Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week members of the Illinois State Board of Education met in Springfield. The one-day meeting was productive, allowing members and agency staff a chance to discuss legislative priorities and to have additional meetings with legislators to make the case for the Board’s budget proposal. These types of face-to-face meetings are crucial, especially in light of the increased pressure from pension and Medicaid costs.

Board members approved the annual financial profile of districts, which shows that some very difficult decisions are being made by districts around the state to keep their finances healthy. For the third year, we used revised data that takes into account late payments from the state, removing the impact of late Mandated Categorical payments and other state grants for Fiscal Year 2011 in the review process. As of last week, the state had more than $4.4 trillion in late payments, including $729 million to schools.

The financial profile is only a snapshot in time, but it does show that the number of districts in the highest category, Financial Recognition, has increased to include more than 77 percent. While this appears to be good news, our data also shows that administrators continue to reduce their spending and increase borrowing to balance the budgets. Increasing cash balances by issuing new or restructuring existing debt and the continued cutting of programs and staff are trends that cannot be sustained.

The Board also received an update on agency staff work to reform the statutory transportation funding formula. We are trying to protect this line item that has been significantly reduced over the past two budget cycles and move it away from a strictly reimbursement model to one that is based on average per mileage or per pupil expenses.

We’ve been working with stakeholder groups to identify changes that would provide benefits to districts and encourage efficiencies within the formula. We are also proposing a three-year hold harmless for districts that would be negatively impacted by a formula change. Some additional revisions being proposed include: eliminating the transportation mandate; eliminating flat grant funding, and the reimbursement of all vehicles other than yellow school buses; extending the permissive transportation tax levy from 0.2 percent to 0.24 percent; indexing costs based on the Consumer Price Index; and continuing funding for transportation of pupils through hazardous conditions as determined by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Not everyone will benefit from the proposed changes, but our hope is to continue to see the state provide some meaningful level of transportation funding, rather than continue to see the line item erode to the point of elimination. I anticipate the proposal to be introduced in bill form very soon.

Have a great week!

Chris
Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **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
- **Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) Request for Proposal (RFP) deadline** – April 20 (RFP can be found at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/taoep.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/taoep.htm))
- **New Part 475 (Contested Cases and Other Formal Hearings), Repeal of existing Part 475 (Contested Cases and Other Formal Hearings), and Repeal of Part 485 (Appeal Proceedings before the State Teacher Certification Board)** – Public comment period ends April 23
- **Illinois RtI Network Request for Applications** – Deadline April 25 (Details at [http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm))
- **Maintenance Grant Program application deadline** – May 1
- **Action for Healthy Kids’ School Grants for Healthy Kids application deadline** – May 5 ([http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/upcoming-events/grant-opportunities/school-grants-for-healthy.html](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/upcoming-events/grant-opportunities/school-grants-for-healthy.html))
- **Part 226 (Special Education)** – Public comment period ends May 7
- **Part 25 (Certification), Part 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing), Part 350 (Secular Textbook Loan) and Part 451 (Private Business and Vocational Schools)** – Public comment period ends May 21
- **ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day** – May 28
- **Preschool For All 3-5 grant continuation application deadline** – June 5
- **RtI Professional Development Trainings, Overview, Normal** – June 7-8
- **Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year nomination deadline** – June 8
- **RtI Professional Development Trainings, Math or Literacy, Normal** – June 14-15
- **RtI Professional Development Trainings, Overview, Chicago** – June 14-15
- **Prevention Initiative (0-3) grant continuation application deadline** – June 19
- **RtI Professional Development Trainings, Overview, Mount Vernon** – June 19-20
- **RtI Professional Development Trainings, Math or Literacy, Chicago** – June 20-21
- **2011-12 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30
- **Preschool for All Program Record reporting deadline** – July 2 (User guide available at ftp://help.isbe.net/webapps/PFAPrgReport/PFAPreUserguide.pdf)
- **ISBE offices closed for Independence Day** – July 4
- **2011-12 Regional Safe Schools Program (RSSP) student reporting deadline** – July 31
- **ISBE offices closed for Labor Day** – Sept. 3

### Funding and Disbursement Services

**March 31, 2012, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Data Due April 5, 2012**

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and vendor data for the quarter ending March 31, 2012, is due at the Illinois State Board of Education on or before Thursday, April 5, 2012. This data is required for all ARRA projects that had activity after Dec. 31, 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 active ARRA projects must report regardless of whether any jobs were funded or any payments were made to a vendor of $25,000 or more in the reporting quarter.

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

- **Step 1:** Determine the number of hours in a full-time schedule for ARRA funded employees between Jan. 1 and March 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 March 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:

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

Mar. 31 ARRA data must be reported for the following ARRA programs for all local education agencies with active ARRA projects after Dec. 31, 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
- Title II D Enhancing Education Through Technology – Revenue Code 4861, CFDA #84.386
- Education Jobs Fund Program – Revenue Code 4880, CFDA #84.410 (If compensation and/or benefits have been or will be requested for employees from Jan through Mar)

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 Jan. 1 and March 31, the full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and vendor data must be reported for the period ending March 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-April an Ed Jobs expenditure report requesting reimbursement of compensation and benefits expended during the reporting quarter ending March 31, the LEA is required to report FTE jobs and vendor data to ISBE on or before the required ARRA reporting deadline of April 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 Dec. 31 and after doing so still has unexpended allocation, but has no Ed Jobs expenditures between Jan. 1 and March 31, they must still submit ARRA FTE jobs and vendor data for the March 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.
Employer TRS Contribution on Federally-Funded Salary

Please be advised that for Fiscal Year 2013 (July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013) the preliminary employer’s share of teachers’ retirement rate will be 28.05 percent for personnel employed with Federal grant funds.

This rate is preliminary and is subject to change. More information can be obtained from the TRS website at http://trs.illinois.gov/subsections/employers/employerservices.htm. The percentage is now determined annually according to the funding amount set by the state legislature.

If you have specific questions regarding TRS contributions, you can direct your inquiries to the TRS Employer Services Division at employers@trs.illinois.gov or phone (888) 877-0890.

Standards and Assessments

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

ISBE has 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.

PERA


The CEC Partnership Group has been selected by ISBE to design and implement a Performance Evaluation Growth Through Learning Training for teacher and principal evaluators that considers student growth measures as well as assessments of professional practice.

The Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) will provide general oversight and coordination of the Performance Evaluation Growth Through Learning Training Program, with support from the members of the CEC Partnership Group: the Center for the Study of Educational Policy at Illinois State University, the DuPage Regional Office of Education, Teachscape, the Danielson Group, and the Value-Added Research Center at the University of Wisconsin.

The CEC Partnership Group will design and implement a training program for approximately 9,000 teacher and principal evaluators that will enable school districts in Illinois to meet requirements of the Performance Evaluation Act (PERA) of 2010.

To read more, go to http://www.isbe.net/PERA/pdf/pera-perf-qual-training-release-0312.pdf. In addition, a new document of frequently asked questions on the Performance Evaluation Reform Act and the evaluation system will be available soon on ISBE’s website at http://www.isbe.net/PERA/default.htm.

Nutrition

USDA Releases Proposed Rules on Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

On Feb. 24, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service issued proposed rules on the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). The proposed rules establish the basic requirements for the implementation of FFVP in conformance with the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act. The intent of these provisions is to ensure that FFVP encourages the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by elementary school children, thus improving their dietary and long term habits. A full copy of the proposed regulations can be accessed at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-02-24/pdf/2012-4181.pdf.

Comments on this proposed rule must be received by the Food and Nutrition Service on or before April 24, 2012, for consideration. Comments can be submitted electronically via the Federal eRulemaking Portal (http://www.regulations.gov) or via mail to Julie Brewer, Chief, Policy and Program Development Branch, Child Nutrition Division, Food and Nutrition Services, USDA, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 634, Alexandria, Va. 22302. The phone number is (703) 305-2590.

A summary of the requirements of the FFVP proposed rules are as follows:

- State agencies would be required to work with School Food Authorities (SFAs) that would be charged with administering the FFVP in their participating schools, including training, approving, consolidating and submitting monthly reimbursement claims to the state.
• FFVP funding would continue to be allocated in 2 periods – Period 1: July 1 to Sept. 30, and Period 2: Oct. 1 to June 30 annually. Funding for participating schools must equal an amount of no less than $50 and not more than $75 per enrolled student per school year.

• State agencies would be required to conduct outreach to schools serving low income students, defined as elementary schools with 50 percent or greater free and reduced-price eligible students. Priority of grant awards must be provided to such schools.

• SFAs or schools that have been documented as being deficient in managing FNS programs shall not be authorized to operate the FFVP.

• SFAs must review each participating school within the first year of operation to ensure that the school is conducting the program in accordance with the requirements of FFVP regulations.

• State Agencies would be required to conduct monitoring of FFVP in conjunction with an administrative review or oversight activity they may conduct under the National School Lunch Program. State Agencies would have the authority to withhold payment or suspend or terminate a school’s participation in the FFVP due to repeated failure to meet program requirements.

• Schools would be expected to offer the FFVP at least twice a school week during the entire school year (first to last day of school) to effect a positive change in the dietary habits of participating students.

• Schools shall use the majority of funds for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables. Schools would be allowed to use no more than 15 percent of the school’s total grant for non-food costs necessary to operate the program. Non-food costs, for example, would include the purchase of disposable supplies, equipment purchases or leases, and salaries and fringe benefits for employees that wash and cut produce, prepare food trays, distribute produce to classrooms, set-up kiosks, restock vending machines, and clean up after the food service.

Please contact the ISBE, Nutrition Programs Division staff at cnp@isbe.net or (800) 545-7892 if you have any questions regarding this information.

School Wellness and Recognition Conference Set for May 3 in Springfield

Registration is under way for the fifth annual School Wellness and Recognition Conference, which is set for 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 3 in Springfield at the Crown Plaza.

The conference, titled “Healthy Schools, Healthy Kids,” is jointly presented by Action for Healthy Kids Illinois, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program. Registration, which includes lunch, costs $50 per participant. Participants can earn five hours of continuing education credit for the full-day conference.

Adam Brumberg will be the featured speaker on “Making Healthy Choices Easy Choices.” Brumberg is a research specialist at Cornell University and deputy director of the Cornell Food and Brand Lab.

To read additional information and to register, go to http://take.actionforhealthykids.org/site/Clubs?club_id=1121&sid=3980&pg=event. Questions? Contact Joan Love at (800) 545-7892 or jlove@isbe.net. 

Special Education Division

Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day Set for May 9

National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day is a day to join the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), communities, organizations, agencies and individuals nationwide in raising awareness that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development from birth and that children with behavioral health needs can thrive in their communities.

To learn more ways for how your district and communities can prepare for the 2012 Awareness Day activities, visit http://www.samhsa.gov/children/.

No Child Left Behind

Opportunity to Comment on Waiver Sought From U.S. Department of Education

The Illinois State Board of Education is seeking the following waiver from the U.S. Department of Education. Please submit any comments on this waiver to nclb@isbe.net by March 27, 2012. ISBE hopes that by soliciting this waiver from the U.S. Department of Education, students of Illinois will be better served.
• Waive the period of availability of funds under state-administered Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) programs, specifically those funds appropriated under the School Improvement Program. The extended authority to obligate these funds would enable ISBE and its sub-recipients to increase the quality of instruction for students, improve their academic achievement and continue to assist the same populations served by the programs for which this waiver is being requested in accordance with applicable program requirements.

The full waiver request will be available at http://www.isbe.net/nclb/htmls/waivers.htm. Questions on this waiver should be directed to nclb@isbe.net.

Capital Development Board

Update on the Early Childhood Construction Grant Program

Work continues regarding the release of the Early Childhood Construction Grant funds. The Capital Development Board administers the Early Childhood Construction Grant Program. Notification of grants will be made on the Capitol Development Board website, http://www.cdb.state.il.us/.

Watch the Weekly Message and the ISBE website, http://www.isbe.net, for additional details as they become available.

The program was created to provide early childhood centers an opportunity to increase or enhance their facilities space with the primary goal of serving more young children, birth to age five. Priority for these grants will be given to projects located in those communities in the state with the greatest underserved number of young children.

A total of $45 million was appropriated for the program with up to $5 million available to centers. These funds, which require a 10 percent match, can be used for renovation and expansion of facilities to improve the early learning experience of the youngest Illinoisans. The application deadline was Nov. 30, 2011.

For more information, go to http://www.cdb.state.il.us/ecgp.shtml. The Capital Development Board can be reached at (217) 782-2864.

Early Childhood Division

Continuation Application for the Preschool for All 3-5 Grants Now Available on IWAS

The continuation application for the Preschool For All 3-5 grants is now available through IWAS for school year 2012-13 (FY13).

• All recipients of the FY13 Preschool for All 3-5 grant are required to submit an eGrant. This eGrant is due by June 5, 2012.
• All children in your FY13 Preschool for All 3-5 classrooms MUST be enrolled in SIS by Oct. 15, 2012.

NOTE: Allocations are preliminary, and payment under this grant is subject to passage of a sufficient appropriation by the Illinois General Assembly or sufficient appropriation by the U.S. Congress for federal programs. Obligations of the State Board of Education will cease immediately without further obligation should the agency fail to receive sufficient state, federal or other funds for this program.

To notify the Early Childhood Division of changes to your FY13 grant, or if you have any questions, please contact the Early Childhood Division at (217) 524-4835 or by email at earlychi@isbe.net.

Continuation Application for Prevention Initiative (0-3) Grant Available on IWAS

The continuation application for the Prevention Initiative (0-3) grant is now available through IWAS for school year 2012-13 (FY13).

• All recipients of the FY13 Prevention Initiative 0-3 grant are required to submit an eGrant. This eGrant is due by June 19, 2012.
• All children in your FY13 Birth to Three classrooms MUST be enrolled in SIS by October 15, 2012.

NOTE: Allocations are preliminary, and payment under this grant is subject to passage of a sufficient appropriation by the Illinois General Assembly or sufficient appropriation by the U.S. Congress for federal programs. Obligations of the State Board of Education will cease immediately without further obligation should the agency fail to receive sufficient state, federal or other funds for this program.

To notify the Early Childhood Division of changes to your FY13 grant, or if you have any questions, please
Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

2011-12 Preschool for All Program Record Now Available on IWAS

The Preschool for All Program Record IWAS system is open for school year 2011-12 data entry. All educational entities that received Preschool for All funds this school year to serve children ages 3-5 are required to submit these data to ISBE, per Section 2-3.71 of the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/2-3.71).


Questions about using the Preschool for All Program Record 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.

2012 Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report Available on IWAS

The Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report IWAS system is open for school year 2011-12 data entry. Each school district that received state transitional bilingual education funds this school year to serve students with limited English proficiency (LEP) in a transitional bilingual education (TBE) program or transitional program of instruction (TPI) is required to submit this report to ISBE, per 23 Illinois Administrative Code 228.40(c)(2).


Questions about using the Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report IWAS system should be directed to the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600. Questions about the data to be reported 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.

Response to Intervention

Illinois RtI Network Request for Applications

The Illinois Response to Intervention Network (I-RtI Network), which is operated under a federally-funded grant that ISBE awarded to the Lee/Ogle Regional Office of Education, has issued a Request for Applications (RFA) to identify additional public school districts to participate in the Network for the 2012-13 school year. The I-RtI Network provides standardized professional development consisting of training, technical assistance and coaching to district and school teams and parents throughout the state. These services focus on improving the performance of students in grades K-12 through the implementation of a multi-tiered system of instruction, curricula, intervention and assessment, commonly known as RtI, with an emphasis on:

- Administrative leadership;
- Scientific, research-based reading and math curricula, instruction and interventions at grades K-12;
- Data-based decision making;
- Universal screening and progress monitoring;
- Parent involvement.

Further details of the services to be provided and the potential benefits to and expectations of participating districts are delineated in the RFA, which can be accessed at [http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm). ISBE believes districts will find the services of the project to be well-aligned with the district improvement process and an invaluable asset to local efforts to strengthen classroom instruction and improve student performance.

Applications are due April 25, 2012. Questions about the RFA should be directed to the I-RtI Network Area Wide Instructional Leader for the geographic area in which a district is located (see Page 2 of the RFA for names and contact information). Other questions about the I-RtI Network can also be directed to Dr. Pamela Radford, Statewide Project Administrator, at pradford@west40.org or (708) 544-4278.

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:

- Chicago: April 18-19 overview and April 25 and 26 math and literacy; Marriott Chicago Midway, 6520 S. Cicero Ave.; (708) 594-5500.

- 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

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

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

Part 25 (Certification): Responds in part to P.A. 97-607, which repeals portions of Article 21 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/21] and establishes the new licensure system under Article 21B of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/21B]; additional changes in response to this legislation are forthcoming. Deadline for Public Comment: May 21, 2012

Part 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing): Establishes a revenue code for use by school districts receiving funding under the federal Race to the Top 3 initiative. Deadline for Public Comment: May 21, 2012

Part 350 (Secular Textbook Loan): Repeals Part 350 due to the enactment of P.A. 97-570, effective August 25, 2011, which repeals Section 18-17 of the School Code (secular textbook loan program) and replaces it with the Textbook Block Grant Program. Deadline for Public Comment: May 21, 2012

Part 451 (Private Business and Vocational Schools): Repeals Part 451 due to the enactment of P.A. 97-650, effective February 1, 2012, which transferred responsibility for approving and overseeing private business and vocational schools from the State Board of Education to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Deadline for Public Comment: May 21, 2012

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that an emergency rulemaking recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education is now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s website at http://www.isbe.net/rules. Please choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to “Part 100: Emergency.”
Part 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing): Establishes a revenue code for use by school districts receiving funding under the federal Race to the Top 3 initiative.
Affected Sections: 100.130 and 100
Effective Date: March 21, 2012

Invitation to Comment on Rules
A rulemaking recently reviewed by the Illinois State Board of Education is available for public comment. The proposal has been posted on the agency’s website at http://www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments” and scroll down to the affected Part number. Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

Part 226 (Special Education): Responds to several recently enacted public acts (P.A. 97-123, effective July 14, 2011; P.A. 97-227, effective January 1, 2012; and P.A. 97-284, effective August 9, 2011) and eliminates provisions that are obsolete in Sections 226.800(g)(2) and (h)(2) that address requirements for State-approved director of special education, assistant directors, and special education supervisors.
Deadline for Public comment: May 7, 2012.

Illinois Network of Charter Schools

Board Member Speed Networking Event Scheduled for April 11
The Illinois Network of Charter Schools will hold an event titled “Board Member Speed Networking” from 5:30 to 8 p.m. on April 11 in Chicago.

The event is an opportunity for charter schools to meet board member candidates and for potential board members to connect with recruiting schools in a “speed-matching” format. It will be held in the lower level of Elephant and Castle, 111 W. Adams St.

The event is free and includes refreshments. Register at http://boardmatching.eventbrite.com.

Educator Opportunities

Program Provides Overseas Training Opportunity for Educators to Teach Chinese
The Cultural Division of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago is seeking applications for a program to provide development training for American educators to teach Chinese language.

This group program will last two weeks and be held this mid-summer (proposed July 16 to July 26, 2012) in Taiwan, where participating teachers will receive methodological and theoretical advanced instruction for K-12 and college level Mandarin Chinese pedagogy, respectively. Professional development includes curriculum and oral training, Chinese teaching pedagogy, classroom visits, cultural introductions and a conference promoting Chinese language learning.

The Taiwan Ministry of Education will sponsor tuition, accommodation, textbooks, food and transportation in Taiwan. Teachers are responsible for their own airfare. Interested teachers can send their completed application form before April 14 to Cultural Division, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago, 180 N. Stetson Ave., Suite 5803, Chicago, IL 60601

For more information, visit http://www.edutw.org or contact John Lin at (312) 616-0805.

Student Opportunities

Smithsonian Offers Shout Environmental Exploration Program
For those interested in learning more about the environment, the Shout environmental exploration program offers live webinars and online content, including a digital badging program. Shout is a joint project of the Smithsonian, Microsoft’s Partners in Learning and TakingITGlobal.

Upcoming sessions will explore water-related inventions, the importance of water in cultures around the world and representations of water in American art. Archived sessions can be accessed at www.smithsonianconference.org/shout/schedule. Register for one or more of the 50-minute sessions at http://www.smithsonianconference.org/shout/program-2012/.

The digital-badging program is for participants who want to demonstrate their understanding of environmental issues and their contributions to finding solutions. More information about badging can be found at www.smithsonianconference.org/shout/badges.
In the News

Weekly News Clips

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at http://www.isbe.net/news/2012/newsclips/120326.htm.

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.