Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

I will soon send notification to the local school boards in North Chicago and East St. Louis that the Illinois State Board of Education intends to remove the locally elected boards and replace them with an “independent authority.”

The School Code gives the State Board this authority in situations where a school district has not made Adequate Yearly Progress for seven consecutive years; however I am of the mind that the State Board needs to exercise this authority carefully. With the two school districts in question, the State Board initially entered into intergovernmental agreements with the districts to promote a collaborative and supportive approach to intervention. Based on our experiences in these districts since the interventions began, we can no longer accept the involvement of the local boards. The local boards, prior to any action of removal, will be able to make their case to remain in place before the State Board.

This conclusion has been difficult, because these are locally elected officials selected to represent their communities and I know the importance and challenges of their voluntary work. Should the local boards be removed, I will work to ensure that both these communities still have a strong voice in running their schools, looking first locally for a pool of candidates to assume control under a new independent authority. Again, I simply do not believe the best interests of students can be served by allowing the current boards to remain.

Also last week, the Board received the annual report of School District Special Education Expenditures and Receipts. Since Fiscal Year 2008, the agency has been compiling this report that identifies each district’s special education expenditures, receipts and the net special education expenditures over receipts. We know there are significant limitations with presenting this report; however, it does provide a snapshot for us to look at a larger picture.

State Board members expressed significant interest in the data and have asked that staff delve more deeply into it for further discussion. The Board has asked that we facilitate a thoughtful discussion around the special education formulas currently in place and provide possible alternatives for them to discuss in the late summer or fall. I will keep you up to date as we explore the special education formulas in more depth later this year, but wanted you to be aware that this is a discussion that the Board is interested in beginning. You can access the School District Special Education Expenditures and Receipts report at http://www.isbe.net/sfms/sp_ed/fy11/sped_rpt_alpha_fy11.pdf.

Finally, late last week, Gov. Pat Quinn proposed significant changes to pensions and Medicaid in order to try and better contain state spending. You can find out more information on the governor’s proposals at http://www2.illinois.gov/Pages/default.aspx or http://trs.illinois.gov/.

Have a great week.

Chris
Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- 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)
- 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)
- 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
- Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Fall ’12 – Aug. 17
- 2011-12 High School Students Taking Community College Courses data submission deadline – Sept. 17

Funding and Disbursement Services

Filing Period for 2011-2012 Final Public School Calendars Begins May 1 on IWAS

The ability to file the 2011-2012 Final Public School Calendar will be available May 1, 2012, via IWAS. Please complete and transmit the Final Calendar to the appropriate Regional Superintendent by the last day of school. REMINDER: The document type Final Calendar must be submitted even if the district has submitted a document type Amended Calendar previously. A Final Public School Calendar must be transmitted and approved prior to filing the 2011-2012 claims for General State Aid, Pupil Transportation and 18-3 Regular Education Orphanage.

HELPFUL HINT: The unused proposed emergency days (XED) that are coded at the end of the school calendar may be removed by correcting the Regular School End Date to the last day of actual school activity.
Once the Regular School End Date has been corrected, the calendar codes after that date will be omitted.

If you have questions that are not addressed in the Public School Calendar Guidelines (http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/ps_guidelines.pdf), or Final/Proposed Calendar Checkpoints (http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/calendar_checklist.pdf) you may contact the office of your Regional Superintendent or Marj Beck of the Illinois State Board of Education at mbeck@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256. If you encounter technical issues with the Public School Calendar in IWAS please contact the ISBE Call Center at (217) 558-3600 during business hours: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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**Student Advisory Council**

**Student Advisory Council Applications Now Available Online**

The application for the 2012-13 Student Advisory Council is now available on the ISBE website at http://www.isbe.net/sac. There will be 10 positions open. Applications are due May 31, 2012. Interviews will be scheduled for mid to late July for those applicants chosen as possible candidates.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Hatfill at (217) 524-4832 or dhatfill@isbe.net.

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**School Business Services**

**Public Act Revises Illinois School Code to Address Radon Testing and Reporting**

Public Act 96-417 revised the Illinois School Code to include a section on radon testing and reporting. The recommendations included in the act are as follows:

- It is recommended that every occupied school building of a school district be tested every five years for radon pursuant to rules established by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA).
- It is recommended that new schools of a school district be built using radon resistant new construction techniques, as shown in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency document “Radon Prevention in Design and Construction of Schools and Other Large Buildings.”
- Each school district may maintain, make available for review, and notify parents and faculty of test results under this Section. The district shall report radon test results to the State Board of Education, which shall prepare a report every two years of the results from all schools that have performed tests, to be submitted to the General Assembly and the Governor.

For more information and assistance, contact Susan Weitekamp with the School Business Services Division (217) 785-8779. Additional information can be found at http://www.radon.illinois.gov.

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**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 maybe 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.

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**English Language Learning**

**Individuals Sought to Serve on the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education**

State Superintendent Christopher Koch is seeking individuals to serve on the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (ILCS 5/14C-13). New members would serve a three year term of office, beginning on July 1, 2012. New members will be expected to attend four meetings per year, as well as participate in additional meetings and special projects.

If you are interested in serving on the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education, please email a cover
letter and resume to William P. Garcia (wgarcia@isbe.net), Principal Consultant, English Language Learning, before the close of business on May 15, 2012. Successful candidates selected to serve on the IACBE will be notified by the State Superintendent by June 15, 2012.

**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.

School districts, groups of schools and non-profits organizations in partnership with districts and schools are eligible to compete for these grants. Grant awards will be made to those with the strongest proposals for expanding promising or effective educational practices to improve learning. More information is available at [http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/). A pre-application for “development grants” (up to $3 million) was announced last month.

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](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.

**‘Strong Fathers, Strong Families, Strong Schools’ Scheduled for May 5 in Chicago**

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships will present “Strong Fathers, Strong Families, Strong Schools” on Saturday, June 2, in Chicago. The forum, which aims to engage fathers and father figures, will be held at Malcolm X College, located at 1900 W. Van Buren St. Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. The event is in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Chicago Public Schools, the Office of the Mayor, City Colleges of Chicago, Black Star Project, Real Men Charities Inc., Fathers Who Care, WATCH D.O.G.S. and the Illinois Fatherhood Initiative.

For more information and to register, email edtownhalls@ed.gov or call (312) 730-1706.

**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).


**Innovation and Improvement**

**Webinar to Address Cultivating Fathers’ Involvement in Their Children’s Education**

A webinar titled “Million Father March: The First Step to Cultivating Year-Round Father Involvement From K-12” is planned for April 25. Space is limited. Reserve a seat at [https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/881484689](https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/881484689).

This one-hour webinar will cover the history and pervasive grassroots adoption of the Million Father March, a back-to-school campaign targeting male involvement in education. Participants will learn creative strategies developed and implemented around the country that get men and fathers engaged in children’s education. Learn how to bring the Million Father March to your neighborhood, school or city. Chicago, birthplace of the Million Father March, has worked its way up to 95 percent first-day attendance using these techniques. Finally, this webinar will highlight ways to keep male involvement throughout the school year. Participants will get tips for cultivating volunteers and planning activities that will keep fathers and men coming back in support and commitment of K-12 education.
**Title:** Million Father March: The First Step To Cultivating Year-Round Father Involvement from K-12  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 25, 2012  
**Time:** 1-2 p.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.

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**Grant Readers Request for Illinois FY 2013 School Improvement Grants**

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Innovation and Improvement Division is seeking grant readers for the FY 2013 School Improvement Grant (SIG) – Section 1003(g) competition. Selected grant readers must participate in web-based trainings on the SIG 1003(g) requirements and Illinois’ application assessment process prior to receipt of the district/school applications. ISBE anticipates that readers will need to devote approximately 100 hours to this process over a four to five week period in May and June 2012. Readers will complete the review process and submit their scoring results electronically. Following the individual application reviews, readers must attend one face-to-face consensus meeting in Illinois.

**Required Qualifications and Skills:** A minimum of four years in the field of education. Candidates must have knowledge about turning around low performing schools, high school administrative/teaching experience and familiarity with the SIG grant requirements. Applicants with work experience in low-performing schools that were effectively turned around are preferred.

**Compensation:** ISBE will issue a $4,200 honorarium to readers selected for their service and a maximum of $800 approvable travel reimbursement based on Illinois state guidelines (transportation, hotel and per diem).

**Contact Information:** Interested candidates should email Marti Woelfle at mwoelfle@isbe.net to receive the required grant reader application documents.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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 inSpecial 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.

**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 – Centralla
- 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.

**Classroom Opportunities**

**Scholastic Offers Materials and Webcast From 12th World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates**

Scholastic Inc. is working to bring the 12th World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates to classrooms across the country. Broadcast live online at http://www.scholastic.com/speakupspeakout, this event will provide an opportunity for middle and high school students to observe some of the world’s most notable figures and engage them in a discussion on global peace and human rights.

The website also features video content and educational resources for teachers and students. The live webcast begins at 1 p.m. CST on Monday, April 23. A schedule of events for the three-day summit is available online along with a registration form for online viewing.

**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.

Professional Development

**National Conference on School Diversity Scheduled for May 17**

The National Coalition on School Diversity plans to hold its second national conference in Washington, D.C., on May 17. This year’s National Conference on School Diversity, titled “Advancing the Legacy of Mendez and Brown,” will take place on the anniversary of the Brown v. the Board of Education decision made in 1954.

The National Coalition on School Diversity is a network of national civil rights organizations, university-based research institutes, local education advocacy groups and academic researchers that seek increased commitment to racial and economic diversity in K-12 education policy and funding.

The coalition’s first national conference was held in 2009 and was attended by more than 200 policymakers, advocates, practitioners, parents and educators. For more information about the conference, visit [http://school-diversity.org](http://school-diversity.org).

**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/120420.htm](http://www.isbe.net/news/2012/newsclips/120420.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](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm).