Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Chairman Chico and I testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee on Friday. It was our second formal appearance before the General Assembly to defend the State Board of Education’s FY 14 budget request, and we were joined by Board members Andrea Brown and Melinda LaBarre. We were before the House Elementary and Secondary Education Appropriation Committee last month.

As we meet with legislators, individually and within these formal committee hearings, it is obvious that a number of them are hearing from you. They understand the types of cuts that are occurring at the local level and want to work with us to stop those reductions. There is genuine interest in reviewing the school funding formula, a discussion the Board began last year. Last week, Senator Manar proposed an advisory committee to study and make education funding recommendations by next February. You can read the full text of the resolution (Senate Joint Resolution 32) at http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=85&GA=98&DocTypeId=SJR&DocNum=32&GAID=12&LegID=76064&SpecSess=&Session.

Thanks to all of you who participated in the first year of the 5Essentials Survey. Friday was the final day of the survey and the percentage of districts that will be receiving a report, teacher, student or both stands at 93 percent. By the close, 75 percent of teachers and 71 percent of students statewide had completed the survey. Principals and superintendents will have access to survey results in June. If a district suspects misuse, they can report it to us and we will investigate. If misuse occurs, we will invalidate results.

The survey data will become publicly available when the Illinois State Report Card is published in the fall. The display of the data elements is under final consideration by the Report Card Steering Committee and will be announced by the end of April. As has happened previously, the public will have access to results at a detailed level through our website. We are looking forward to having these results available to help us all paint a more robust picture of school climate and learning conditions.

I know some of you are receiving pushback on the Common Core standards that we are implementing in Illinois. The criticism is based on a misguided perception that the Common Core is an attempt by the federal government to take over education. We’ve put together a couple of documents you may access at http://www.isbe.net/common_core/htmls/facts-vs-myth.htm. Among the documents are responses to several questions that seem to be at the root of a coordinated campaign as well as a general overview of the Common Core based on facts.

The final version of the Next-Generation Science Standards (NGSS) was released last week. Illinois was one of 26 lead states that partnered in developing the standards as part of a collaborative state-led process. An Illinois NGSS Review Committee made up of K-12 science teachers, state science and policy staff, higher education faculty, scientists and engineers were involved in reviewing the standards as they were under development. A team, called the NGSS
Adoption Committee, made up of 60 K-12 science teachers from across the state, is reviewing the standards to provide recommendations concerning adoption and implementation.

NGSS are internationally benchmarked, rigorous, research-based and aligned with expectations for college and careers. They provide for deeper understanding of content and application. The new science standards integrate core ideas, key practices and concepts that apply to many areas of science. For example, the disciplinary core ideas of science and engineering are integrated rather than taught separately. However, the engineering design process has distinct performance expectations. Overall, the standards reflect the interconnected nature of science as it is practiced and experienced. Illinois will begin the NGSS adoption process this spring. The adoption process includes review by the State Board of Education, a 45-day public comment period and review by a legislative committee. The state adoption process will take approximately six to eight months.

We have received feedback from many of you that the implementation of the new Employment Information System (EIS) is difficult both because of the time needed to learn the system and because the collection has expanded to include all employees. We requested and were granted by the U.S. Department of Education a deadline extension to July 31 for data entry into the EIS. We have also been in discussion with the Department of Education about reducing the data collection to include only administrators and teachers, but they are unwilling to modify their requirements.

The intent of this new system is to improve and simplify the Teacher Service Record (TSR) and Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefits (ATSB) data collections by creating a single system that would allow school districts to upload data from their human resources or payroll databases. These data generated by the collections are required by the Department of Education and the Illinois School Code. In addition to the legal requirements, ISBE plans to use the data in analyzing the characteristics of Illinois’ school- and district-based work force.

Many school districts are entering their data into the system manually. If your district generates pay checks electronically, our staff can provide guidance on how to generate an extract from your human resources or payroll system and upload it to our system without manual data entry. Our helpdesk can be reached at (217) 558-3600.

I have also instructed ISBE staff to identify and convene a school district data advisory council. We would like to hear more regularly from school districts to help us better anticipate the impact of data collection on districts as well as to identify ways of reducing data collection burden. Going forward, no new data collection or revisions to data collection will be undertaken without first running it by this body.

Finally, congratulations to Stephanie Hawkins, a second-grade teacher at Lynne Thigpen Elementary School in Joliet. She has been chosen as the Illinois recipient of the Milken National Educator Award.

