Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

We have formally submitted our Race to the Top Phase 3 application, which will allow us to move forward with Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) initiatives as well as significant portions of our reform initiatives. We won the $43 million grant through our strong showing in the previous Race to the Top competitions and should receive final approval and access to the funds prior to the end of the year.

Half of the funding we receive will be used by the Illinois State Board of Education to build up the overall educational infrastructure in the state, while approximately $21 million will be reserved for districts that wish to move more aggressively in the implementation of our reform agenda. We will be providing information to you on how interested districts may apply to participate in Race to the Top 3. You may review the entire application on our website at http://www.isbe.net/racetothetop/PDF/phase3_app.pdf.

Last week we learned that we were not chosen for under the Early Learning Challenge. This was obviously disappointing, but we put together a very competitive application that we will use as a planning tool for the future. We will work with Governor Quinn’s office, the Department of Human Services and stakeholder groups to determine which parts we will be able to move forward with and which will have to be shelved until additional funding becomes available.

Finally, I’d like to wish everyone happy holidays. The Weekly Message will take a break and be back after the New Year.

I hope you are able to spend time with family and friends and enjoy the spirit of the season.

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **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

Funding and Disbursement Services

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and vendor data for the quarter ending Dec. 31, 2011, is due at the Illinois State Board of Education on or before Thursday, Jan. 5, 2012. This data is required for all ARRA projects that had activity after Sept 30, 2011.

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.

IMPORTANT: Grant recipients with ARRA projects that had an end date on or before Sept. 30, 2011, but had activity, i.e. liquidated/paid an outstanding obligation, after Sept. 30, 2011, are required to report ARRA data for the quarter ending Dec. 31, 2011. If the project activity after Sept. 30, 2011, paid a salary and/or a vendor payment of at least $25,000 this would be the FTE/vendor data reported. If the project activity after Sept. 30, 2011, did not fund any salary or a vendor payment of at least $25,000, the ARRA data, that must be reported, will be zero.

Please follow these three steps below to properly calculate the jobs FTE that must be reported for the period ending Dec. 31.

• Step 1: Determine the number of hours in a full-time schedule for ARRA funded employees between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31 (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 Dec 31.

• 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:

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

Dec. 31 ARRA data must be reported for the following ARRA programs if your LEA liquidated/paid an outstanding obligation after Sept 30, 2011:

• 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 Oct through December)

If you have any questions, contact Funding and Disbursement Services at (217) 782-5256.
EDUCATION JOBS ARRA REPORTING REMINDER – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY: If the LEA has submitted or plans to submit an expenditure report requesting reimbursement of qualifying expenditures (i.e. compensation and benefit costs) that occurred between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, the full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and vendor data must be reported for the period ending Dec. 31 even if an expenditure report for reimbursement has yet to be filed for that period of time. For example, if the LEA is going to submit in mid-January an Ed Jobs expenditure report requesting reimbursement of compensation and benefits expended during the reporting quarter ending Dec. 31, the LEA is required to report FTE jobs and vendor data to ISBE on or before the required ARRA reporting deadline of Jan. 5, 2012 even though the expenditure report has not yet been submitted by the LEA. This is true for any subsequent quarter.

Further, once the LEA begins to request Ed Jobs expenditure reimbursement they are obligated to report ARRA FTE jobs and vendor data via the ARRA Reporting System every subsequent quarter until all Ed Jobs Funds have been requested and reported, even if no expenditure reports for reimbursement have been submitted in the current ARRA reporting quarter. For example, if the LEA requested reimbursement and reported ARRA data through Sept. 30 and after doing so still has unexpended allocation, but has no Ed Jobs expenditures between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, they must still submit ARRA FTE jobs and vendor data for the Dec. 31 ARRA reporting quarter that reflects that 0 FTE jobs or vendor payments were funded with Ed Jobs dollars during the reporting quarter. Again, the LEA must continue to submit ARRA data reports for each reporting quarter, beginning with the quarter in which the compensation funding start date occurs until all Ed Jobs funds have been requested and reported.

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

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 jiconboy@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.

English Language Learning

ACCESS for ELLs

2012 Announcements

ELL Inclusion: All students in Illinois public schools, with limited English proficiency are required to participate in the annual ACCESS for ELLs assessment from Jan. 9 until Feb. 10, 2012. For policy questions regarding the ACCESS administration, contact Barry Pedersen in the Student Assessment Division of ISBE at (866) 317-6034, or Boon Lee in the Chicago ISBE office at (312) 814-3850. For questions about materials, contact MetriTech at (800) 747-4868. Technical questions about ACCESS may be addressed to the WIDA Help Desk at (866) 276-7735.

“Do Not Score” Box: School and district staff should be aware that federal law does not allow ELLs to be excused from language proficiency testing for any reason. Illinois public schools are obligated under NCLB to attempt this assessment for all students with limited English proficiency. Do not use the bottom row of squares (SPD) in the box entitled “Do Not Score This Section For This Student” on the back test booklet cover, in the lower right corner. Please, disregard the instructions on Page 29 of the ACCESS Test Administration Manual for using the Deferred Special Education/504 option. ACCESS for ELLs is a consortium product, and not all options apply to all states.

