Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This week the Illinois State Board of Education holds its December meetings in Springfield on Wednesday and Thursday. During Wednesday’s Finance and Audit Committee meeting (scheduled for 2 p.m. and available on the Internet), Board members will be discussing the FY 2013 (July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013) budget with input from, among others, experts from the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability. The Board will make its formal FY 2013 budget recommendation to the Governor and General Assembly at its January meeting.

The Board held a series of five FY13 budget hearings throughout the state in October and November, and included the first ever joint early learning budget hearing with representatives from the Governor’s Office and the Department of Human Services. We had more than 80 people testify at the hearings with additional supporters of specific programs in attendance. In addition, we also accepted comments through email, with more than 1,300 individuals advocating for a variety of programs.

This will again be a difficult year for budgeting, despite revenue from the tax increase, and it may be time for the General Assembly to consider changing some of the statutory formulas for disbursing certain State funds, such as those related to school transportation.

This week we will also honor a friend and colleague, Dr. Chris Ward, who is leaving the Illinois State Board of Education to spend more time with his family. Chris had been a member of the Board since September 2004, serving the entire time as Vice Chairman. During his time as a member of the State Board, Chris also represented Illinois a number of times as a representative to the National Association of State Boards of Education.

A former local superintendent in Lockport, Chris is passionate about education and focused on outcomes. Even in the most technical policy discussion he always came back to: “What is good for the boys and girls?” He has been a mentor to many of us, a good friend to education and a champion of the children of Illinois. We thank him for his service and wish him well in the future.

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Annual Statement of Affairs (ISBE Form 50-37) Submission**: Posted in newspaper by Dec. 1 and submitted to ISBE by Dec. 15
- **2011-2012 Teacher Service Record data deadline** – Dec. 15
- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 151 (School Construction Program)** – Public comment period ends Dec. 19
• Certificate of Tax Levy (ISBE Form 50-02) – Must certified and submitted to the county clerk by Dec. 26
• Deadline for Request for Proposals for Child Find Public Awareness Project – Dec. 29
• Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment, and Staff Report deadline – Dec. 31
• Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Spring ’12 – Jan. 13
• Deadline to submit written opt-out petition to regional superintendent of schools for Summer Food Service Program mandate (Public Act 096-0734) – Jan. 15
• Part 50 (Evaluation of Certified Employees under Articles 24A and 34 of the School Code) – Public comment period ends Jan. 17
• Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant) – Public comment period ends Jan. 30
• 2011-12 Teacher Salary Study data form deadline – Feb. 1
• 2011-12 Noncertified Staff Salary Study survey – Feb. 1
• Illinois New Teacher Collaborative’s Induction and Mentoring Conference – Feb. 22-23 in Springfield
• 2011-12 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline – June 30

Standards and Assessments

Impact of Grade 11 Definition and the Receipt of a Regular High School Diploma

ISBE has posted a flowchart to assist districts in applying the ISBE Rule that defines grade 11 and restricts promotion to grade 12 until a student has taken the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) or Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA). Please visit http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/impact_of_gr11_def.pdf to review this flowchart. Additional information related to legislation about state assessment and the receipt of a regular high school diploma is also available at this link.

Status of ACT Writing for Spring 2012 PSAE Administration

As announced by State Superintendent Koch in his July 11, 2011, Weekly Message, the grade 11 writing component has been eliminated from the state assessment. Funding for grade 11 writing was not reinstated for 2012 during the fall veto session, so ACT Writing will not be a part of PSAE Day 1 in 2012. Many districts inquired as to whether the ACT Writing could be optionally self-funded, and ACT has indicated to ISBE that this is not a feasible option.

PSAE Test Accommodations Coordinators should not submit any accommodations requests specific to ACT Writing, as previously suggested. Any ACT Writing accommodations requests will not be reviewed by ACT since ACT Writing is not a component of the 2012 PSAE.

PSAE Day 1 will consist of the battery of four multiple-choice ACT tests to enable students to receive the bonus of a college-reportable ACT score, as long as PSAE Day 1 is administered under standard-time conditions or with ACT-Approved accommodations.