Have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

Please note this is not a complete list of dates and deadlines. For questions, call the Illinois State Board of Education at (866) 262-6663 or (217) 782-4321 or visit the agency’s official website at http://www.isbe.net.

- **Part 226 (Special Education)** – Public comment period ends April 22
- **Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) FY 2014 RFP** – Must be submitted to ISBE by 5 p.m. on April 22
- **“Professional Standards for School Food Service” webinar** – April 24 (For more information and to register, go to https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/725294913)
- **Physical Education II. Learning Standards Revision Committee** – April 29 (For more information, go to http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm)
• **Promoting Enhanced Physical Education Committee Meeting** – April 30 (For more information, go to [http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm](http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm)).

• **Sixth annual School Wellness Recognition Conference** – May 3 (Early bird deadline registration is April 19, [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/wellness-conf13.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/wellness-conf13.pdf)).

• **National School Nurse Day** – May 8

• **Enhance Physical Education Task Force Meeting** – May 15 (For more information, go to [http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm](http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm)).

• **Applications for the Exception to the 1.0 Percent Cap due** – May 17

• **Physical Education IL Learning Standards Revision Committee** – May 31 (For more information, go to [http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm](http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm)).

• **Part 20 (Standards for Endorsements in Elementary Education)** – Public comment period ends June 3

• **Part 21 (Standards for Endorsements in the Middle Grades)** – Public comment period ends June 3

• **Part 25 (Certification)** – Public comment period ends June 3

• **Part 26 (Standards for Certification in Early Childhood Education and in Elementary Education)** – Public comment period ends June 3

• **Part 27 (Standards for Certification in Specific Teaching Fields)** – Public comment period ends June 3

• **Part 226 (Special Education)** – Public comment period ends June 3

• **Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Advisory Committee meeting** – June 4 ([http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/SHAC.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/SHAC.htm)).

• **Enhance Physical Education Task Force Meeting** – June 14 (For more information, go to [http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm](http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm)).


• **0-3 Prevention Initiative – Outcomes Questionnaire IWAS data entry deadline** – July 1 (IWAS Reporting Guide available at [http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/pfa_prev_init.htm](http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/pfa_prev_init.htm)).

• **0-3 Prevention Initiative – Parent Questionnaire IWAS data entry deadline** – July 1 (IWAS Reporting Guide available at [http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/pfa_prev_init.htm](http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/pfa_prev_init.htm)).

• **Student Health Data** – Vision system report deadline – July 1

• **Regional Safe Schools End of Year Data reporting deadline** – July 31 (User guide for the IWAS reporting system, [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/rssp_iwas_user_guide.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/rssp_iwas_user_guide.pdf))

• **Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) reporting deadline** – July 31 (User guide for the IWAS reporting system, [ftp://help.isbe.net/webapps/taoep/pdf/TAOEP.pdf](ftp://help.isbe.net/webapps/taoep/pdf/TAOEP.pdf)).

• **Enhance Physical Education Task Force Meeting** – Aug. 2 (For more information, go to [http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm](http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm)).

• **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Fall 2013** – Aug. 16 (see [http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm) for new public notice requirements for all waiver requests)

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**PARCC**

**ISBE and Education Super Highway Team Up for Survey of Schools’ Download Speeds**

The Illinois State Board of Education is working with Education Super Highway to collect data in support of planning for instruction and the PARCC online assessments in 2014, and make data-driven decisions in our budget process to maximize the impact of spending to upgrade Illinois school technology infrastructure.

During the last two weeks of April we will be asking for your assistance to verify upload and download speeds for every school building within the state. Your participation is strictly voluntary and the information gained by this testing will be used to assist ISBE in its planning to improve statewide technology infrastructure and it will also assist you in your own planning.

The School Speed Test has been endorsed by the State Educational Technology Directors Association, the U.S. Department of Education and the Council of Chief State School Officers as an effective way to accurately determine the network infrastructure needs of districts and schools. We will be hosting a webinar at 10:30 a.m. on April 17 to provide you with additional information about the School Speed Test. Register for the webinar at [https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/618560560](https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/618560560).
The School Speed Test is a completely voluntary survey that is meant to provide the ISBE with data as it advocates for improvements to our educational technology infrastructure and while we ask for your participation it is not required.