Alternate ACCESS: WIDA is making available a version of ACCESS designed for students with cognitive disabilities called the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. Unfortunately, the Alternate ACCESS will not be available soon enough for the Illinois 2011-12 administration. Therefore, Illinois will not make use of the Alternate ACCESS until 2012-13. All ELLs assessed during 2011-12 should use the standard version of ACCESS. Late testing with the Alternate ACCESS is not allowed for state accountability.
ACCESS Changes for 2012: ACCESS test administrators need to be aware of changes for the 2011-12 assessment cycle.

New for the Speaking Test in 2011-2012:
- Tier B and C students will now skip T1 tasks on the Speaking Test, unless they fail to meet T2 expectations on Parts A or B. This change was made in order to better communicate to students at higher proficiency levels the amount of language they are expected to produce.
- A comprehensive tutorial that explains changes to Speaking test administration procedures and provides further details of the rationale for the T2 change is available in the ACCESS for ELLs online training course at [http://www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us).
- The ACCESS for ELLs online test administrator training course will soon include new sound files at each language proficiency level in the speaking test module. These additional examples will help to clarify the scoring process on the ACCESS for ELLs Speaking test.

New for the Writing Test in 2011-2012:
The Grades 3-12 Tier A tests will now feature a Language of Language Arts (LoLA) writing task for Part B, instead of the current Language of Mathematics (LoMA) writing task. Part A remains a Social Instructional (SI) task and Part C an integrated Language of Mathematics (LoMA)/Language of Science (LoSC) task. The number of writing tasks remains unchanged.

The Listening and Reading test procedures are unchanged from 2010-11.

School Business Services

Annual Financial Report Deadline Passes
The Annual Financial Report (AFR) (ISBE Form 50-35) Submission Due Date of Dec. 15, 2011, has now passed for all School District/Joint Agreements who have not submitted the audited report. This includes those districts/joint agreements with approved extensions until Dec. 15, 2011. According to 105 ILCS 5/3-7 (Failure to Prepare and Forward Information) no further extensions of time are allowed by the Regional Superintendent. Those districts who have not submitted and AFR are now delinquent and are likely to be placed on the 2012 School District Profile in the Watch List category. Furthermore, any districts who have not submitted an AFR may find their federal revenue funds frozen until a completed and acceptable audit report is submitted.

If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact ISBE’s School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779 or email finance@isbe.net. For more information regarding the AFR, please see the following website: [http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/afr.htm](http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/afr.htm).

Career Development and Preparation

Illinois Innovative Talent Project Grant Announcement
The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Transportation hereby issue a Request for Application from schools interested in participating in the 2011-12 Illinois Innovation Talent (ILIT) program.

The goal of the ILIT program is to demonstrate how industry-sponsored problems can exemplify the Race to the Top STEM Learning Exchange functions at the middle and high school level where interdisciplinary teams of students collaborate on real-world problem-based learning (PBL) challenges designed to improve student achievement and increase college and career readiness.

Recognizing the need for students to become globally competitive, a public-private partnership formed in 2008 to design an initiative to promote innovation-centered education and increase student achievement in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This initiative connected schools with industry, government and community partners to critically examine and solve complex real-world problems as part of a work-based learning experience involving teams of students. ILIT demonstrates one of the work-based learning functions of the STEM Learning Exchanges as described in the State of Illinois' Race to the Top proposal.

There are nine challenge sponsors and statements that applicants are to select from. Up to five applicants will be selected for each challenge.
- **Challenge 1**: Abbott - Neuroimaging as a Tool to Advance the Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease.
- **Challenge 2**: Illinois State University Center for Renewable Energy and Western

- **Challenge 3**: Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council (MCHC) - Preventing Prescription Poisoning.
- **Challenge 4**: Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) - Freeway Interchange Innovations.
- **Challenge 5**: Illinois Department of Transportation and URS Corporation - Sustainable Bridge Design.
- **Challenge 6**: Center Point Properties - Creating More Efficient Supply Chains.
- **Challenge 7**: University of Illinois - Illinois Food System Design.
- **Challenge 8**: Bison Gear - A Working Mechanism Utilizing ServoNOW.
- **Challenge 9 by Invitation Only**: Baxter - Preventing Hospital-Acquired Infections.

Participating teams will receive a $5,000 stipend to cover project-related costs.

**Timeline:**
- Jan. 5, 2012: Informational Webinar (voluntary) 3:30-4 p.m. (For details, visit http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/webinar.htm.)
- Jan. 20, 2012: Applications are due.
- Feb. 10, 2012: Participants attend professional development day at IMSA for problem-based learning training, meet challenge sponsors, and develop implementation plan.
- February (TBD), 2012: Participants attend professional development day at IMSA or at sponsor’s facility to collaborate with sponsor and finalize implementation plan.
- February - April 2012: Participants implement challenges, collaborate with sponsors, and receive on-site training from IMSA.
- May 2012: Participants present their findings to their challenge sponsor and attend a project-sharing event to be organized by IMSA.