However, students taking the PSAE this year will not receive an ACT Writing score, and, therefore, students who are seeking admission to universities and colleges that require a writing score on a national examination must take either the ACT or SAT on a national test date and independently from the PSAE that is being administered this spring. Of particular note for Illinois students is the University of Illinois, which requires a national exam writing score.

ISBE apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause for students and hopes to be able to reinstate grade 11 writing for Spring 2013 if funding is restored. Should your school staff have any questions concerning the administration of the PSAE, please write to psae@isbe.net.

School and Campus Security

Change Made to the Illinois Sex Offender Registration Act

An amendment to the Illinois Sex Offender Registration Act (730 ILCS 150/) in August now requires convicted sex offenders attending a higher education institution to register with campus police and security. Previously, convicted sex offenders were only required to register with police or sheriff at their home residence.

The new mandate has implications for K-12 schools that are leasing or providing classroom and other space for a college or university. School administrators at schools having these arrangements should contact the campus police/security unit for guidance and ensure the campus
police/security unit makes timely notification of any sex offender registered for college classes at the K-12 school. Since most of these classes are evening and Saturday courses, measures must be taken to ensure such sex offenders do not have access to minors in the school.


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**Funding and Disbursement Services**

**Updated Home/Hospital Instruction and Reimbursement Questions and Answers**

Public Act 97-0123 effective July 14, 2011, modified language in Section 14-13.01 regarding eligibility for Home or Hospital instruction. The Home/Hospital Instruction and Reimbursement Questions and Answers guidance has been updated accordingly and is online at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/home_hospital_qa.pdf. To review the changes in statute, the public act is posted at http://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/97/PDF/097-0123.pdf.

If you have questions about Home or Hospital Instruction claims for reimbursement, contact Judy Conboy at jconboy@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.

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**Educator Certification**

**Certification Fees Set to Increase at the Start of the New Year**

Please be advised that pursuant to PA 97-0607, signed on Aug. 26, 2011, that educator certification fees will increase on Jan. 1, 2012. The new fees are as follows:

- $75 application fee for each educator certificate
- $50 for each subsequent endorsement application
- $10 per year registration fee for the course of the validity cycle*

*The registration fee must be paid in its entirety. For example, the registration fee for a certificate with a five-year validity cycle would be $50. Any application that ISBE receives on or after Jan. 1, 2012, will be held to the new fee structure. If you are unsure as to whether or not an application and fee will reach the Illinois State Board of Education by Dec. 29, 2011, please utilize the Educator Certification System (ECS).

Applicants may apply online for most certificates through midnight of Dec. 31, 2011. Note that all fees continue to be non-refundable and non-transferable. Please contact Educator Certification at (217) 557-6763 with any questions.

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**U.S. Presidential Scholars Program**

**ISBE Seeks Nominations From Principals for Award Program to Honor Top Seniors**

The Illinois State Board of Education is asking high school principals for help nominating the state’s top seniors for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Education’s Commission on Presidential Scholars. The program has honored more than 6,000 outstanding high school seniors since being established by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964.

Students are selected on the basis of outstanding scholarship and promise of future success. Except for the first dozen or so years of the program’s existence, nominees have been invited to apply for Presidential Scholars recognition based solely upon SAT and ACT scores. In part to address this “identification gap,” starting in 1979, students who demonstrated ability and accomplishment in the visual and performing arts or creative writing have also been included in the Presidential Scholar pool. This year, two additional students from Illinois will be nominated:

Illinois high school principals are encouraged to nominate one student from their school who, while demonstrating outstanding scholarship, might not otherwise be nominated through the current SAT/ACT or arts recognition processes. All high school seniors graduating between January and June of 2012 who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents, who attend public, parochial or independent schools, as well as those who are homeschooled are eligible.