Center of Innovation and Improvement

‘Introducing the ISBE Model Common Core Math Curriculum: Grades 6-12’ Webinar Set

The webinar “Introducing the ISBE Model Common Core Math Curriculum: Grades 6-12” is scheduled for 11 a.m. to noon April 22. Presenters will be Jennie Winters and Diane Beedy. There is no charge for the webinar.

Participants in this webinar will be made aware of the model units and unit sequence for grades 6-12. These units were created by a team of representatives from across the state and are based upon the final PARCC Framework, released in November of 2012. Participants will gain an understanding of the scope and sequence and units, including the purpose, content and structure of the Model Curriculum Units. Each grade level and course contains a scope and sequence of core and supporting standards. The grade levels/courses are divided into units of instruction that include the timeframe for each unit and explanations of the content and practice standards specific to each particular unit.

Join us to learn more about the ISBE Model Common Core Math Curriculum. Register at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/697834385. This webinar will be archived for viewing after April 22.

Rising Star Capacity Builders Training

Day III: Creating a Culture of Inquiry

Using Data to Inform Continuous Improvement Planning in an Indicator-Based System

Participants will:

- Engage in a data dialogue within a Multiple Measures Data Framework;
- Explore the data features warehoused in the Illinois Interactive Report Card;
- Connect data in all of its forms to an indicator-based, research supported continuous improvement process; and
- Apply Root Cause Analysis techniques to examine educational practice.

To register online, please visit http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/. Registration is from 8:30-9 a.m. with the workshop to follow from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. A beverage and coffee service will be available in the morning. Lunch will be provided.

Participants are encouraged to bring laptops and the most current form of local assessment data that you would like to incorporate into your district level continuous improvement plan.

- Thursday, April 25, 2013, Hilton Lisle, Audience: External and Internal Rising Star Coaches and Non-SSoS Cadre Trainers
- Monday, April 29, 2013, State House Inn, Audience: External and Internal Rising Star Coaches and Non-SSoS Cadre Trainers
- Tuesday, April 30, 2013, State House Inn, Audience: Race To The Top, School Improvement Grant (1003g) Participants, and Non-SSoS District Continuous Improvement Team Members

Rising Star Capacity Building Professional Development Series for Non-SSoS Districts

The intended audience for this training series is District-Level Continuous Improvement Teams who have not been assigned an externally appointed Rising Star Capacity Building Coach.

To register online please visit http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/. Registration is from 8:30-9 a.m. with the workshop to follow from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. A beverage and coffee service will be available in the morning. Lunch will be provided.

Day I, Coaching for Capacity Building: Continuous Improvement Planning Using Indicators of Effective Practice; Day II, Monitoring and Sustainability; Day III, Creating a Culture of Inquiry: Using Data to Inform Continuous Improvement Planning in an Indicator-Based System.

- Day I, May 15, 2013, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel Springfield; May 22, 2013, Hilton Lisle
- Day II, April 17, 2013, Hilton Lisle; April 18, 2013, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel Springfield; May 16, 2013, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel Springfield; May 23, 2013, Hilton Lisle
- Day III, May 29, 2013, Hilton Lisle; May 30, 2013, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel Springfield
School Business Services

**Maintenance Grant Programs Applications Available Beginning Wednesday, April 17**

On Feb. 16, 2012, Gov. Pat Quinn announced the release of $50 million for the Maintenance Grant Program as a part of the Illinois Jobs Now! Capital Program. Round 1 was offered from March 1 to May 1, 2012, and $39.2 million dollars was paid to 691 districts for Maintenance projects. The remaining $9.8 million will be awarded this summer in a second round with $1 million held in reserve for Emergency projects.

The application materials for the second round will be available beginning April 17, 2013, on the IWAS System. Applications must be submitted in IWAS to the Regional Offices of Education by May 31, 2013. The Maintenance Grant Program is a dollar for dollar state matching grant program providing up to $50,000 for the maintenance or upkeep of buildings or structures for educational purposes. All school districts, cooperative high schools and Type 40 area vocational centers are eligible.

