Lawmakers completed their work on the FY 2012 budget more than a month ago, but it continues to evolve even as we enter the new fiscal year. Governor Quinn used his amendatory veto power to further reduce the education portion of the budget by about $100 million on the last day of FY 11. This brings the total reduction to the education budget from FY 11 to FY 12 to $270 million and $650 million since FY 2009.

The salary and services lines for the Regional Offices of Education were cut, which has created a lot of questions and uncertainty over the past week. Conversations are ongoing as we work together to address this issue.

It is my understanding that, regardless of the uncertainty, our Regional Superintendents and their assistants intend to continue serving in their roles, providing support to their local administrators, teachers and students. I want to thank our ROEs for their professionalism in what has been a very trying time for them.

In addition to the elimination of the ROE line items, the Governor reduced Regular Transportation by $89 million or about a three percent reduction from FY 11. This translates into a reduction in regular transportation from FY 10 of $145 million, but it is still $30 million higher than the FY12 Governor’s March 2011 budget proposal.

I know many of you were involved in a successful campaign to prevent a reduction in transportation funding at the end of FY 11. If you would like to see this reduction reversed in the fall veto session, I believe that you need to begin communicating with your legislators about the impact these reductions have had and will have on your students and families.

Finally, we have made the difficult decision to eliminate state funding for the grade 11 writing component of our state assessments. In 2012, the ACT writing component will not be tested as part of the Prairie State Achievement Examination, and to maintain equality, the Illinois Alternate Assessment will not contain items that test writing. Lawmakers reduced our assessment budget to a point where we had to make difficult choices, and by eliminating grade 11 writing components, we believe we will still be able to offer districts Explore and Plan.

We know that being able to write clearly and effectively is critical to the future success of our students and writing is an essential expectation in the newly adopted Common Core Standards. Teachers will continue to teach and assess writing in their classrooms and across the curriculum. I regret not being able to provide state support for the grade 11 writing components this fiscal year, but just as you are making difficult decisions for your districts during these challenging financial times, I am forced to do the same.

It is not a decision that was made lightly, but one that is necessary given the fiscal realities we are facing.

Thanks,

Chris
Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **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

Nutrition

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

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Nutrition Programs Division was notified that the Community Eligibility Option (CEO) will be available to Illinois schools for school year 2011-12. 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.

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.

The due date to apply to participate in CEO for the 2011-12 school year is by the first day of school for year round schools or by Aug. 15, 2011, for those with traditional school years. Information and application materials for CEO are available on our website at [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/nslp_hhfka_implementation.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/nslp_hhfka_implementation.htm).

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 enp@isbe.net (type "CEO" in the subject line).

U.S. Department of Education

**Applications Now Available for Promise Neighborhoods Program**

The U.S. Department of Education has released the application for the second phase of the Promise Neighborhoods program, including new implementation grants and a second round of planning grants, totaling $30 million. The program will again have Absolute Priorities for serving rural and tribal communities. Nonprofits, institutions of higher education and native American tribes are eligible to apply for funds to develop or execute plans that will improve educational and developmental outcomes for students in distressed neighborhoods.

Applications will be due by Sept. 6, 2011. Winners will be selected and awards will be made no later than Dec. 31. Officials from the Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement will conduct several webinars for potential applicants. All webinars require participants to register in advance. Registration and additional information about the Promise Neighborhoods program is available at [http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html).

Introduction to Education Policy Seminars Scheduled for Teachers

The U.S. Department of Education is inviting teachers to participate in Summer Seminars at Six: An Introduction
to Education Policy. The series of four hour-long seminars will be held every other Thursday, starting at 6 p.m. July 14.


For more information and to register, go to http://usdoedregistration.ed.gov/profile/web/index.cfm?PKWebId=0x9138701.

Assessment

Posting of 2011 PSAE Scores Delayed Because of Flooding

Scores for the 2011 PSAE were originally scheduled to be posted by Tuesday, July 12, 2011. Due to severe spring flooding experienced by many southern Illinois school districts, additional PSAE makeup testing was allowed to take place one week later than the original makeup testing dates. As a consequence of this late testing, the reporting of all PSAE scores will also occur one week later than scheduled.