Please send a nominating letter to Ann Muraro of the Illinois State Board of Education’s Public Information Division at amuraro@isbe.net. The deadline is Dec. 19. For questions, call (217) 782-4648. All nominations will be reviewed and two students will be selected for possible national recognition. As in the past, the 2012 U.S. Presidential Scholars will be selected by the Commission on Presidential Scholars and will receive the Presidential Scholars Medallion and an expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June.
Title I SIG Program

Notice Inviting Public Comment on School Improvement Grant Waiver Request

As part of the Title I School Improvement Grant (SIG) program authorized by Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) has provided states with the opportunity to apply for a waiver of certain Title I requirements.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) intends to apply to DOE for a waiver from Section I.A.2(d)(1)(i)(B) of the final requirements of the SIG, which requires a local educational agency (LEA) to develop and implement teacher and principal evaluation systems that meet certain standards during the first year a school is implementing the transformation model. Those systems must be rigorous, transparent and equitable and take into account data on student academic growth as a significant factor as well as other factors, such as multiple observation-based assessments of performance, ongoing collections of information on professional practice reflective of student achievement and increased high school graduation rates. The systems must comply with Article 24A of the School Code and ISBE's administrative rules promulgated under Article 24A [See proposed Rules for Part 50 (Evaluation of Certified Employees under Article 24A of the School Code), at http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/default.htm.]

This waiver would permit ISBE, in accordance with criteria Illinois develops, to permit an LEA that is implementing the transformation model in one or more schools to take additional time to develop and implement high-quality teacher evaluation systems that meet these requirements.

This waiver would apply only to teacher evaluation systems for cohort 1 and cohort 2 SIG schools as follows:

- A school that began implementing the transformation model during the 2010-2011 school year (cohort 1) and that was not able to complete the development and implementation of its teacher evaluation systems during that year must develop them during the 2011-2012 school year and, at a minimum, pilot them for all teachers at the school no later than the 2012-2013 school year. The piloted systems should be capable of being used for decisions regarding, for example, retention, promotion, compensation, and rewards, no later than the 2013-2014 school year.

- A school that begins implementing the transformation model in the 2011-2012 school year (cohort 2) must develop its teacher evaluation systems during that year, pilot them for all teachers during the 2012-2013 school year, and use the system in the school, including for decisions regarding, for example, retention, promotion, compensation, and rewards, no later than the 2013-2014 school year.

For both cohorts, the pilot would include administration of both the teacher practice and student growth components of the evaluation system, although only the teacher practice component would be used for the final summative evaluation during the pilot year.

You are invited to provide comments to ISBE that will be forwarded to DOE along with Illinois’ waiver application.

Please submit comments or questions by Dec. 7, 2011, to Robin Staudenmier at estauden@isbe.net.

Nutrition

2011-12 School Employee Wellness Awards Program Accepting Applications

Does your school offer your employees a wellness program? If so, consider applying for recognition in the 2011-12 School Employee Wellness Awards Program, sponsored by the Directors of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE). Applications must be submitted online by Feb. 15, 2012. This awards program recognizes schools and school districts that demonstrate commitment to the health of their employees by implementing school employee wellness programs. Awardees will receive special recognition for their efforts that include grants (Bronze, $250; Silver, $500; Gold, $1,000) to be reinvested in their employee wellness programs.

A webinar hosted by DHPE is scheduled to start at 2 p.m. on Jan. 4, 2012, to review the SEW Awards Program and application. To apply for DHPE's School Employee Wellness Awards Program, or to learn more about school
employee wellness programs, visit http://www.schoolempwell.org.

Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

Department of Public Health Adopts Changes for Immunization Requirement

Recently, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) amended its rules to comply with recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for providing increased protection for infants against pertussis disease. Specifically, the ACIP recommends that a dose of combined Tetanus/Diphtheria/acellular Pertussis vaccine (Tdap) be administered at 11 to 12 years of age. To that end, the Illinois Department of Public Health proposed adding the following language to 77 Illinois Administrative Code 665.240(a):

5) Beginning with school year 2011-12, any child entering sixth grade shall show proof (see Section 665.250(b) of receiving one dose of Tdap (defined as tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) vaccine regardless of the interval since the last DTaP, DT or Td dose.

6) Students entering grades seven through 12 who have not already received Tdap are required to receive 1 Tdap dose regardless of the interval since last DTaP, DT or Td dose.