**Please note:** There have been changes to the application process since the Round 1. Please be aware of the following:

- Applications will be limited to one project per application.
- If funds are insufficient to approve all approved projects, grants shall be awarded in order of the five priorities established in Section 5-100(b) of the School Construction Law:
  A. Emergency projects
  B. Health/Life Safety
  C. State Priority
  D. Permanent improvement
  E. Other projects
- Applicants may not obligate funds or begin work on any of the projects listed on the application prior to Final approval of the Grant by ISBE.
- The local board of education must authorize the school maintenance project application during a duly convened meeting before the application can be submitted on IWAS and the board must reserve the local funds to cover the districts portion of the project costs.
- Grant funds may only be used for projects approved on the District’s application. Modifications may not be made after approval.
- Subcontractor information must be submitted to ISBE within 15 days of awarding contracts.
- Quarterly Expenditure reports will be required.
- A final expenditure report is due within twenty (20) calendar days after final project completion.
- All project activities must be expended or legally obligated within two years of disbursement by the State. If funds have been obligated but not fully expended within two years after disbursement, ninety (90) calendar days will be given to liquidate all obligations.

For detailed information about the program, go to [http://www.isbe.net/sbss/smp_grants.htm](http://www.isbe.net/sbss/smp_grants.htm) or contact Kimberly Beachy with the School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779.

**Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program for Calendar Years 2012 and 2013 Authorization**

The Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program has been extended for two more years as a result of the passage of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-240). The implementing regulations provide that Illinois’ share of these allocations is $14.893 million (for calendar year 2012) and $14.893 million (for calendar year 2013), for a total of $29.786 million.

The application process will be open beginning April 15, 2013, through May 31, 2013. For more information, go to [http://www.isbe.state.il.us/construction/html/qzab.htm](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/construction/html/qzab.htm).

**FY 2012 Operating Expense Per Pupil/Per Capita Tuition Charge Available**

Now available are the FY2012 Operating Expense Per Pupil (OEPP)/Per Capita Tuition Charge (PCTC). ([http://www.isbe.net/finance/verification.htm](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 (AFR). These are considered the official OEPP/PCTC for each district. If necessary the detailed calculation is available upon request.

If you have any questions, please contact ISBE’s School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779 or email [finance1@isbe.net](mailto:finance1@isbe.net).

**Indirect Cost Rates for Program Year 2014**

Now available are the Indirect Cost Rates for Program Year 2014 at the following website: [http://www.isbe.net/sbss/indirect.htm](http://www.isbe.net/sbss/indirect.htm).

These rates are used for award and management of federal contracts, grants and other assistance.
arrangements governed by the Office of Management and Budget. For further documentation of methodology, please see Indirect Cost Rate Plan at the link above. The methodology of the calculated rates are approved and accepted as policy and procedures by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Circular A-87, and Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR parts 75.561 (b) and (c).

If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Hemberger in ISBE’s School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779 or finance1@isbe.net.

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**Early Childhood**

**Deadline to Meet Certification Requirements for Preschool Bilingual Rules is July 2014**

In an effort to strengthen and support the academic achievement of English language learners in Illinois, new administrative rules went into effect in July 2010 that expanded bilingual services to preschool programs administered by a school district. In accordance with 23 Ill Administrative Code Part 228, effective July 1, 2014, preschool teachers who provide native language or ESL instruction to ELL students must also hold the English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual endorsement or approval that corresponds with the teaching assignment.

For more information, contact the ISBE Division of English Language Learning at (312) 814-3850 or the ISBE Division of Early Childhood at (217) 524-4835. An explanation of the rules can be found in the PowerPoint “Overview: The New ISBE Bilingual Rules and Early Childhood Teacher Preparation,” located at http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/pdf/ce_bilingual_rules_webinar_pres.pdf. For additional resources to support your preschool English Language Learners, log onto http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/preschool_ell.htm.

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**Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) Pilot Year Two in 2013-14**

Adopted by the ISBE in 2012, the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) is a comprehensive process designed to assess kindergarten students’ growth and development and provide information about students’ competencies across developmental domains, with the goal of generating more effective classroom instruction.

Based upon developmental research and theory, KIDS uses an observation-based assessment instrument to record students’ progress over time. Starting this school year, 64 districts participated in the KIDS pilot and received training on how to implement KIDS in their kindergarten classrooms. KIDS will continue as a pilot, with volunteer districts, until it is implemented statewide in 2015-16.

The KIDS pilot begins its second year this summer with trainings throughout the state for participating districts. If you would like to inquire about participating in the pilot for school year 2013-14, contact the Division of Early Childhood at (217) 524-4835. To learn more about KIDS, log onto the ISBE KIDS page at http://www.isbe.net/KIDS.

