Legislators return to the Capitol this week after their spring break and we expect the pace of the budget making process to pick up considerably. The House Education and Secondary Appropriations Committee met last week and will meet again tomorrow to discuss specific line items in the K-12 budget. As members of the House move forward, they will be working with the much lower amounts approved in their spending resolutions last month. It is unknown what amounts the Senate will use in budget development, but the House numbers are considerably lower than what either the Illinois State Board of Education or Governor Quinn has recommended.

Currently, the state’s backlog of bills is $4.856 billion with $948.5 million, or 19 percent of that total, related to pre-K-12 education, which includes the December 2011 and March 2012 Mandated Categorical (MCAT) payments. The Comptroller’s Office is still processing payments for vouchers dated Dec. 22, 2011. It is our understanding, through conversations with the Comptroller’s staff, they anticipate being able to release all of the December 2011 MCAT payments by the end of the month.

The March and June 2012 MCATS are not anticipated to be released by June 30, which is consistent with recent years where four payments are released during the fiscal year — two from the prior fiscal year and two from the current fiscal year.

Illinois has been selected as one of five finalists to apply for a new round of funding under the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge. We were selected due to our strong showing in the first Early Learning Challenge and will be eligible for between $30-35 million. This competition is distinct from the main Race to the Top competition, for which we are receiving funding in Phase 3. The Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge does not involve school district sign-ons. We are still waiting for details to become available, but are very interested in submitting an application. It will require us to scale back significantly from our earlier proposal, but depending upon the federal requirements, could certainly help to move Illinois’ early childhood platform forward. We’ll have more on this as additional details become available.

Also, we are among 26 states that have signed on to develop new common standards in science, known as the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Illinois is one of the lead states, providing guidance to the writing of the standards as well as activities related to adoption and implementation of NGSS. In addition, the NGSS writing team includes three Illinois educators with expertise in K-12 science teaching and learning.

The first draft of these standards is set to be released in late April for public review and comment. The development of NGSS is a state-led initiative. The following link provides additional information about NGSS and the framework document: [http://www.isbe.net/ngss/](http://www.isbe.net/ngss/).

Finally, three Illinois public schools were nominated for a new U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools award program that recognizes exemplary achievement in environmental impact, student and staff health and the environmental literacy of graduates. These three schools: Thomas J. Waters Elementary School in Chicago Public
Schools District 299; Academy for Global Citizenship in Chicago; and Prairie Crossing Charter School in Grayslake will be considered for national recognition under the new federal program.

Illinois is among 33 states to participate in the U.S. Department of Education’s pilot year of the Green Ribbon Schools award program with winners to be announced April 23 and honored locally and nationally later this spring. A team of environmental and education experts reviewed and scored 13 applications before nominating the three Illinois schools. Thanks to all of our green schools that went through the process this first year.

Have a great week.

Chris

### Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **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
- **Application deadline for the Exception to the 1.0 Percent Cap** – May 18
- **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
- **RtI Professional Development Trainings, Math or Literacy, Mount Vernon** – June 26-27
- **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
- **2011-12 Teacher Service Record reporting deadline** – Aug. 15
U.S. Department of Education

Announcements Made Regarding Investing in Innovation (i3) Grants

The U.S. Department of Education is inviting applications for “validation grants” (up to $15 million) and “scale-up grants” (up to $25 million) through the Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund, with applications due May 29.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Education encourages individuals from various backgrounds and professions with content expertise in Investing in Innovation’s six Absolute Priorities (see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/peerreviewcall.html) or in education evaluation to apply to be a peer reviewer for the FY2012 i3 competitions. If you are interested in serving as a peer reviewer for the FY2012 i3 grant competition, please see the link above, which describes the necessary qualifications.

Stop Bullying

Agencies Team Up to Re-Launch Site Aimed at Preventing Bullying

The U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently launched an updated website to help stop bullying.

The Stop Bullying website includes a map with detailed information on state laws and policies, interactive webisodes and videos. Materials on the website cover strategies for schools and communities to ensure safe environments and suggestions on how parents can talk about this sensitive subject with their children and more.

The site also explores the dangers of cyberbullying, including tips on preventing and reporting its occurrence.

In addition, a Get Help Now link provides guidance, which includes the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Visit the Stop Bullying website at http://www.stopbullying.gov.

Innovation and Improvement

Parent Surveys Shipped for Supplemental Educational Services Eligible Schools

Last month, this weekly bulletin provided information regarding the Center for Research in Educational Policy (CREP) at the University of Memphis’ annual evaluation on behalf of ISBE of Supplemental Educational Services (SES).

The primary components of the evaluation are: SES student achievement outcomes, SES student attendance and the perceptions of parents with children attending SES. Parental feedback plays a critical role in the evaluation of SES providers. Increasing the level of input from parents, through increasing the survey response rate, will ensure the evaluation contains accurate and reliable information.

Boxes containing parent surveys have been shipped to schools that are designated SES-eligible. Each box contains 60 parent surveys in English and in Spanish and instructions for returning surveys. Please share this information with your schools and emphasize the importance of the survey distribution and return in an effort to increase the rate of survey submissions.

If your district has not received surveys, or if you have questions or would like additional information regarding the parent survey, contact Beth Murphy of the Center for Research in Educational Policy at the University of Memphis at kmurphy3@memphis.edu or (866) 670-6147. For general SES questions, contact Gary Greene at (312) 814-3989 or ggreene@isbe.net.

FY 2013 School Improvement Grant 1003g Request for Proposal Bidders’ Conference

Join us for a Webinar on April 23. Space is limited. Reserve your webinar seat now at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/423959040.
Bidders’ Conference: A Bidder’s Webinar will be hosted by the Innovation and Improvement Division of ISBE to discuss the FY 2013 SIG 1003(g) School Improvement Grant 1003g RFP and answer questions from potential applicants. During this webinar, participants will learn how the Needs Assessment and SIG 1003(g) FY2013 Application will be analyzed by reviewers. Applicants will be given specific guidance on developing the three year budget and how district capacity and school readiness are measured. District and school leadership teams who are developing the SIG 1003(g) application should participate.

- **Title:** FY 2013 School Improvement Grant 1003g Request for Proposal (RFP) Bidders’ Conference
- **Date:** Monday, April 23, 2012
- **Time:** 10-11:30 a.m. CDT
- **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.

Register for Upcoming Family Engagement Webinars

The Illinois State Board of Education's Division of Innovation and Improvement has planned a series of 60 minute Family Engagement Webinars as part of a statewide family engagement initiative. Each webinar in the 2012 series will feature practitioners from the 2011 Regional Summits. The practitioners will share their experiences in the successful implementation of evidence-based family engagement strategies in their schools or districts. These sessions are open to district staff, school staff, parent facilitators, and parents. Information on the upcoming session is given below and you may register by clicking on the registration link below.

**Very Important Parents (VIP): Utilizing Parents during the School Day as a Resource to Improve Reading Outcomes for Students:** 3:30-4:30 p.m. April 26. Reserve a webinar seat now at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/239619112. Adam Zbrozek, the principal of a Title I building in St. Charles Community Unit School District will share how the building has engaged parents in on-site support of reading improvement efforts with students during the instructional day. Mr. Zbrozek will discuss how and why the program was developed, how parents were engaged in the work, what staff development occurred along the journey, lessons learned, and successes. Strategies for embedding a program like this will be shared as well as data showing the impact this program has had on student learning. Participants will hear the benefits of engaging parents during the school day in meaningful work with students. (Adam Zbrozek, Lincoln Elementary School principal, St. Charles SD 303)

**Involving at Risk Families in RtI supports with an ELL Focus:** 3:30-4:30 p.m. May 10. Reserve a seat at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/230095241. The Individual Problem Solving Team of Oak Terrace School (74 percent low income, Latino, ELL) will share its approach, which involves parents to help close the gap for the most vulnerable students. The documentation of the approach includes a scope of intervention matrix, research from UCLS, referral form and meeting note templates. The processes include the consideration of potential barriers to learning, meeting with families and follow up, community supports, midyear of review of cases and modifying intervention plans. The success of this approach is measured by the achievement of the children and the increased participation of families in our school. (Sandy Anderson, Oak Terrace Elementary principal, District 112)

**Important Update on the AP Test Fee Program**

The U.S. Department of Education has provided the AP Test Fee Program with additional funds to cover the costs of all 2012 AP Exams for eligible low-income students. This means that the AP Test Fee Program changes we announced in February will be reversed. Here is the new breakdown:

- College Board fee reduction: $26 per exam
- Illinois Federal fee reduction: $53 per exam.
- There is no longer a required student fee of $15 per exam for up to three AP Exams per low-income student or a $53 fee for exams beyond the third exam.
- There is no longer a limit on the number of exams funded per student, i.e., the three-exam cap has been removed.

For questions on the AP Test Fee Program, please contact Mike Hatfill at 217-557-0643.

**Special Education**

**IAASE Plans Administrator Academy for Friday, May 11, in Collinsville**

The Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education (IAASE) will hold an Administrator Academy called “Legal Issues in Special Education – Putting Theory
“Into Practice” on Friday, May 11, at the Doubletree Hotel in Collinsville (1000 Eastport Plaza Drive).

Here is the course description: “The legal intricacies of special education continue to impact and often bewilder educators. Seemingly each day brings new legal developments increasing the complexity (and risk) for school administrators. As school districts face financial crisis, administrators need to update themselves on how to avoid (or at least minimize) legal liability. This administrator academy program is designed to provide a practical spin on a complex topic and help you manage your special education programs in a way that avoids legal risk and fosters improved relationships between staff, parent and school. Join Bennett Rodick and Stephanie Jones and bring your issues and questions.”

Registration is from 8-8:30 a.m. and the event is 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, go to http://www.iaase.org. Register early as the workshop is limited to 65 participants. The $125 registration fee includes Administrator Academy credit fee, continental breakfast, working lunch and materials. Please direct questions to Norma Gerrish at ngerrish@iaase.org or (618) 622-8800.

**Save the Date: Piecing It All Together Conference Scheduled for April 27**

The Piecing It All Together conference is scheduled for Friday, April 27, 2012, at Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills. The conference is titled “Piecing It All Together: How Children’s Mental Health/Mental Illness Affect Home, School & Community.” The keynote, “Integrated Care: Why It Makes Complete Sense for Children & Families,” will be presented by Darcy E. Gruttadaro, J.D., director of the NAMI National Child and Adolescent Action Center.

For more information, visit the NAMI Illinois website at http://il.nami.org/piat.htm. The National Alliance on Mental Illness is a not-for-profit membership organization that aims to improve the lives of individuals and families challenged by mental illness.

**1 Percent Exception Application Reminder**

If more than 1 percent of your students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 are identified as significantly cognitively disabled, it is time to prepare your district’s application for an exception to the 1 percent cap. If the conditions for the exception are approved, then all progressing and attaining scores earned by students taking the Illinois Alternate Assessment will be counted as proficient in making determinations for school, district, and state AYP.

- K-8 districts: Apply after the ISAT testing is completed (March 19 for most districts).
- High school and K-12 districts: Apply after the PSAE makeup date has passed (May 14).


**School Business Services**

**Fiscal Year 2011 Operating Expense Per Pupil/Per Capita Tuition Charge Available**

Now available are the FY2011 Operating Expense Per Pupil (OEPP)/Per Capita Tuition Charge (PCTC). (http://www.isbe.net/finance/verification.htm) Districts are not required to verify the amounts, but an Excel calculation worksheet is available to check against the audited Annual Financial Report. These are considered the official OEPP/PCTC for each district. If necessary the detailed calculation is available upon request.

Note: When comparing the PCTC on the website to the district’s annual financial report, a slightly different number may be noticed. This would only be due to Function 4856-ARRA-Preschool Flow Through and 4875-ARRA Early Childhood. These two amounts were manually added back into the PCTC expenditures for all districts. If the FRIS expenditure report listed any support services (less capital outlay and/or non-capitalized equipment) in these two functions then that total amount would be subtracted out of the PCTC expenditures for all districts. Any other differences would likely be to the 9 Mo Average Daily Attendance.

If you have any questions, please contact the School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779.

**Data Analysis and Progress Reporting**

**2011-12 High School Students Taking Community College Courses System Open**

The 2011-12 High School Students Taking Community College Courses system is open in IWAS for district-
level data submission. The deadline to submit is Monday, Sept. 17, 2012.

Only unit and high school districts need to submit the required data, per Section 2-3.144 of the Illinois School Code. Each district needs to submit a report, even those that did not have any high school students taking community college courses during the 2011-12 school year. In this instance, the district should access the system, click on “No,” and submit the report by Sept. 17.

Questions about the IWAS system should be referred to the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600, and questions about the information to be entered for this data collection should be referred to Niann-Tsyr Chern in the Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at (217) 782-3950.

Nutrition

ISBE Announces New USDA Meal Pattern and Menu Planning Workshop Dates

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Nutrition Programs Division is offering a USDA Meal Pattern and Menu Planning Workshop for schools participating in the USDA’s National School Lunch Program. This workshop will be a hands-on training for school menu planners that will assist them in the development of menus that meet the new USDA meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards that go into effect for school year 2012-13. An emphasis on the vegetable subgroups, whole grain rich items and offer versus serve will be provided. The following dates and locations are available.

- May 8 – Galesburg
- May 9 – Bloomington
- May 10 – Quincy
- May 15 – Springfield
- June 5 – Freeport
- June 6 – Chicago Heights
- June 7 – Lombard
- June 20 – Centralia
- June 21 – Edwardsville

Additional sites are being planned. Please check our website at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/default.htm, under the Upcoming Workshops heading for any updates to locations and dates.

Space is limited. Please limit registration to two staff persons per district. Register now at http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnscalendar/asp/eventlist.asp.

For questions, please contact the Nutrition Programs Division at (800) 545-7892.

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.

Rules and Waivers

Reminder: No Waivers Required for School Holidays

In August of 2009, Section 24-2 of the School Code (Holidays) was amended by passage of Public Act 96-640. Districts may make changes to five of the legal school holidays by actions taken by the local board of education, without the need to submit a waiver application to the State Board of Education.

The changes in the law provide that a school board (or other eligible entity) is authorized to hold school; schedule teachers’ institutes; schedule parent-teacher conferences; or schedule staff development activities (including school improvement and inservice training) on the following legal school holidays:

- The birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (third Monday in January);
- The birthday of President Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12);
- The birthday of Casimir Pulaski (first Monday in March);
- Columbus Day (second Monday in October);

and
• Veterans Day (Nov. 11). Reminder: Applicants planning to hold any event at a school on Veterans Day must include a moment of silence at the event to recognize veterans of foreign wars (Public Act 96-84, July 2009).

A school board or other applicant is authorized to take these actions provided that (1) the person/persons honored by the holiday are recognized through instructional activities conducted on that day or, if the day is not used for student attendance, on the first school day preceding or following that day; and (2) the school board or other entity choosing to exercise this authority first holds a public hearing about the proposal (for a school district, the hearing should be held in conjunction with a school board meeting). The school board or other applicant shall provide notice preceding the public hearing to both educators and parents, setting forth the time, date and place of the hearing; describing the proposal for use of holiday(s); and indicating that testimony from educators and parents will be taken on the proposal during the public hearing.

There is no longer any need to submit paperwork from this process to the State Board for approval. Since these actions no longer require a waiver, districts and other applicants do not need to notify their state legislators in advance of their meeting, nor is there a time limit of five years (as there would be using the waiver process).

Please note that if your district has a holiday modification approved by the State Board, it remains in effect until its expiration date.

Any questions can be directed to the Rules and Waivers Division at (217) 782-5270 or waivers@isbe.net.

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that two rulemakings recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education are 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 the number of the Part that you wish to review.

Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision): Responds to several recently enacted statutes, particularly proposing a process to approve entities that will provide training for school board members, as is required under P.A. 97-8, effective June 13, 2011.

Section Affected: 1.210, 1.420 and 1.705
Effective Date: March 20, 2012

Part 151 (School Construction Program): Adds special education cooperatives to the entities eligible to apply for energy efficient grants under the School Construction Program, a change made by P.A. 97-205, effective July 28, 2011.

Section Affected: 151.200
Effective Date: March 20, 2012

Student Opportunities

Latino Art Beat Offers Art Contest for Illinois High School Students

Latino Art Beat, a national not-for-profit arts organization, announced its 15th anniversary art competition, "What Hispanic Heritage & Culture Means to Me?" The competition is available to all high school juniors and seniors currently enrolled in an Illinois high school.

Competition categories will be Drawing & Painting and Film & Animation. Students can submit artwork entries in all media, in the categories of Drawing & Painting. Such entries must be either mounted or matted on white or black board. All canvas entries must be stretched and mounted to a wood stretcher. Film entries must reflect either the students Hispanic Heritage, Public Service Announcements or a Narrative and be a VHS or DVD of 5 minutes or less total running time.

Scholarship awards will be given to select winners of the 2012 competition. To date, Latino Art Beat has awarded nearly $4 million in scholarship to students on a national basis. The Illinois deadline for competition entries is Monday May 21, 2012. For full competition information, applications and the 2012 Rules & Guidelines booklet please email your request to latinoartbeat@hotmail.com or call (773) 291-6901 for more information.

Office of the State Fire Marshal

Illinois Risk Watch New Community Training Scheduled for May 22 in Dixon

Risk Watch is an unintentional injury prevention program for children pre-k through eighth grade. Unintentional injuries are the No. 1 killer of children in this age group. The program is run through local schools and is matched with local experts such as fire departments, police departments, Red Cross, etc. The Illinois Risk Watch State Board, along with local experts, works with every teacher and community throughout the process, also
offering all expenses paid to the annual Illinois Risk Watch Conference.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal will be hosting a free Illinois Risk Watch New Community Training on May 22 in Dixon. This all-day training will feature experts in the Illinois Risk Watch Program and teacher resources. Lunch, curriculum and all program materials are provided for free.


In the News

Students From Across the State to Showcase Technology at the Illinois State Capitol

On Wednesday, May 2, students from all parts of the state will gather at the Illinois State Capitol Building in Springfield to participate in a program called TECH 2012.

Since 1990, Illinois students and teachers have set up demonstration tables at the Capitol building in Springfield to showcase for elected officials, business leaders and the public how technology is being utilized in schools to enhance learning. From 12:30 to 3 p.m., visitors are encouraged to visit with students to see firsthand how technology in their schools is helping them increase their achievement levels in reading, math and other subjects.

TECH 2012 is a not-for-profit initiative supported by a broad range of education and business organizations. Its purpose is two-fold: 1) Raise awareness of the critical role technology plays in preparing students to succeed in today’s world; and 2) to show the need for increased funding for classroom technology. The event is open to the public.

Weekly News Clips

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at http://www.isbe.net/news/2012/newsclips/120416.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.