The rules were adopted and became effective on Sept. 27, 2011. Because this was after the start of school year 2011-12, IDPH requested that the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) allow schools flexibility in implementing the changes this year. ISBE has determined that the rules should be enforced starting school year 2012-13, and the Illinois Department of Public Health agrees this is a reasonable approach.

Questions can be directed to the ISBE Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at (217) 782-3950 or the IDPH Immunization Program at (217) 785-1455.


Early Childhood
RFP Issued for Child Find Public Awareness Project

ISBE has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) titled “Child Find Public Awareness Project.” As detailed in the RFP (see link below), the Child Find Project provides resources and materials for local education agencies (LEAs) and other child referral sources to assist them in meeting their requirements for Child Find. Child Find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires states to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, from birth through age 22, who are in need of early intervention or special education services.

The RFP and application forms are posted at http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/spec-ed.htm. Applications must be received by ISBE no later than Dec. 29, 2011. For questions about the RFP, contact Pamela Reising Rechner at (217) 524-4835 or preising@isbe.net.

Innovation and Improvement

Promote and Support the Illinois Youth Survey 2012

Please be sure that all schools in your district are aware of the time-limited opportunity to participate in the 2012 Illinois Youth Survey (IYS). All schools are encouraged to take advantage of this resource to support data-driven decision-making. Schools and their community partners have used their IYS data to inform plans and secure additional funding for Social and Emotional Learning, PBIS, bullying prevention and other efforts to support positive conditions for learning.

The Illinois Youth Survey (IYS) is a statewide self-reported adolescent survey administered every other year in Illinois schools and is designed to gather information about a variety of health and social indicators including alcohol and other drug use, nutrition and fitness, violence, bullying, gambling, depression, perceptions of school climate and more. Funded entirely by the Illinois Department of Human Services since 1990, the IYS is free in 2012 to all schools in the state when surveying sixth, eighth, 10th and/or 12th grade students. The IYS contract is now administered through the University of Illinois’ Center for Prevention Research and Development (CPRD).
Schools can register to participate in the Illinois Youth Survey 2012 at [http://iys.cprd.illinois.edu/register](http://iys.cprd.illinois.edu/register) before this opportunity passes. Because survey administration is funded by the state only every two years, the next opportunity to use the IYS at no cost will be 2014. If you have any questions or would like assistance with registration, please contact the IYS coordinator, Jessica Thomas, at (888) 333-5612 or email jthomas0@uillinois.edu.

An individual school report is sent to each participating school within 4-6 weeks in an easy-to-read format. A district summary can be provided if more than one school participates. No individual school or district results are released publicly without written permission from the school/district administrator.

Benefits:

- Schools and communities can use IYS to assess needs, track progress toward youth physical, social and mental health goals, and evaluate student support services.
- Training and technical assistance is available to help schools interpret and use their data.
- Statewide results, based on a random sample of Illinois youth, are available. Schools and communities can therefore review their own local results and answer the question: “Compared to Illinois youth overall, should this issue/behavior be a priority for our school or community to address?”
- Schools have the option of adding up to 30 questions to get data on local issues not included in the pre-printed survey form.
- No names or personal identifiers (e.g. IDs) are collected from students in order to protect confidentiality and promote truthful responses.
- Schools, districts and their community partners have used IYS data to support grant writing and justify budget allocations for student support services during these economically uncertain times.

Each school chooses a date to administer surveys any time between Jan. 15 and April 30; based on timing that is least disruptive to the school’s calendar. The IYS is available in a traditional paper/pencil format as well as online, in both English and Spanish, and can be completed in one 40-50 minute class period. While instruction time is of highest priority, devoting one class period every two years to this effort will benefit schools, students and families in multiple ways.

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### Educator Opportunities

#### Nominations Sought for Illinois Alliance for Arts Education Awards

There is still time to enter the Illinois Alliance for Arts Education Awards. Nominations must be postmarked by Dec. 17. Awards are presented in the following categories: Artist, Arts Educator, IAAE Organization, Industry, Public/Community Service, School Administration, Schools of Distinction and Arts Exemplar. For more information, including a nomination form, visit ISBE’s Innovation and Improvement Division online at [http://www.isbe.net/grants/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/grants/default.htm) and look under “What’s New?”