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**Student Advisory Council**

**Applications Available Online to Serve on Council for the 2013-14 School Year**

The Student Advisory Council application for the 2013-14 school year is now available on the ISBE website at http://www.isbe.net/sac.

Any public school student interested in serving on the Illinois State Board of Education’s Student Advisory Council must complete an application and essay. Eligible applicants must submit all paperwork required and be available for four meetings.

There are 11 positions being filled for the 2013-14 school year. Applications are due May 31, 2013. 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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**Rules and Waivers**

**Reminder: No Waiver Requests Needed for District Holiday Plans**

Public Act 96-640, effective in August of 2009, allows school districts and other eligible entities to make plans for use of five legal school holidays at the local level. Since 2009, it is no longer necessary to use the waiver application process in order to make district plans for these holidays:

- The birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (third Monday in January);
- The birthday of President Abraham Lincoln (February 12);
- The birthday of General Casimir Pulaski (first Monday in March);
• Columbus Day (second Monday in October); and
• Veterans' Day (November 11).

A school board may choose to: (a) hold school; (b) schedule teachers' institutes; (c) hold parent-teacher conferences; or (d) hold staff development activities (including school improvement and inservice training) on one or more of these holidays, provided that it has first taken the following steps:

- Scheduled a public hearing (can be part of a regular board meeting) about the holiday proposal;
- Provided notice before the hearing to both educators and parents that sets forth the time, date and place of the hearing; describes the purpose of the hearing; and indicates that testimony will be taken from educators and parents about the holiday plans at the hearing;
- Ensured that the person/persons honored by the holiday will be recognized through instructional activities conducted either on the holiday or, if there is no attendance on that day, on the first school day preceding or following the holiday.

There are currently 446 holiday modifications still in effect that allow for use of some or all of these holidays. Here is a link to the database that shows these modifications, sorted by county and then by district:

http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/excel/holiday-sort0413.xls. (Since holiday use is now controlled at the local level, several of these modifications may no longer be 'valid' if the districts have since held a public hearing and made plans at the local level.) If, however, your district has a holiday modification set to expire this spring, and you wish to continue to set holiday plans, you will need to follow the procedure described above in order to have students in attendance or schedule other activities.

Here are answers to questions on the local procedure for holiday plans:

1. **Does my district need to put a legal notice in the local paper in advance of the school board's public hearing on holiday plans?** No. While several districts have chosen to provide this type of notice to teachers' union representatives, the law does not require it, so long as the district can show that teachers knew of the public hearing on holiday plans in advance.

2. **Does my district need to provide advance written notice to its state senator(s) and state representative(s)?** No. Such notice is only required when the district submits a waiver or modification to the State Board for review by ISBE or the Illinois General Assembly. Holiday plans are no longer governed by the waiver process.

3. **Does my district need to provide advance written notice to its state senator(s) and state representative(s)?** No. Such notice is only required when the district submits a waiver or modification to the State Board for review by ISBE or the Illinois General Assembly. Holiday plans are no longer governed by the waiver process.

4. **Does my district need to limit its holiday plans to five years?** No. The district can set its holiday plans going forward, and will need to redo the public hearing process only in the event that its plans for use of holidays changes in the future.

5. **Does my district's board need to vote to approve the use of holidays after holding the public hearing and taking testimony?** Yes.

Questions about the local holiday process can be addressed to Rules and Waivers at (217) 782-5270 or by writing to waivers@isbe.net.

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

Six sets of proposed amendments recently reviewed by the Illinois State Board of Education are available for public comment. The proposals have been posted on the agency’s Web site at http://www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

**Part 20 (Standards for Endorsements in Elementary Education):** Establishes standards to take effect February 1, 2017, for receipt of the elementary endorsement and for program approval.

*Public comment period ends June 3, 2013.*

**Part 21 (Standards for Endorsements in the Middle Grades):** Establishes standards to take effect February 1, 2018, for receipt of the middle grades endorsement and for program approval.

*Public comment period ends June 3, 2013.*

**Part 25 (Certification):** Establishes requirements for the receipt of endorsements for elementary education and middle grades and for gifted education teacher and specialist.
Public comment period ends June 3, 2013.

Part 26 (Standards for Certification in Early Childhood Education and in Elementary Education): Provides for the phase out by January 31, 2017, of standards specific to the elementary education endorsement, to be replaced by standards in Part 20, and prohibits enrollment in programs aligned to Part 26 after February 1, 2014.
Public comment period ends June 3, 2013.

Part 27 (Standards for Certification in Specific Teaching Fields): Acknowledges the proposed standards for the middle grades and sets forth standards for an optional endorsement for gifted education teacher and gifted education specialist.
Public comment period ends June 3, 2013.

Part 226 (Special Education): Delays until July 1, 2015, new qualifications for personnel who conduct the medical review, establishes a definition of a medical review, and provides for training or testing options in lieu of educator licensure for certain personnel to make education recommendations as a result of educationally relevant medical findings.
Public comment period ends June 3, 2013.

Special Education Services

New Response to Intervention (RtI) Website Now Available

A new website has been established for ISBE’s State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), which focuses on supporting and coaching the sustainable implementation of response to intervention (RtI) in Illinois districts and schools. The Illinois SPDG consists of the following components: 1) Illinois RtI (I-RtI) Network, 2) Illinois Institutes of Higher Education Partnership, and 3) Parent and Family Engagement (integrated within the work of the I-RtI Network).

Visit the new website at http://www.illinoisrti.org to access information about the Illinois SPDG projects and RtI, as well as useful resources for administrators, educators, RtI coaches, parents and families, and higher education faculty.

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 2013 Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day activities, visit http://www.samhsa.gov/children/national.asp.

April is Designated as National Month of the Military Child

During April, designated as the National Month of the Military Child, military children are applauded for the daily sacrifices they make and the challenges they overcome by being a part of a military family. The Department of Education, the Department of Defense, the entire federal government and all sectors of our communities are asked to honor military children by providing a variety of resources, programs and opportunities to show their support.

There are numerous ways that schools and communities can honor military-connected students during the Month of the Military Child. The Department of Defense Education Activity’s has resources that can be found at their website, http://www.militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/. The site includes the Students at the Center guidebook, a research-based grant program, and special education professional development for military-connected local education agencies and school liaison(s) at each military location.

5Essentials Survey

Webinar Looks at Understanding and Using the Data for Improvements

5Essentials Survey of Learning Conditions: Webinar III
As you know, the 5Essentials Survey window will close at the end of the day on Friday April 12. As the window draws to a close, we wanted to let you know about the third part of the webinar series being conducted by UChicago Impact.

This series looks at the next steps for the 5Essentials – understanding the data and using the data for continuous improvement in schools. The first three dates for the webinar are listed below. To register for the surveys or to view recorded versions of Webinar I and Webinar II, please see https://illinois.5-essentials.org/2012/. Webinar III was held at 10 a.m. April 8, and is scheduled again at 1 p.m. April 18 and 10 a.m. April 23.
Nutrition and Wellness Programs

National Food Service Management Institute Offering Free Training Sessions in Macomb

The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) has recently announced that they are hosting a variety of trainings at Western Illinois University in Macomb on May 14-16. There is no cost to attend the training; however, the attendee is responsible for their own travel expenses, including food and lodging.

The training sessions include Meal Pattern, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on May 14; Food Safety Basics, 8 a.m. to noon on May 15; Food Defense Tabletop Exercise, 1:30-5:30 p.m. on May 15; Inventory Management and Tracking, 8 a.m. to noon on May 16; and Everyone Plays a P.A.R.T. in Norovirus Control, 1:30-3:30 p.m. on May 16.

For details about the sessions and to register, visit http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20130308110640.pdf. If you have questions or would like more information, contact Jennifer Marascalco at (662) 915-2351 or jhrascal@olemiss.edu.

School Safety

School Threat Evaluation Training Program Training to be Held in Springfield in May

On behalf of the Illinois State Police and Illinois Emergency Management Agency, you and members of your school or organization are invited to attend a specialized training seminar providing an introduction to school threat assessments for those who work in the K-12 school environment. The School Threat Evaluation Program (STEP) training will be held at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Because of popular demand, the training is being offered in two sessions: Session 1 is May 22-23, and Session 2 is May 23-24. Due to limited space, we are encouraging registrants to attend the session that corresponds to their Regional Office of Education Area and/or their county. Session 1: Areas 1, 2 and 6 Session. Session 2: Areas 3, 4 and 5 (Please refer to map link on the registration website to identify your Area.)

STEP training will provide school administrators, teachers, resource officers, social workers, counselors and local law enforcement with techniques to identify students who pose a legitimate threat to themselves and others, as well as methods to better utilize information sources in the assessment process.

