The U.S. Department’s of Education and Health and Human Services last week released the final application for the Race to the Top — Early Learning Challenge (ELC). We will apply for funding under the Early Learning Challenge and have already begun taking steps to prepare an application.

The main goal of the ELC is to better prepare more “high need” children for kindergarten, focusing on five key areas:

- Establishing Successful State Systems
- Defining High-Quality Accountable Programs
- Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children
- Supporting a Great Early Childhood Education Workforce
- Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Here in Illinois we will focus on reaching every “high need” child and prioritizing their enrollment in early learning services from birth by improving cooperation among all state agencies. We need to better use data to guide decisions and measure outcomes, and establish more consistent monitoring based on common standards and criteria.

Additionally, our ELC application will include a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to provide parents and schools with information about a student’s development. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment that I will recommend will not mean sitting preschoolers down at a desk for a timed, bubble filling exercise. What we need is an assessment similar to what was recommended earlier this year by the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Stakeholder Committee that would be based on multiple observations by the student’s teacher.

I want to thank all of you who have taken the time to provide us with feedback on our survey about a possible NCLB waiver (http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ESEAWaivers). We’ve received some great ideas from the more than 400 of you who have responded so far and I look forward to hearing more of your thoughts as we consider what a waiver would look like for Illinois, should we decide to pursue it.

In my role as president of the Council of Chief State School Officers I have been in communication with the U.S. Department of Education, providing them with feedback of how I would like to see the waiver process implemented and what it could look like on an overall scale. Much of what I have suggested is based on feedback that has come up frequently in conversations that I have had with you.

Currently, 40 states have joined to form the Multistate Consortium on College and Career-Ready Accountability Systems to develop a next generation of accountability systems that are more realistic, focusing on student growth and improved achievement, rather than punitive measures that can stifle student progress. I believe that all states that take
on this crucial reform should be afforded waivers from many of the onerous requirements of NCLB. Some examples of
what that relief could look like include:

- Waive Mandatory Set-Asides for school choice and supplemental educational services irrespective of state or
district reform initiatives. There is no question that mandatory set-asides take money from schools that are
currently suffering dramatic cuts.
- Allow for More School-wide Programming by setting the poverty threshold for school-wide eligibility below
the current threshold of 40 percent of the student population.
- Allowing District Reforms within School Improvement 1003(g) (SIG). Guidance is clear that all activities
funded with SIG funds must directly relate to the full implementation of the selected intervention model,
which misses a great opportunity to fund district-wide improvements that directly impact the success of the
SIG schools as well as other schools in the district.
- Expand Uses of Funds Across the Law. There are several limitations and restrictions on the use of funds that
impede state and district reform efforts.
- These are just a few ideas, but important ones that I felt needed to be expressed to the Department in a broad-
based manner as they finalize decisions on the waiver process. If we are to pursue a waiver, we would still
need to work together on the specifics of our application and I look forward to receiving your continued input.

Thanks and have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- Affidavit of School Treasurer Bonds submitted by Regional Superintendents/Intermediate Service
  Centers – Sept. 1
- School Safety Conference in Hillside – Sept. 8
- 2010-11 High School Students Taking Community College Courses system district-level data submission
deadline – Sept. 15
- School-based Child Nutrition Sponsor Applications due – Sept. 15
- ISBE’s Transition Institute in Bloomington – Sept. 19-21
- “How Can I Help? The Summit on Aging Education and Service” in Normal – Sept. 26
- Parent Involvement Regional Summit in Lisle – Oct. 3
- ISBE offices closed for Columbus Day – Oct. 10
- Parent Involvement Regional Summit in Marion – Oct. 11
- Parent Involvement Regional Summit in Alsip – Oct. 14
- 2011-12 School District Budget form – Adopted by Sept. 30 and due to ISBE by Oct. 30
- Parent Involvement Regional Summit in Springfield – Nov. 1
- 2010-11 LEA Annual Financial Report – Due to ROEs/ISCs Oct. 14 and due to ISBE Nov. 15 (with the
  exception of those who received an “Extension of Time” approval letter)
- ISBE offices closed for Thanksgiving – Nov. 24 and 25
- FY 12 School Technology Revolving Loan Program (STRLP) application deadline – Dec. 1
- Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Spring ’12 – Jan. 13

Innovation and Improvement

ISBE’s 2011 Parent Involvement Regional Summits Return in October

The Illinois State Board of Education's Division of Innovation and Improvement is pleased to announce the
2011 fall Parent Involvement Regional Summits to be offered at four Illinois locations. The Regional Fall
Summits, created for Title I School Teams, have been developed to assist districts and schools in the
development and planning of strategies that sustain parent partnerships and to improve skills that join
families and schools on a common path to student achievement.
Summit 2: This working session will resume the work started in the spring summits. Using data specific to each school, this session will lead the school’s team through an evaluative action planning process and the development of a ready-to-implement plan that will satisfy family engagement requirements for school improvement planning. Break-out sessions will serve elementary, middle school and high school levels with practitioners from the spring Summits returning to provide support.

Participants will:
- Take away ready-to-implement strategies for family engagement.
- Build a network of support for future work in family engagement.
- Gain experience in tools and processes that will assist in future school improvement planning.

NOTE: School teams must complete the assignment from the spring summits prior to attending the fall summits. The assignment can be found at http://www.illinoisparents.org/isbesummitinfo.htm.

School Title I Teams should include administrators, school faculty and parents who are not employees of the school or district which they represent. Fall summit dates and times are listed below:
- Monday, Oct. 3 – Lisle Hilton, Lisle
- Tuesday, Oct. 11 – Williamson County Pavilion, Marion
- Friday, Oct. 14 – DoubleTree, Alsip
- Tuesday, Nov. 1 – Springfield Hilton, Springfield

All sessions are from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with check-in beginning at 9 a.m. Lunch will be provided. Schools can register their teams of two or more for one of the sessions at http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference or www.IllinoisParents.org. Please note the registration closing dates below:
- Lisle – Sept. 19
- Marion – Sept. 28
- Alsip – Sept. 28
- Springfield – Oct. 17

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Parent Involvement Regional Summits are the collaborative work of The Academic Development Institute, Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center and the Illinois Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC).

Capital Development Board

Capital Construction Grants Now Available for Early Childhood Services

Applications are being accepted for construction grants to increase the availability of early childhood services in underserved areas of Illinois. The grants are part of a $45 million appropriation under Gov. Pat Quinn’s Illinois Jobs Now! capital construction program. The projects funded by the grants will create more than 300 construction jobs.

Illinois public school districts or not for profit entities can apply for up to $5 million in funding, with a required 10 percent funding match, for grants that will construct, acquire, renovate, equip or expand facilities that serve the educational needs of children ages 0 to 5 in underserved areas of the state. Applications will be accepted through Nov. 14, 2011. The grant program is administered by the Capital Development Board (CDB) in consultation with the Illinois State Board of Education. Links to the grant application and rules are available at http://www.cdb.state.il.us.

“These early childhood education grants will increase badly needed services for Illinois families, plus they will create hundreds of construction jobs for Illinois workers. This is a win-win situation,” said CDB Executive Director Jim Underwood.

Curriculum and Instruction

Grant Funding Approved for Arts and Foreign Language Programs

The Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Arts Council are pleased to announce that grant funding for Arts and Foreign Language Programs has been approved for fiscal year 2012. This competitive grant program provides funding for planning or implementation of arts or foreign language curricula and programs in public school districts throughout the state. Districts may apply for either fine arts funding or foreign language funding.

The Planning Grant provides one year of funding for initiating a strategic planning process in the district to develop, improve or expand arts or foreign language programs.

The Implementation Grant provides up to three years of renewable funding for salaries, professional
development, curricular materials, classroom technology and supplies, and related student field trips.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) for both projects has been released. Applications are by 4:30 p.m. on Oct. 10, 2011. Full guidelines and materials can be found at http://isbe.net/curriculum/html/arts_fl.htm. An interactive Webinar providing application information will be conducted at 1 p.m. on Sept. 1. Registration information may be found at the Website listed above. The information presented during these Webinars will continue to be posted at the Website until the RFP due date.

For more information, contact Christina Steelman at csteelma@isbe.net or (217) 557-7323.

Let's Move in School: Physical Education Teacher Toolkit Available Online

The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) has created the Let's Move in School physical education teacher toolkit.

This free online toolkit provides easy-to-use resources and activities every month that can help educate administrators, school board members, parents and colleagues about the importance of a comprehensive school physical activity program with physical education as its foundation. Each month, the toolkit features:

- A single focused theme with tips and resources:
  http://www.aahperd.org/letsmoveinschool/tools/peteachers/theme_aug.cfm
- Physical activity break ideas:
  http://www.aahperd.org/letsmoveinschool/tools/peteachers/break_aug.cfm
- A communication to parents:
  http://www.aahperd.org/letsmoveinschool/tools/peteachers/communication_aug.cfm
- News about upcoming Webinars:
  http://www.aahperd.org/letsmoveinschool/tools/webinars/index.cfm

Legal

Registration Guidance for the New School Year

Visit http://www.isbe.net/pdf/guidance_reg.pdf for registration guidance for the 2011-12 school year and take time to review four areas that traditionally have generated confusion: Residency; Immigrant Pupils; Homeless Pupils; and School Fees and Waivers.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Education provided a guidance letter regarding residency of students and school enrollment, available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201101.html. The guidance letter was jointly issued by the Office for Civil Rights and the Office of the General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Education, and by the U.S. Department of Justice. It is similar to the Illinois State Board of Education’s registration guidance in determining residency.


Thomas Lay Burroughs Award

Nominations Sought for Award to Honor Outstanding School Board President

The Illinois State Board of Education invites you to nominate your local board president for the Thomas Lay Burroughs Award for the State's Outstanding School Board President.

This award was created in 1991 in memory of the late ISBE chairman and is presented each November at the IASB/IASA/IASBO conference in Chicago. This year, the conference will be held on Nov. 18-20 and the award will be presented that Sunday morning (Nov. 20).

Nominations should be submitted as indicated below by the close of business on Oct. 14, 2011. You can send your nomination to Jean Ladage via e-mail to jladage@isbe.net. Please indicate in the subject line of the e-mail: Burroughs Nomination. If you have questions, call Jean Ladage or Marsha Moffett at (217) 557-6626. For nomination information and format please go to http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf.

Funding and Disbursement Services

FY 2012 Funding for Children Requiring Special Education Services Calculations

The final FY 2012 Funding for Children Requiring Special Education Services school district amounts have
been calculated and can be accessed at

Per Section 14-7.02b of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/14-7.02b], after the block grant allocation for Chicago District 299 is subtracted from the final appropriation, all remaining funding is distributed 85 percent on average daily attendance and 15 percent on poverty as used in the calculation of General State Aid for each school district. In addition, districts eligible for Hold Harmless have been calculated per P.A. 95-0705 (effective Jan. 8, 2008). The language added to Section 14-7.02b states that, for fiscal year 2008 and each fiscal year thereafter, individual school districts must not receive payments under [Section 14-7.02b] totaling less than they received for fiscal year 2007 (commonly referred to as a “hold harmless” provision). However, the language further states that any “hold harmless” funding is to be “computed last and shall be a separate calculation from any other calculation set forth in [Section 14-7.02b].”

The “other calculation” referenced in the new language is the existing split of the entire appropriation – 85 percent based on each district’s average daily attendance and 15 percent on poverty. The change amount between FY 07 and FY 12 has been calculated. A district is eligible for Hold Harmless if the amount calculated is bracketed in the final column on the spreadsheet. Currently, there is no supplemental appropriation to pay the FY 12 Hold Harmless amount.

If you have questions regarding these calculations, contact Jodi Whitlow at jwhitlow@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.

Selected ARRA Programs Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011

The final date for grant recipients that have been awarded funds under selected programs for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is Sept. 30, 2011. This date is applicable to all grant recipients with active projects that were provided project date extensions to Sept. 30. It is critical that all activities and final obligations occur on or before Sept. 30. Extensions cannot be granted. Any unexpended funds reflected on final expenditure reports must be returned. The list of the ARRA programs that will expire are provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARRA Program Name</th>
<th>Rev Code(s)</th>
<th>CFDA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARRA Title I Low Income</td>
<td>4851, 4852, 4853 and 4854</td>
<td>84.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRA Sp Ed IDEA Part B Preschool</td>
<td>4856</td>
<td>84.392</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARRA Sp Ed IDEA Part B Flow Through</td>
<td>4857</td>
<td>84.391</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARRA Title II D Technology Competitive</td>
<td>4861</td>
<td>84.386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRA McKinney Vento Homeless Education</td>
<td>4862</td>
<td>84.387</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

If you have any questions, please contact your program consultant or the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at (217) 782-5256.

Special Education

Request for Proposals for Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center

On Aug. 24, 2011, ISBE issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to continue the implementation of the Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center (IS-TAC). Established by ISBE in 1998, IS-TAC is a state sponsored and federally funded entity consisting of four (4) collaboratively functioning projects (i.e., funded by federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B discretionary monies). The purpose of IS-TAC is to coordinate a regionalized system of technical assistance and training to build the capacity of schools to promote social and academic success of all students, including those with significant challenges and disabilities. IS-TAC promotes a prevention-based systems-change approach, which includes data-based decision-making and research-based instructional practices. The four collaborative projects that make up IS-TAC include the following:

1. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Network
2. Illinois Autism Training and Technical Assistance Project (IATTAP)
3. Project Children Have Opportunities in Inclusive Community Environments and Schools (CHOICES)

4. Parent and Educator Partnership (PEP)

The RFP, application forms, and other pertinent materials are posted at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm). Applications must be received by ISBE no later than Sept. 30, 2011. Questions about the RFP may be submitted to the Online Bidders’ Forum at istacfrp@isbe.net (preferred) or by contacting Dave Andel at (217) 782-5589.

**Illinois LRE Data Cohort Aims to Improve Placement Options**

The Special Education and Support Services division at the Illinois State Board of Education is looking for districts who are interested in participating in an exciting opportunity. The purpose of the LRE Data Cohort is to provide districts hands-on assistance in using their data to improve placement options for students with disabilities. Selected cohort districts will work with state and national technical assistance providers on modules that guide the process. Interested districts will form a team and participate in three work sessions during the spring and fall of 2012. Details can be found at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/lre_data_cohort.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/lre_data_cohort.pdf).

Districts who are interested in the Illinois LRE Data Cohort will be supported by ISBE through conference calls, Webinars and on-site technical assistance. To volunteer and be considered for the cohort, contact Erin Saxton at (217) 782-5589 or via e-mail at esaxton@isbe.net or contact Krista Hinton at (312) 814-8288 or via e-mail at khinton@isbe.net by Sept. 30, 2011.

**Nutrition**

**HealthierUS School Challenge News**

The HealthierUS School Challenge is the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s voluntary school nutrition and wellness initiative to improve student health and well-being. HUSSC rewards schools for excellence in promoting nutrition and physical activity. USDA’s national goal to certify 1,250 schools by June 30, 2011, has been exceeded by 23 schools; 1,273 achieved this recognition.

Kudos to Illinois’ 60 HUSSC certified schools representing five school districts. Schools participating in the challenge are recognized with Gold of Distinction, Gold, Silver, or Bronze-level certification. Illinois boasts three Gold of Distinction, 14 gold, four silver, and 39 bronze certified schools. These schools are certified for four years. Challenge certification also includes monetary incentives for schools – $2,000 for Gold Award of Distinction, $1,500 for Gold, $1,000 for Silver and $500 for Bronze, a plague and national recognition and prestige. A special celebration to honor the HUSSC certified schools, effective June 30, 2011, will be held at the White House, South Lawn in October.

Take the HealthierUS School Challenge today. Go to [http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/healthierUS/index.html](http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/healthierUS/index.html) for the application, training and technical assistance, FAQs, tips from award winners, a calculator, and more useful information. Contact cnp@isbe.net if you have any questions regarding the application. To view schools that have received a HUSSC award by state, region, and nationally, use the Healthy Access Locator at [http://www.healthyaccesslocator.com/](http://www.healthyaccesslocator.com/).

**Reminder Regarding Notice of School Breakfast Availability**

School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) must inform eligible families of the availability of reimbursable breakfasts served under the SBP. This must be done just prior to or at the beginning of the school year in the informational packets that are sent to each household with free and reduced price meal applications for the new school year, as well as through reminders sent multiple times throughout the school year.

Schools can provide reminders to children through their public address systems in schools or through means normally used to communicate with the households of enrolled children. Other acceptable outreach activities may include developing or disseminating printed or electronic material to families and school children. For example, information about the SBP should be posted on the school’s Website.

The Illinois State Board of Education encourages SFAs to use the information in Expanding Your School Breakfast Program, the SBP Toolkit found at [http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Breakfast/expansion/default.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Breakfast/expansion/default.htm), as a resource for outreach and expansion activities.

**School-based Child Nutrition Sponsor Applications Due Sept. 15**

The Sponsor/Site Applications to participate in the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast
and file it with the papers of his/her office. If the bond is in any respect defective, or if the sureties are insufficient, the bond shall be returned for correction.

In Cook County, the responsibilities and duties of the Regional Superintendent of Schools detailed in Section 3-8 and Section 8-2 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/3-8 and 105 ILCS 5/8-2) will be assumed by the respective Intermediate Service Center.

An electronic version of the Affidavit, and other information, can be found online at www.isbe.net/sfms/html/1t_bonds.htm.

Please contact Michelle Heninger, School Business Services Division, at (217) 785-8779 or mheninge@isbe.net with any follow-up questions.

Fostering Connections Act

Resources Offered for Awareness of Serving Children in Foster Care

Michael Yudin, the U.S. Department of Education’s Acting Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, and Bryan Samuels, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Commissioner for the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, issued a joint letter on Aug. 25 stressing the requirements of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act.

The Fostering Connections Act, enacted in 2008, made several changes to parts B and E of Title IV of the Social Security Act (IV-B and IV-E) in order to improve outcomes for children in foster care.

The Website of the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections (NRCPFC) provides some examples of education and child welfare collaborations in support of the Fostering Connections Act. The site can be accessed at http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfpp/info_services/download/ChildWelfareandEducation2pgr.pdf.

A list of state laws that have been passed in support of the Fostering Connections Act and additional information can be found at http://www.fosteringconnections.org. The U.S. Department of Education is online at http://www.ed.gov/, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is at http://www.hhs.gov/.
PARCC

Draft Model Content Frameworks
Feedback Extended Until Aug. 31

On Aug. 3, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers released draft model content frameworks for public review. The model content frameworks identify the main ideas in the Common Core State Standards for each grade level and will help determine the focus for various assessments being developed.

The draft frameworks in English language arts/literacy and mathematics will be posted on the PARCC Website at http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-content-frameworks until Aug. 31. Feedback is sought from K-12 educators, curriculum and assessment experts and other stakeholders via a survey at the site listed above. All feedback will be reviewed and final model content frameworks will be released in the fall.

PARCC is 24-state consortium working to develop common assessments, which is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The alliance is led by the member states and Achieve, a nonprofit group that aims to align K-12 education policies with the demands of employers and the postsecondary community. Visit http://www.parcconline.org for more information.

Professional Opportunities

Nominations Sought for National Teachers Hall of Fame

Nomination forms are available for the National Teachers Hall of Fame. Each year, the Hall of Fame, located in Emporia, Kan., inducts five teachers from across the country.

Candidates must be certified public or nonpublic classroom teachers with at least 20 years experience teaching in grades preK-12.

Anyone can nominate a teacher; self-nominations are accepted, too. For more information and a nomination form, go to http://www.nthf.org/ or call (620) 341-5660.

Upcoming Events

The Summit on Aging Education and Service to be Held Sept. 26

The Illinois Policy Academy on the Civic Engagement of Older Adults and the Intergenerational Initiative through the Center for Health for Law and Policy at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale are planning an upcoming summit. Other participants include the Illinois State Board of Education and the P-20 Council.

“How Can I Help? The Summit on Aging Education and Service” is set for 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 26 at the Illinois State University Alumni Center, 1101 N. Main St., Normal.

The summit will discuss ways to utilize the knowledge and skills of all generations to increase student achievement, with an emphasis in reading and writing. Registration is $15. To register, go to http://seniorprofessionals.illinoisstate.edu/. For more information, contact Jane Angelis at intnews@siu.edu or visit http://www.solit.siu.edu/GenServeGen.

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