An award ceremony will be held at the Governor Mansion in Springfield on Thursday, March 15, during Illinois Arts Education Week, which will be held March 12-18. The Illinois Alliance for Arts Education is a member of the Kennedy Center for Arts Education Network and partially supported by the Illinois Arts Council.

### School Opportunities

#### Applications Available for TECH 2012 at the Illinois State Capitol Building

TECH 2012, an annual student showcase at the Illinois State Capitol building, will be held Wednesday, May 2, 2012. At TECH 2012 schools from throughout the state will share classroom technology projects with state legislators and the general public. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness of the role technology plays in preparing students to succeed in today’s world and to show the need for increased funding for classroom technology.

For more information about the event, go to [http://www.iceberg.org/tech_2012](http://www.iceberg.org/tech_2012). Schools selected to participate in TECH 2012 will send a team of four (two or three students and one or two teachers) to Springfield to share a school project with state legislators from approximately 12:30 to 3 p.m.

Schools interested in participating should submit an application at [http://www.iceberg.org/tech_2012_by_Jan_13](http://www.iceberg.org/tech_2012_by_Jan_13). Applications will be reviewed in mid-January and notification of selection status will be shared at the end of January. Selected teams will represent a balanced distribution between legislative districts, grade levels and curricular areas. The goal of TECH 2012 is to have
school representation from every legislative district throughout the state.

**Chicagoland Schools Eligible for Cubs Caravan Essay Contest**

For the second straight year, Chicagoland schools can enter an essay contest convincing the Chicago Cubs to visit their school on the annual Cubs Caravan. The Cubs Caravan Visits My School Contest will reward one school with a visit from Chicago Cubs players, coaches and front office leadership on the morning of Jan. 12.

Teachers or principals, in cooperation with their students, can visit [http://www.cubs.com](http://www.cubs.com) to submit an essay of 400 words or less in support of their school as a Cubs Caravan destination. The entry period is open now and ends at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 16. Schools must be located in Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake or McHenry counties in Illinois, or Lake or Porter counties in Indiana.

To enter the 2012 Cubs Caravan Visits My School Contest and to review official rules, visit [https://secure.mlb.com/chc/community/caravan_contest.jsp](https://secure.mlb.com/chc/community/caravan_contest.jsp).

**Student Opportunities**

**Annual National Radon Poster Contest Under Way**

Students ages 9 to 14 are eligible to enter the annual National Radon Poster Contest. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can reach dangerous levels in buildings. The contest aims to raise awareness so that families can protect themselves from lung cancer caused by radon gas.

The American Lung Association in Illinois, the Ecology Action Center, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Radon Program, Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago, Southern Illinois Radon Awareness Task Force and University of Illinois Extension are partnering with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to sponsor the Illinois portion of the contest.

The winning poster will be distributed during National Radon Action Month in January 2013. The first-place winner in the nation will receive $1,000. There are additional cash prizes for national and Illinois winners.

Posters are due to Cindy Ladage at the Illinois Emergency Management Agency on or before March 1, 2012. For more information, visit [http://takeactiononradon.illinois.edu/resources/contest](http://takeactiononradon.illinois.edu/resources/contest), email cindy.ladage@illinois.gov or call (800) 325-1245. The web site includes rules, submission forms and fact sheets on radon to educate students.

**Entries Sought for National STEM Video Game Challenge**

The 2012 National STEM Video Game Challenge is under way. The challenge is in partnership with Digital Promise, a new initiative created by President Barack Obama and Congress, supported through the U.S. Department of Education.

Entrants have until March 12, 2012, to submit their ideas and games. The contest is open to students and game designers in four levels: middle school, high school, college and graduate students, and educators.

Inspired by the Educate to Innovate Campaign, President Obama’s initiative to promote a renewed focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education, the National STEM Video Game Challenge is a multi-year competition whose goal is to motivate interest in STEM learning among America’s youth by tapping into students’ passion for playing and making video games.

For more information, visit [http://stemchallenge.org/about/Default.aspx](http://stemchallenge.org/about/Default.aspx).

**In the News**

**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).