PSAE scores are now scheduled to be posted in ISBE’s Student Information System no later than Tuesday, July 19, 2011. Consequently, the PSAE Assessment Correction window will be extended to Tuesday, July 26, 2011. Please note that if scores are able to be posted prior to the new date of July 19, 2011, the Assessment Correction window will still be extended to Tuesday, July 26, 2011. Final PSAE scores are now scheduled to be posted by Aug. 8, 2011.

ISBE apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause. Questions regarding PSAE can be directed to Megan Forness at (217) 782-4823 or psae@isbe.net.

Funding and Disbursement Services

Claimable Pre-kindergarten Students on Nonexclusive Transportation Routes

Please be advised that PA 96-1264 effective Jan. 1, 2011, allows for pre-kindergarten students who are transported on nonexclusive routes to be claimable for transportation. Specifically the language states, “When calculating the reimbursement for transportation costs, the State Board of Education may not deduct the number of pupils enrolled in early education programs from the number of pupils eligible for reimbursement if the pupils enrolled in the early education programs are transported at the same time as other eligible pupils.”

Please note that this new language does not allow any prekindergarten students to be claimed who are transported on exclusive pre-kindergarten routes. The new law only provides for pre-kindergarten students to be claimed on Jan. 1, 2011, and after who are “transported at the same time as other eligible pupils” (e.g. transported on a regular route with a sibling).

Pursuant to this law, when reporting pre-kindergarten pupils on the 2010-11 Pupil Transportation claim payable in FY 2012, districts should report the following:

**Line 3 – Pre-kindergarten Headcount – Number of pre-kindergarten pupils enrolled to be transported (Regular Route-Not Exclusive);**

**Line 5 – Total number of days pupils are enrolled to receive regular transportation – prior to Jan. 1, 2011, days should be reported on Line 5(b) – Regular Education Pre-kindergarten Pupils; however, the days enrolled after Jan. 1, 2011, should be reported on Line 5(a) – Pupils residing 1.5 miles or more or on Line 5(d) – Pupils residing less than 1.5 miles with an approved Serious Safety Hazard;**

**Line 13 – Total nonreimbursable miles. Mileage is still reported on line 13(b) – Total Prekindergarten miles prior to Jan. 1, 2011. After Jan. 1, 2011, the mileage for pre-kindergarten students on nonexclusive transportation routes should be reported on Line 10 (a) – Total regular route miles.**

If you have any questions, please contact Jamie Johnson via telephone at (217) 782-5256 or via e-mail at jjohnson@isbe.net.

FY 2012 Federal Grants Reimbursement Policy Change – Implementation

Please be reminded that comprehensive changes have been implemented to all Federal grant based programs beginning July 1, 2011 (FY 2012). To review the changes implemented by the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services please review the May 5, 2011, webinar, which can be found at
Federal Interest Income – Quarterly Reminder

The Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34-Education, Part 80 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, Subpart C-Post Award Requirements, Section 80.21 Payment, requires grantees and subgrantees to promptly, but at least quarterly, remit interest earned on advances to the appropriate federal agency. The grantee or subgrantee may keep interest amounts up to $100 per year for administrative purposes.

To ensure compliance with federal administrative requirements, local education agency fiscal officials should develop internal controls and a sound methodology to calculate and return, at least quarterly, interest earned in excess of $100 on federal program funds. Interest calculation methodologies must be based on actual, not estimated, interest earnings on federal funds. Further details as to how federal interest should be calculated and remitted can be found on Pages 7-9 of the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures, which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbook.pdf.

Interest should be returned using the following guidelines:

- Checks for interest earned should be made payable to the Illinois State Board of Education.
- Checks should not include the return of unexpended disbursements from the Illinois State Board of Education. Even though unexpended disbursements and interest payments are made payable to the Illinois State Board of Education, separate checks should be issued for both.

All checks must be mailed to: Illinois State Board of Education, Funding and Disbursements Services Division (E-320), 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL 62777-0001.

Innovation and Improvement

Grant Readers Sought for 21st Century Community Learning Center Program

ISBE’s Innovation and Improvement Division is seeking additional grant readers for the FY 2012 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) Program grant competition. Preferred grant readers must have after school experience and knowledge in after school programming and/or community based programming that serves school age students, grantsmanship experience, previous grant reading experience, 21st CCLC experience and knowledge, program management and experience with schools and districts.

Readers will need to be available Aug. 15-19, 2011, to read the Request for Proposals (RFP). Readers will be required to participate in a training that will be delivered via a webinar on July 29, 2011. Readers will read and score their assigned applications, which will be sent to the readers through a web-based system. Access to a computer with Internet capability will be necessary. An honorarium will be provided. Once selected, readers will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, a memorandum of understanding and complete a conflict of interest questionnaire.

To be considered for this opportunity please send a letter of interest and resume or curriculum vitae by July 12, 2011, to Tammy Greco, Principal Consultant, Illinois State Board of Education, Innovation and Improvement Division, 100 N. First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001 or via e-mail at 21stcclc@isbe.net. Contact Tammy Greco with questions at (217) 524-4832.

Student Opportunities

Students Bring Home the Gold From SkillsUSA Championship

A team of four students from the Kankakee Area Career Center brought home a gold medal in the entrepreneurship team contest at the annual National Leadership and Skills Conference and SkillsUSA
Championships. The winning team was Jake Hines and Andrew Bond, both 2011 graduates from Herscher High School; Giovanni Schiavone, a junior at Beecher High School; and Brianna Jones, a 2011 graduate of St. Anne High School.

The team presented a business concept, competing against 14 other states in Kansas City, Mo., June 22-23. Team member Brianna Jones stepped in for Joe Volek, a senior from Beecher High School, who won with the team at the state level competition.

The SkillsUSA Championship is for high school and college level students who are members of SkillsUSA. The students compete in technical, skilled and service occupations. For more information, visit [http://www.skillsusa.org](http://www.skillsusa.org).

**Registration Under Way for Cyber Foundations High School Competition**

Registration is open for the Cyber Foundations High School Competition, which is sponsored by the U.S. Cyber Challenge, a coalition consisting of the Air Force Association (CyberPatriot), the Center for Internet Security, the Department of Defense Cyber Crime Center and the National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition.

The competition is a learning opportunity for students interested in cyber security and information systems management. The competition includes online tutorials and video education materials and quizzes covering networking, operating systems and system administration. The competition is part of the coalition’s goal to strengthen the work force with skilled cyber professionals.

The registration deadline is Sept. 30 and costs $100 per school or $25 per individual. For more information, go to [http://www.uscyberchallenge.org](http://www.uscyberchallenge.org) or [http://workforce.cisecurity.org/competitions-camps/cyber-foundations/](http://workforce.cisecurity.org/competitions-camps/cyber-foundations/).

**In the News**

**LaSalle-Peru High School to Receive Award from High Schools That Work**

LaSalle-Peru High School will receive the Outstanding High Schools That Work School Award at a ceremony later this month in Nashville, Tenn. The award is given to schools that have made noteworthy improvements in such areas as graduation rate, the percentage of students meeting college readiness as measured by the ACT, significant improvement on state assessments and other similar measures.

The award ceremony is set for July 20 at the start of the 2011 High Schools That Work Summer Staff Development Conference. High Schools That Work is a nationwide school improvement initiative for high school leaders and teachers. For more information, visit [http://www.sreb.org/page/1078/high_schools_that_work.html](http://www.sreb.org/page/1078/high_schools_that_work.html).

**National Parenting Gifted Children Week Begins July 17**

National Parenting Gifted Children Week kicks off on July 17. The annual special designation is sponsored by Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted (SENG). The nonprofit organization uses the week to bring attention to “the joys and challenges of raising, guiding and supporting bright young minds.” For more information, go to [http://www.sengifted.org](http://www.sengifted.org).

**Weekly News Clips**


**Employment Opportunities**

**ISBE External Vacancy List**

An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at [http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm).