Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

The U.S. Department of Education has approved our request to freeze the Annual Measurable Objectives at the 2010-11 school year levels. We made this request due to the delay in the approval of our application for a waiver to some aspects of the No Child Left Behind law. We continue to have dialogue with the Department about our waiver request.

The AMO freeze means the calculations for Adequate Yearly Progress targets for 2011-12 are being based on the previous year’s levels, without increasing. This is a one-time request that we could make, but does provide districts with some relief as we continue to work through this process.

The PARCC assessment has issued initial guidance for technology for the new assessments scheduled to begin with online testing in 2014-15. The initial guidance is meant to help you as you make technology purchases to ensure that your instruments will be able to support the new assessment systems into the future. A wide variety of devices meet the minimum guidelines, including iPads, and other tablets, as well as desktops and notebooks. You can access the full guidelines at http://www.parcconline.org/technology.

Also, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency is encouraging administrators to think about severe weather as you prepare for students to return to school. They have developed a new video that will assist your district planning teams in the identification of safe spaces within your facilities.

The video is available at http://www.ready.illinois.gov. It includes a to-do list for schools to prepare for severe weather, including the establishment of protocols, assigned responsibilities for staff, training and practice techniques.

Finally, more than 3,400 evaluators have completed the Teachscape portion of the teacher evaluation training. This is nearly a third of all personnel identified by districts that are required to undergo this training. Additionally, more than 1,100 principal evaluators have completed the first module for principal evaluations.

Have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- The 2011-12 End of Year Report deadline – Aug. 15
- 2011-12 Teacher Service Record reporting deadline – Aug. 15
- “Exercise Your Mind: Collaborating to Enhance Physical Education in Illinois Schools” webinar – Aug. 17
- Adjusted cohort graduation data deadline – Aug. 17
• Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Fall '12 – Aug. 17
• Part 60 (The “Grow Your Own” Teacher Education Initiative) and Part 65 (New Teacher Induction and Mentoring) – Public comment period ends Aug. 20
• Affidavit of School Treasurer Bonds submitted by Regional Superintendents/Intermediate Service Centers – Sept 1
• ISBE offices closed for Labor Day – Sept. 3
• 2011-12 High School Students Taking Community College Courses data submission deadline – Sept. 17
• 21CCLC Grants Request for Proposals application deadline – Sept. 18 (http://www.isbe.net/21cclc)
• Illinois RtI Network statewide conference – Sept. 24-25 (http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm)
• ISBE offices closed for Columbus Day – Oct. 8
• School District/Joint Agreement Budget Form deadline – Oct. 31

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Waiver Request Regarding Adequate Yearly Progress Targets Approved

The Illinois State Board of Education requested a waiver of section 1111(b)(2)(H) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, to permit ISBE to use the same AYP targets as in the 2010-11 school year – 85 percent – to make AYP determinations for the 2011-12 school year (instead of 92.5 percent).

ISBE believes that allowing Illinois to use the same targets for AYP determinations will help increase the quality of instruction for students and improve the academic achievement of students by removing the pressure of meeting escalating targets so the state can devote necessary time and resources to planning for the implementation of ESEA flexibility.

The waiver request was granted, and the AYP results that were recently released are based on the 2011 AMO targets.

Student Assessment

2012 Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) Final Results Posted Aug. 1, 2012

The final 2012 results for the PSAE are now available online via IWAS, on the ISBE website. The final results are located within the Student Information System (SIS).

If you have any problems accessing the final results, please contact the Illinois State Board of Education’s Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

Growth Through Learning

Survey Under Way on Auditory and Visual Accommodations for Evaluator Training

Your cooperation and patience is appreciated as we continue to work to improve upon issues associated with the Illinois Performance teacher and principal evaluator training (Growth Through Learning). We have received feedback from several individuals and have worked to incorporate suggestions from the field as we address technical and content related issues associated with the training.

In an effort to address concerns regarding accommodations for administrators with visual or auditory impairments taking the exam, we have initiated conversations with Teachscape to discuss accommodations.

From our conversations we have identified four possible accommodations described below. Knowing the timeline for completion is Sept. 1, 2012, we would appreciate your feedback via the SurveyMonkey link below no later than Aug. 15, 2012. ISBE, in collaboration with Teachscape, will make every effort to provide the necessary accommodations in a timely manner. You are reminded that the Sept. 1, 2012, timeline refers to the date by which administrators must have completed the assessment in order to conduct teacher observations. Your access to Teachscape does not end on Sept. 1, 2012. Should you not complete the assessment by Sept. 1, 2012, you are prohibited from conducting teacher observations until which time you have successfully completed the assessment.

Accommodations discussed to date:

For Auditory Accommodations

• Add Closed Captioning to the video component of modules of all teacher and student comments.
• Provide an interpreter to sign the audio portion of the video in a small group setting followed by completion of a paper assessment.

For Visual Accommodations
• View using a Smartboard
• Add Screen Reader

To complete the survey and provide your feedback by Aug. 15, 2012, please visit the following link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TeachscapeAccommodationSurvey.

Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

2011-12 Teacher Service Record – Spring Data Collection Reminder

This is a reminder that the deadline to submit 2011-2012 Teacher Service Record (TSR) data is Aug. 15, 2012. The deadline is firm since ISBE has immediate TSR data usage needs. It is critical for districts to submit complete and accurate TSR data, including actual salaries (i.e., total creditable earnings); missing or incomplete data will affect state totals and averages. For the spring data collection, you must do the following by Aug. 15:

• Make necessary educator updates.
• Submit 2011-2012 salaries. Please note that salaries can only be submitted through the “Submit/Update Teacher Salary” wizard.

Questions about the 2011-12 TSR spring data collection can be directed to the ISBE Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at tsr@isbe.net or (217) 782-3950. On Wednesday, Aug. 15, division staff will be available to respond to emails and take calls until 4 p.m. CDT.

School Business Services

Requirements Regarding School Treasurer Bonds

Section 3-8 and Section 8-2 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/3-8 and 105 ILCS 5/8-2) require Regional Superintendents of Schools to file an affidavit with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) showing which treasurers of school districts in their region are properly bonded. This affidavit must be filed before Sept. 1 of each year. Copies of the actual school treasurer bond should not be filed with ISBE.

Section 8-2 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/8-2) requires each treasurer of a school district to be properly bonded. The penalty of the bond shall be 25 percent of the amount of all bonds, notes, mortgages, moneys and effects of which the treasurer is to have custody at any given time. The bond shall be increased or decreased from time to time, as the increase or decrease of the amount of notes, bonds, mortgages, moneys and effects may require. The bond shall be payable to the township trustees of schools over the district or payable to the school board of the district, whichever is applicable. The bond shall be filed with the Regional Superintendent of Schools. School districts should not file a copy of their bonds with ISBE.


Section 3-8 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/3-8) describes the duties of the Regional Superintendent of Schools upon receipt of the treasurer bonds. When the bond of any school treasurer is filed with the Regional Superintendent of Schools, the Regional Superintendent shall carefully examine it. If the bond is found to be in all respects according to law and the sureties sufficient, the Regional Superintendent shall endorse his/her approval and file it with the papers of his/her office. If the bond is in any respect defective, or if the sureties are insufficient, the bond shall be returned for correction.

In Cook County, the responsibilities and duties of the Regional Superintendent of Schools detailed in Section 3-8 and Section 8-2 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/3-8 and 105 ILCS 5/8-2) will be assumed by the respective Intermediate Service Center.

An electronic version of the Affidavit, and other information, can be found online at www.isbe.net/sfms/html/t_bonds.htm.

Please contact Michelle Heninger, School Business Services Division, at (217) 785-8779 or mheninge@isbe.net with any questions.

Special Education

State Performance Plan Indicator 13: Data Verification Process

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires each state to submit a six-year State
Performance Plan (SPP) designed to evaluate the state’s efforts to implement the requirements of IDEA and describe how the state will improve its implementation.

A required component of the SPP is improvement activities for each of the 20 indicators. Under direction from the Office of Special Education Programs, the Data Accountability Center, and the Regional Resource Centers, one of the improvement activities included in the SPP under Indicator 13 (Secondary Transition) and Indicator 20 (Timely, Valid & Reliable Data) is the implementation of a data verification process to address the completeness and accuracy of these data. These data are submitted to ISBE through the Funding and Child Tracking System (FACTS) for students with IEPs ages 14½ and above.

Each year, ISBE will implement this data verification process with a randomly selected sample of districts that reported 100 percent compliance for Indicator 13. Districts selected for the 2012 data verification process will be notified by Aug. 1, 2012, and will be required to submit IEPs from the 2011-2012 school year for a randomly selected sample of students. The transition plan components of these IEPs will then be reviewed and ISBE will follow-up with the selected districts.

For more information regarding Indicator 13 and secondary transition planning, please review the technical assistance resources available at http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/html/total.htm.

**ISBE Receives State Education Agency Determination Letter on IDEA**

The Illinois State Board of Education received its State Education Agency (SEA) Determination letter on the implementation of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Illinois was placed in the “Needs Assistance” category with several other states. The Department’s determinations are based on the totality of a State’s data and information, including a State’s FFY 2010 Annual Performance Report (APR) and revised State Performance Plan (SPP); information from monitoring, including verification visit findings; and other public information, such as the State’s performance under any existing special conditions on its FFY 2011 grant or a compliance agreement, longstanding unresolved audit findings, and other State compliance with the IDEA.

The specific factors affecting the OSEP determination of “Needs Assistance” for Illinois were: (1) the State’s FFY 2010 data for SPP Indicator 13, which measures compliance with secondary transition requirements, reflect 86.4 percent compliance, and the State did not report that it corrected all FFY 2009 findings of noncompliance as one finding remains open; and (2) the State’s FFY 2010 data for SPP Indicator 17, which measures the timeliness of impartial due process hearing decisions, reflect 58.3 percent.

OSEP also noted areas that reflect a high level of performance in Illinois, including SPP Indicators 4B (suspension/expulsion by race/ethnicity), 9 (disproportionality), 10 (disproportionality in specific disability categories), 11 (evaluation), 12 (transition from Part C to Part B), 15 (correction of noncompliance), 16 (complaints) and 20 (state-reported data).

**Project SET Launches Site to Help Youth With Disabilities Transition Beyond High School**

Project SET (Seamless Effective Transition), a program supported by funding from the Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education, has launched a new website to support the transition of urban youth with disabilities into post-high school life.

Project SET administrators cite lower high school graduation rates mixed with greater risk of unemployment, incarceration, and life in poverty as issues that commonly affect youth with disabilities.

Project SET provides information focused on local and state resources for personnel who work with youth and families, updates about transition services, and announcements about community participation to help youth with disabilities and their families. Go to http://projectset.ed.uic.edu for more information.

**Physical Education**

**Web Conference to Help Put Illinois Enhanced P.E. Strategic Plan Into Motion**

“Exercise Your Mind: Collaborating to Enhance Physical Education in Illinois Schools,” a web conference, is scheduled for 1-2:30 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 17.

The webinar follows up the release of the Illinois Enhanced Physical Education Strategic Plan, which is available at http://www.isbe.net/EPESP/default.htm. The plan provides a roadmap for implementing the vision that all Illinois K-12 students will participate in daily, high-quality physical education. The strategic plan was

The plan states, “High-quality physical education is as important as math, science or any other core subject because it correlates directly to the health and well-being of students for the rest of their lives. P.E. and physical activity have cognitive benefits too, and can make students more receptive to learning.”

The webinar is intended for community members, parents, students, teachers, health departments, school board members, principals, superintendents and local coalitions that want to collaborate to enhance PE. Participants will be able to earn 1.5 CPDU credits. To register for the web conference, go to http://www.iphionline.org.

Innovation and Improvement
Grant Readers Sought for 21st Century Community Learning Center Program

ISBE’s Innovation and Improvement Division is seeking additional grant readers for the FY 2013 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) Program grant competition. Preferred grant readers must have after school experience and knowledge in after school programming and/or community based programming that serves school aged students, grantsmanship experience, previous grant reading experience, 21st CCLC experience and knowledge, program management and experience with schools and districts.

Readers will need to be available during Sept. 24-Oct. 1, 2012, to read the Request for Proposals (RFP). Readers will be required to participate in a training that will be delivered via a webinar on Sept. 10, 2012. Readers will read and score their assigned applications, which will be sent to the readers through a web-based system. Access to a computer with internet capability will be necessary. An honorarium will be provided. Once selected, readers will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, a memorandum of understanding and complete a conflict of interest questionnaire.

To be considered for this opportunity please send a letter of interest, a completed application form, which can be found at http://www.isbe.net/21cclc/PDF/43-44R-fv13-rfp-call-for-reviewers.pdf, and a resume or curriculum vitae by Aug. 10, 2012, to Mike Hatfill, Principal Consultant, Illinois State Board of Education, Innovation and Improvement Division, 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL 62777-0001 or via email at 21stcclc@isbe.net. Contact Mike Hatfill with questions at (217) 524-4832.

Student Opportunities
Registration Begins Soon for Cyber Foundations High School Competition

Registration begins Aug. 1 for the 2012 Cyber Foundations High School Competition. The national competition for high school students aims to identify future cyber security experts, testing mastery of networking, operating systems and system administration.

The contest offers free web tutorials and awards scholarships and other prizes for top performers. For more information, visit http://www.CyberFoundations.org or contact Sonny Sandelius at ssandelius@sans.org. Registration ends Oct. 15, 2012.

Professional Development
Illinois Council for Exceptional Children Starts Registration for Fall Conference

The Illinois Council for Exceptional Children (ICEC) will hold its 2012 fall convention Nov. 1-3 in Lisle. The theme for this year’s convention is “The Best of Special Education.”

This year’s keynote speakers include Dr. Vinni M. Hall, a member of the State Board of Education and former president of ICEC. Dr. Hall, who serves as secretary on the State Board of Education, was first appointed to serve on the state agency’s board in September 2004. On Friday, Nov. Dr. Richard Van Acker, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will present “Building Ships for the Seas We Must Sail: Exploring the Current Challenges Confronting Special Educators in Today’s Schools.”

The Illinois Council for Exceptional Children provides professional development, advocacy, networking and information aimed at improving the quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

For more information, including online registration, visit http://illinoiscecc.org. Reservations must be made by Oct. 18. For questions, contact Bev Johns at bevjohns@juno.com.
Conference Offers Opportunity to Learn Skills Students Need for Apprentice Programs

The Illinois State Apprenticeship Committee will hold a free Counselor Conference on Friday, Sept. 28, at the Operating Engineers Apprenticeship School, 19800 Arsenal Road, in Wilmington. Lunch will be provided at the event, which starts at 8 a.m. with registration.

The conference offers CDPU points with the opportunity to learn skills students need to get into Union Construction Apprentice Programs. While attire is casual, safety is stressed, therefore long pants are required and dangling jewelry should be avoided. Work boots are encouraged and no sandals or other open-toe shoes are permitted.

Some of the trades attending the event include the Operating Engineers Local 150, Laborer’s Apprenticeship Training, Carpenters Training Program, Bricklayers, Electricians, Painter Decorators, Drywall Finishers, Teamsters Apprenticeship Training, Plumbers and Pipefitters.

For more information and to register for the event, contact Johnetta Ryan of the Construction Industry Service Corp. at (630) 472-9411 or johnetta@cisco.org.

‘A Workshop for RN’s Working in the Schools’ Scheduled for Aug. 7-8

Slots are still available for “A Workshop for RN’s Working in the Schools,” which is being offered Aug. 7-8, 2012, by National Louis University. The program is intended to provide information to facilitate the safe practice of nursing in a school setting. This workshop is intended for registered nurses who do not hold Type 73 School Nurse Endorsement.

Learning objectives for the workshop include: 1) Identify state and federal laws that directly affect the practice of nursing in the school setting; 2) Identify health problems specific to the school setting; 3) Apply the nursing process in providing care for injuries and illnesses to students and staff in the school setting; 4) Apply legal resources and references affecting the practice of nursing in the school setting, and 5) Identify resources for protecting the safety of students and staff in the prevention of violence and the implementation of crisis plans.

Cost is $250 for non-credit and $360 for one-hour college credit. The program will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days and is held on the campus of National Louis University in Wheeling. For more information, contact Linda Gibbons at linda.gibbons@nl.edu.

In the News

Weekly News Clips

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at http://www.isbe.net/news/2012/newsclops/120806.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.