Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Severe weather can occur anytime, a truth many of us know firsthand. Our southern counties were struck by tragedy last week as tornadoes and severe storms crashed through, destroying homes and businesses and taking life.

Living in Illinois, we know that a violent change in weather can occur within a matter of minutes, whether it’s a blizzard, flood, severe thunderstorm or tornado. We can only plan and prepare for the worst. While tragic, it is a timely reminder for all of us to take a few moments and review our preparedness efforts, both for our schools and personally. Review the plans you have made and the various contingencies, in buildings, on buses, at extracurricular events or in responding to assist your community. Make sure staff understands their role in protecting our students. We have many online resources, including the School Emergency and Crisis Response Plan Template districts are required to complete and review with first responders each year at [http://www.isbe.net/safety/guide.htm](http://www.isbe.net/safety/guide.htm). Districts can also get information on Emergency Planning Guides, Bio-Terrorism and other links at [http://www.isbe.net/construction/health_safety/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/construction/health_safety/default.htm).

Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Harrisburg who now are beginning the long process of rebuilding their community and dealing with lost family and friends.

We had 140 districts, including the Chicago Public Schools, submit Statements of Intent to become participating districts in our Race to the Top 3 grant. The preliminary allocations have been posted on our website at [http://www.isbe.net/racetothetop/PDF/phase3-partic-lea-alloc-prelim.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/racetothetop/PDF/phase3-partic-lea-alloc-prelim.pdf). The U.S. Department of Education requires all Race to the Top states to calculate each Participating LEA share based on the Title I share of the Participating LEA compared to the Title I share of all Participating LEAs combined. Due to the Title I numbers of the Participating LEAs, the preliminary allocation for the Chicago Public Schools is $16.4 million or 77 percent of the $21.4 million total, rather than their overall statewide share of Title I, which is about 48 percent. This means substantially smaller shares for other Participating LEAs than what many of us expected, but the formula is set in federal law so there is no leeway.

We will have a webinar from 10 a.m. to noon Thursday, March 8, for those districts that will be completing a Scope of Work to continue on in partnership with us. You can register for the webinar at [https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/598489120](https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/598489120).

Thanks,

Chris
Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Overview of SIG 1003(g) Intervention Models and Grant Requirements webinar** – March 14 (Register at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/582815441)
- **Migrant Education Program grant application deadline** – March 15 (Application available at http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/migrant.htm)
- **Part 226 (Special Education) and Part 575 (School Technology Program)** – Public comment period ends March 26
- **Part 51 (Dismissal of Tenured Teachers under Article 24 and Dismissal of Tenured Teachers and Principals under Article 34 of the School Code)** – Public comment period ends April 2
- **Maintenance Grant Program application deadline** – May 1
- **ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day** – May 28
- **2011-12 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30
- **ISBE offices closed for Independence Day** – July 4
- **2011-12 Regional Safe Schools Program (RSSP) student reporting deadline** – July 31

Innovation and Improvement

**Overview of SIG 1003(g) Intervention Models and Grant Requirements**

Join us for the Overview of SIG 1003(g) Intervention Models and Grant Requirements webinar on March 14. Space is limited. Reserve your webinar seat now at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/582815441.

This introductory webinar is designed for schools that are eligible to apply for the SIG 1003(g) grant. Staff from Innovation and Improvement will explain the requirements of the four intervention models required under the grant, i.e. turnaround, transformation, restart and closure. Additionally staff will provide a general overview of the grant application process, requirements for working with a pre-approved lead partners and the grant application timeline.

Participants are encouraged to review earlier SIG 1003(g) RFPs and related resources at http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/sip_1003.htm. Here are the webinar details:

**Title:** Overview of SIG 1003(g) Intervention Models and Grant Requirements  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 14, 2012  
**Time:** 1:30-3 p.m.  
**System Requirements:** Windows 7, Vista, XP or 2003 Server required for PC-based attendees.  
Mac OS X 10.5 or newer required for Macintosh-based attendees.

PARCC

**PARCC Releases Invitation to Negotiate to Engage Educators**

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a 24-state consortium working together to create next generation assessments in English language arts and mathematics, has released through the Florida Department of Education, PARCC's fiscal agent, the Educator Leader Cadre, Meeting Logistics and Meeting Content Services Invitation to Negotiate (ITN). The Educator Leader Cadres (ELC) are a major part of PARCC's ongoing work to engage educators in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the development and implementation of the PARCC assessments.

To read more from the PARCC news release, go to http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-releases-itn-engage-educators. For those interested in Illinois, send a letter of interest and resume by March 15 to Susie Morrison, ISBE Deputy Superintendent, at smorriso@isbe.net.

Educator Certification

**Taskforce Asks Superintendents to Complete Survey on Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs**

The taskforce created by Erin’s Law, (Public Act 096-1524) requests superintendents’ assistance in the following short survey. As the final report is prepared, the taskforce would like to identify districts that currently offer sexual abuse prevention programs and understand how such programs are structured across the state. Thank
The plan includes a checklist of assurances that Illinois has policies and procedures in effect to comply with the requirements of the December 2004 amendments to IDEA. Where Illinois is not in compliance with the IDEA amendments of 2004, a date is given by which Illinois assures that policies and procedures will be in effect. The plan for expenditure of state-level IDEA funds by category is also a component of the state plan.

Written comments will only be accepted March 30 to April 30. To submit a written comment, go to http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/IDEA_PartB_FFY12_comment.pdf.

In addition, public comments can be emailed to partbapplication@isbe.net or mailed to: David Andel, Division Administrator, Illinois State Board of Education, Division of Special Education Services, 100 N. First St. – N-253, Springfield, IL 62777-0001.

Interested persons can review a copy of the plan and comment form in the Information Center, First floor South of the Illinois State Board of Education, 100 N. First St., Springfield.

Illinois Association of School Business Officials

Routing Practices Survey Under Way for School District Transportation Directors

The Illinois Association of School Business Officials is asking for all school district transportation directors to complete a short survey regarding current transportation policies and procedures for their respective district. The data collected through this survey will be summarized and presented during the annual IASBO conference in May at the Transportation Professional Development Committee’s “Best Routing Practices” session. Participation in this survey is requested and appreciated.

Please click on the following link to complete the survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/routingbestpractices2012.

Response to Intervention

Registration Open for RtI Professional Development Trainings

The following Response to Intervention (RtI) Professional Development Trainings are available for registration. Rooms are available under RtI at participant’s expense at each site. Continental breakfast, lunch and beverages will be provided. There is no cost associated with workshop attendance but each participant must register. Five CPDU are available for credit per day. Each participant will receive a flash drive with access to all seven modules, including the PowerPoint presentations and handouts. More workshops will be available in June throughout the state as well.

Encouraged to attend are K-12 grade: administrators, curriculum directors, special education directors, school psychologists, teacher leaders, math and reading specialists, special education teachers, English language learner teachers, general education teachers and content area teachers.

These modules were designed to provide guidance for districts to fully implement the Response to Intervention process. We strongly suggest all participants register for the two-day overview and then take either the two-day literacy or math training. The literacy and math trainings are provided on the same day, and each grade band training is presented concurrently. Choose a grade level to attend: K-3, 4-8 or 9-12. However, if a participant would like to register for only the overview or only a math or literacy training, registering for just one module is acceptable. Registration starts at 8 a.m. and the training workshops will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Contact Sarah McCusker, Principal Consultant, at smccuske@isbe.net or (217) 524-4832 with questions. For more information on Response to Intervention visit http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm. Register at http://maconpiattroe.org/joomla15/index.php?option=com_eventbooking&view=category&Itemid=106. Here are the locations:

Naperville: March 29-30 overview and April 16-17 math and literacy; Hilton-Lisle, 3003 Corporate W. Drive 60533; (630) 505-0900

Fairview Heights: March 27-28 overview and April 9-10 math and literacy; Four Points Sheraton, 319 Fountains Parkway; (618) 622-9500

Springfield: March 27-28 overview and April 4-5, math and literacy; Crowne Plaza, 3000 S. Dirksen Parkway; (217) 529-7777

Chicago: TBD
Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

2011-12 Prevention Initiative – Parent Evaluation is Available on IWAS

The “Prevention Initiative – Parent Evaluation” IWAS system is open for school year 2011-12 data entry. All educational entities that received Prevention Initiative funds this school year to serve at-risk children birth to age 3 (0-3) and their families are required to submit these data to ISBE, per Section 2-3.89 of the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/2-3.89). The deadline for submitting the data is July 2. The user guide for “Prevention Initiative – Parent Evaluation” reporting on IWAS is available at http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/86-56A_60_Instructions.pdf.

Questions about using the “Prevention Initiative – Parent Evaluation” IWAS system should be directed to the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600. Questions about the data to be submitted should be directed to Dr. Lilibeth Q. Gumia in the ISBE Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at (217) 782-3950 or lgumia@isbe.net.

Nutrition

SY2012-2013 Meal Pattern Question and Answer Webinar Scheduled for March 21

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released the nutrition standards for school meals beginning with school year 2012-13. The new standards were designed to align school meals with the most recent nutrition recommendations and current capabilities of schools. The Nutrition Programs Division of the Illinois State Board of Education presented a webinar on the USDA Food Based Meal Pattern Overview for School Year 2012-2013 on Feb. 22. This recorded webinar as well as the PowerPoint presentation used for this webinar are available on our website. (See link below.)

Another webinar for Illinois schools on this topic is planned for 1:30 p.m. March 21. The webinar will provide a brief overview of the new meal pattern with a focus on question and answers submitted by schools since the earlier webinar regarding overall implementation. Space is limited. Register online at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/173745472. If you are unable to attend the webinar, this webinar will be recorded and available for viewing on ISBE’s website shortly after the live webinar is presented.

The USDA currently has a number of resources available for schools to utilize to help them prepare for changes that are to be put into place for 2012-13. The resources include:

- Final Rule: Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs
- School Meals Sample Menus – One Week - Elementary School only
- New Meal Patterns and Dietary Specifications Chart
- Implementation Timeline
- Policy Memo SP 10-2012: Questions and Answers on the Final Rule

To access these resources, as well as the ISBE recorded webinar and PowerPoint presentation, visit our website, http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/nslp_hhfka_implmentation.htm. If you have any questions, please contact our office via email at cnp@isbe.net or via telephone at (800) 545-7892.

First Choice: A Procurement Training for School Food Service Training Announced

The Nutrition Programs Division of the Illinois State Board of Education is happy to announce a training opportunity related to general food service procurement planned for June 2012. Trainers with the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) will be in Illinois to offer the 2 1/2 day First Choice Procurement Training at two locations: June 5-7, 2012, in Springfield and June 12-14 in Joliet. Space is limited. Register online at http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnscalendar/asp/eventlist.asp.

The second edition of the First Choice: A Purchasing Manual for School Food Service (available online at http://www.nfsni.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=64) will be used for this training. The second edition updates procurement information and integrates food safety information to assist purchaser in establishing procedures to assure receipt of a safe product. Procurement requirements will be explained including steps in purchasing, regulations, market place environment, product movement, bid units, specifications, brand approval, obtaining prices, monitoring cost, product testing, receiving and storage and purchasing cooperatives.

Questions related to this training can be addressed to Chad Martel at cmartel@isbe.net or (800) 545-7892.
Community Eligibility Option Webinar for New Applicants Scheduled for March 27

Community Eligibility Option (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.

For a LEA to be eligible to use CEO for school year 2012-13, the LEA must have one or more school that has an identified student percentage of 40 percent or greater as of April 1, 2012. The identified student percentage is NOT the same as the total number of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Identified student counts ONLY include the following:

- Directly certified students and extension of direct certification benefits to other household members
- Homeless students certified as such by the district liaison
- Migrant youth certified by local officials
- Runaway youth certified by local officials
- Head Start students
- Pre-K Even Start students, and
- Foster children, certified based on documentation from the foster child case worker.

The LEA and school must agree to offer all enrolled students breakfasts and lunches at no cost (free) and cover any cost above the federal reimbursement received with non-Federal funds. CEO is approved for four successive school years, with an option annually to return to traditional meal counting and claiming procedures. Reimbursement for schools participating in CEO is based on claiming percentages (Free and Paid only) derived from the percentages of identified students multiplied by a USDA established factor.

ISBE’s Nutrition Programs Division will host a CEO webinar for new applicants from 2-3:30 p.m. March 27. This webinar will provide interested sponsors general information about CEO, how to determine the “identified student” number as well as application information. Register for this webinar at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/608304953. If you are unable to attend the webinar, this webinar will be recorded and available for viewing on ISBE’s website shortly after the live webinar is presented.

The CEO application for SY2012-13 (July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013) will be available online on April 1.. The application must be completed and returned to ISBE for review by the close of business June 29.

For more information about CEO, including the USDA Fact Sheet about this option, visit our website at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/nslp_hhfka_implementation.htm. If you have any questions, please contact our office via email at cnp@isbe.net or via telephone at (800) 545-7892.

School Business Services

Maintenance Grant Program
Applications Available on IWAS

Application materials for the Maintenance Grant Program are available on the IWAS System. Applications must be submitted to the Regional Offices of Education by May 1.. The Maintenance Grant Program is a dollar for dollar state matching grant program providing up to $50,000 for the maintenance or upkeep of buildings or structures for educational purposes. All school districts, cooperative high schools and Type 40 area vocational centers are eligible.

On Feb. 16, Gov. Pat Quinn announced the release of $50 million for the Maintenance Grant Program as a part of the Illinois Jobs Now! Capital Program. The grant application can be found on the IWAS system.

For more information and assistance, go to the School Maintenance Program Grant page on ISBE’s website at http://www.isbe.net/sbss/smp_grants.htm or contact Kimberly Beachy with the School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779.

Common Core

IMSA to Hold Session on Assessing the Common Core Standards and Practices

With support of the governor’s P-20 Council and ISBE, the Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy are sponsoring an event to write assessment items aligned with the Standards and Practices. During the two-day session, participants will learn about models from the top performing countries, review the latest information from PARCC and view examples from other states, but the vast majority of time will be devoted to writing items that require higher order thinking skills and the ability to apply critical concepts. The main goal is to create a significant pool of sample items that will prepare students for future assessments and inform both Illinois
leaders and the national PARCC consortium. Please note that while travel or housing is not covered, meals and snacks will be provided. Here are the details:

Assessing the Common Core Standards and Practices: Friday, March 9 (10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and Saturday, March 10 (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.); Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy; 1500 Sullivan Road, Aurora, IL 60506.

Please RSVP by March 5 to Mindy at (630) 907-5023 or Michelle at (630) 907-5037 or via email to mmalenke@imsa.edu.

U.S. Department of Education

Attention: 2011-12 Civil Rights Data Collection Under Way

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) 2011-12 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) has started. This is a universal collection from all LEAs, schools and state-operated facilities (e.g. schools for the deaf and blind and other facilities for individuals with disabilities and juvenile justice facilities).

- The CRDC Advance website, http://www.crdc2011.org, has opened. ED requests every district to access the site by March 15, 2012, to provide district contact information and update the school list.
- Your district’s Log in ID and Password information was included in the Jan. 3 letter from ED, mailed to your district via USPS.
- The submission of CRDC data will be in the August/September to December 2012 time frame.

If you need any information (including your district’s log-in ID and password) or if you have any questions about the 2011-12 CRDC, contact the CRDC Partner Support Center:

- Phone: (855) 320-6459
- Email: eden_crdc@ed.gov
- Fax: (888) 329-3336
- TTY/TDD: (888) 403-3336

Simplified Pre-Application Process for Annual i3 Competition Kicks Off

The U.S. Department of Education has announced the third year of the Investing in Innovation (i3) grant competition for local educational agencies, groups of schools and non-profit organizations to improve student results through innovative practices. This competition invites entities interested in grants of up to $3 million — termed “Development” grants under the i3 competition — to submit a simplified pre-application starting today through April 9. To learn more about the i3 grant program and the new pre-application process, visit http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html.

Student Assessment

Translated ISAT Directions for 2012 Available Online

Translated Illinois Standards Achievement Test directions for 2012 are now available online under the “Information for ISAT Coordinators” heading on the ISAT web page, http://www.isbe.net/assessment/isat.htm.

The languages available are Arabic, Chinese, Gujarati, Korean, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Urdu and Vietnamese.

Survey Under Way for Principals and Teachers on ISAT Testing

The IL Assessment Consequences Evaluation (IACE) is conducting an online survey to learn about the consequences of ISAT testing from principals’ and teachers’ perspectives. Information gathered from this study may contribute to the development of a long-range strategic plan for the IL Assessment and Accountability Program. A randomly selected sample of principals and teachers (grades 3-8) will be receiving an email with the survey link and are strongly encouraged to participate.

All survey results are confidential. For more details, please contact Katherine Ryan, principal investigator, at (217) 333-7177 or email iace@illinois.edu.

Student Opportunities

Jack Kent Cooke Young Scholars Program Seeks Eligible Seventh-Graders

Applications are available for the Jack Kent Cooke Young Scholars Program, which is a highly competitive national scholarship program open for academically talented seventh-graders. If awarded, the scholar will be given academic and financial support through high school and college.

Only seventh-graders can apply. Students must have A's and B's in core subjects since the sixth grade, Family Adjusted Gross Income must be below $80,000, and
parents or guardians of the student do not have a graduate or professional degree.

The deadline to apply is April 16. For more information, visit http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/jkc/ and http://www.jkcf.org/. For questions, contact Tammie Stewart of Northwestern University’s Center for Talent Development at (847) 491-7127 or tammie-stewart@northwestern.edu.