to the School Code and charged the State Board with establishing standards and requirements for principal preparation programs developed by institutions of higher education and not-for-profit entities, and for approving such programs. Effective Date: June 1, 2011

Student Opportunities

High School Students Invited to Enter First Freedom Student Competition

Is the free exercise of religion adequately protected in America’s public schools today? High school students are asked to answer this question in this year’s First Freedom Student Competition.

The national essay and video contest is sponsored by the First Freedom Center, a non-profit educational organization based in Richmond, Va. The contest is open to those in ninth to 12th grade, including home-schooled students.

Prizes include $2,500 for the best video and the best essay. The deadline for online registration is Nov. 14, and entries must be postmarked by Nov. 26, 2011. Go to http://www.firstfreedom.org/ for more information.

Professional Development

Free School Safety Conference Scheduled for Sept. 8 in Hillside

Registration is under way for the School Safety Conference, which will be held 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept.
8 in Hillside. The free, one-day conference is presented by the Illinois State Board of Education, the Archdiocese of Chicago Office of Catholic Schools, RETA Security, the Illinois Terrorism Task Force and Proviso Area for Exceptional Children.

District and school administrators and others can learn how to enhance the safety and security of their school facility on a day-to-day basis and long term.

The registration deadline is Sept. 1 and is limited to four people per department or school. Call Randy Braverman at (224) 578-0484 for questions. For more information and to register for the conference, go to http://www.gbriskcontrol.com/retasecurityregistration/.

---

**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**