Please see http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/webinar.htm for the ILIT Request for Application. For more information, contact Jason A. Tyszko at jason.tyszko@illinois.gov, Marci Johnson at marjohns@isbe.net or Mark Williams at mawillia@isbe.net.

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**Rules and Waivers**

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

Several proposed rulemakings recently reviewed by the Illinois State Board of Education are available for public comment. The proposals have been posted on the agency’s Web site at http://www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

**Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois)**

Amends Section 30.20 in accordance with P.A. 97-607, stating that institutions of higher education can no longer entitle principals with a general administrative endorsement after August 31, 2014; updates Section 30.45 to provide a link to the revised Standards for Professional Learning published by Learning Forward (previously, the National Staff Development Council).

**Affected Sections:** 30.20, 30.45

**Deadline for Public Comment:** February 13, 2012

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**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.

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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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Nutrition

Summer Breakfast and/or Lunch Program Mandate

Public Act 096-0734 (amends Public Act 095-0155), amends Section 20 of the Childhood Hunger Relief Act (105 ILCS 126/20). This amendment requires a school district to implement a summer breakfast and/or lunch program for the duration of the summer school program in all schools where 50 percent or more of the student population is eligible for free or reduced-price meals AND that have a summer school program. This amendment applies to all schools that meet the above criteria, including those schools not currently participating in any federal Child Nutrition Program.

The legislation, along with question and answers, is accessible at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition on the Summer Food Service Program webpage under Regulations and Policies or on the National School Lunch Program under Public Act 096-0734 — Summer Food Service Program. Staff from the Nutrition Programs Division is available at (800) 545-7892 or (217) 782-2491 for technical assistance with reimbursement or program operations.

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.

Educator Opportunities

Nomination Deadline Extended for Illinois Alliance for Arts Education Awards

There is still time to enter the Illinois Alliance for Arts Education Awards. The deadline for nominations to be postmarked has been extended to Dec. 20. 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 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.

Nominations Sought for History Teacher of the Year Awards

Do you know an outstanding teacher passionate about American history? Gilder Lehrman History Teacher of the Year Award nominations honoring middle and high school teachers can be made now at http://www.gilderlehrman.org/nhtoy. State winners each receive $1,000, and the national winner receives $10,000. All winners receive an archive of materials for their school library, donated in their honor. All full-time educators who teach American history are eligible.

Nominations can be made by a student, parent, colleague, principal or school administrator familiar with the teacher's work. The nomination deadline for the 2012 award is Feb. 1. The award is sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute, Preserve America and the History channel. One winner will be chosen from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Territories and Department of Defense schools. These winners will be considered for the national award.

For more information, visit the website above or contact the National History Teacher of the Year coordinator at nhtoy@gilderlehrman.org or (646) 366-9666, ext. 28.

Free Financial Literacy Conference Scheduled for Next Month in Chicago

Registration is under way for the fourth annual K-12 Teacher Conference on Financial Literacy, which is organized by Econ Illinois, a non-profit organization that provides professional development and resources to K-12 teachers.

The free conference is set for Jan. 20 at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, 230 S. LaSalle St. To register and for more information, go to http://www.econed-il.org/icee/123.shtml. A $50 participation stipend and over $100 in curriculum materials are available for each eligible K-12 teacher in Illinois. Reservations will be accepted through Jan. 13 or until all spots are taken.

Student Opportunities

Econ Illinois Offers Contests for High School Students

Econ Illinois, a non-profit organization that provides professional development and resources to K-12 teachers, is offering two competitions for high school students.

The Illinois Personal Finance Challenge targets consumer education and personal finance students that compete in teams. Twenty teams advance to the state finals in Chicago and a state championship team will compete at the national stage.

Registration for the preliminary online competition begins Jan. 1 and ends Feb. 15. Go to http://econed-il.org/icee/ipfc.shtml to register.

Econ Illinois’ other contest is the Illinois Economics Challenge, an online competition for high school students that tests knowledge of economics and economic reasoning abilities. Registration for the preliminary round will be accepted from Jan. 1 to Feb. 15. For more information, visit http://www.econed-il.org/icee/econchal.shtml.
**Chicago TIBETcenter Organizes Essay Contest for 11th-Graders**

Eleventh-graders in Illinois are eligible to take part in an essay contest sponsored by the Chicago TIBETcenter. Three winners will be selected to each receive a $1,000 prize and an invitation to attend and read their essay during the Dalai Lama’s public talk set for April 26 at Loyola University Chicago.

The essay topic, which was selected by the Dalai Lama, is “How can an attitude of non-violence counteract the prevalence of violence in our families, in our communities, and in international relations; and how can we as individuals cultivate and promote such an attitude?”

The deadline for essay submissions is Jan. 31. For complete rules and additional information, visit http://tibetcenterchicago.org/High_Schools.html. In addition, Illinois high school principals can request one of a limited number of tickets available for one of their students to attend the April 26 event. Visit the Website above for details.

The Chicago TIBETcenter ([http://www.TIBETcenterchicago.org](http://www.TIBETcenterchicago.org)) is a not-for-profit Tibetan art and cultural organization.

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**In the News**

**Weekly News Clips**


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**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).