For more information or to register, click the below and enter code: Safe123. Follow this link to register now: http://www.iema.illinois.gov/iema/training/SchoolSafetyConf/default.asp. If you have questions, please email ema.stepconference@illinois.gov.

Department of Public Health

Memorandum a Reminder of Tdap School Requirement for the 2013-14 School Year

The Illinois Department of Public Health recently distributed a memo on the new Tdap school requirement for the 2013-14 school year. It is available online at http://www.isbe.net/pdf/school_health/tdap-reminder0413.pdf.

This memo is to inform providers that the Illinois Department of Public Health amended the Child Health Examination Code Part 665 to require students in the sixth through 12th grades to show proof of recent pertussis vaccination. The revised rule requires that all students entering, advancing or transferring into sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, 10th, 11th or 12th grades show proof of receiving one dose of Tdap vaccine (defined as tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) regardless of the interval since the last DTaP, DT or Td dose.

The revised rules align the vaccination requirement with the existing physical examination requirements for students entering sixth grade and ensures that older students receive needed “catch up” vaccinations to reduce the risk of acquiring pertussis. This is particularly important as the increase in pertussis cases among school-aged children and adolescents, which began in 2010, has continued throughout 2012. Vaccination of children and adolescents has proved effective in reducing the spread of pertussis within communities.

Read more from the memorandum, which includes resources and more, on ISBE’s School Health Issues webpage at http://www.isbe.net/school_health.htm.

U.S. Department of Education

Information Now Available About This Year’s Investing in Innovation (i3) Grant Competition

The U.S. Department of Education has launched the 2013 competition for the $150 million Investing in Innovation (i3) program, which aims to help school districts and
nonprofit organizations develop and expand practices that accelerate student achievement and prepare every student to succeed in college and in their careers, and includes three grant categories: Development, Validation and Scale-up.

The department has released the program’s invitation for pre-applications for the i3 “Development” grant category and the notice of final priorities for the i3 program overall. The deadline for the pre-application is April 26, 2013. Following the peer review process, the department will announce a list of the highly rated pre-applications. These entities will then be invited to apply for the Development competition and given additional time to complete their full application.

This year’s priorities for the Development grant category are: Improving the Effectiveness of Teachers or Principals; Improving Low-Performing Schools; Improving Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education; Improving Academic Outcomes for Students With Disabilities; Improving Academic Outcomes for English Learners (ELs); Improving Parent and Family Engagement; Effective Use of Technology; and Serving Rural Communities.

The U.S. Department of Education plans to announce applications for the Validation and Scale-up categories later this spring. To learn more about the program, and how to apply for its grants, click on http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html.

In Brief

Professional Development

- The ADA National Network has announced the April 16 ADA Audio Conference Series session titled “Extracurricular Athletic Opportunities for Students With Disabilities: Understanding the Issues.” Details and registration can be found at http://www.ada-audio.org/ProgramInformation/. For questions, call (877) 232-1990 (V/TTY) or email adaconferences@adagreatlakes.org.
- A conference titled “How to Build Wealth in Today’s Economy” is set for April 26 at the McLean County Extension Office in Bloomington. Six CPDUs are available for the training, which will present new technologies for teaching students. Get more details at http://www.cefe.illinois.edu/calendar/event_04_26_13.html.
- The annual Cook County Department of Public Health Update for School Nurses is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on May 10 in Brookfield. CEUs and CPDUs will be available pending approval. For more information and to register, go to http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/events.

Student Opportunities

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency of Region 5 invites Illinois students in grades 3-8 to submit a poster in recognition of Asthma Awareness Month in May. The deadline for entries is May 10. For more information on how to enter the Asthma Awareness Month poster contest, visit http://www.epa.gov/region5/asthmapostercontest/.
- The Healthy Lunchtime Challenge invites children ages 8-12 and their parent(s) and/or guardian(s) to create an original lunch recipe in line with the USDA’s MyPlate information. Recipes must be submitted by May 12. For more information, visit www.recipechallenge.epicurious.com.

Upcoming Events

- The Tdap vaccine, which is required for students entering sixth through 12th grade, will be offered by the Chicago Department of Public Health at no cost from 9 a.m. to noon on April 20 and April 27. A limited supply of HPV and meningitis vaccine will also be available. Call (312) 746-6129 or go to http://www.ilmaternal.org/caic/pdfs/CDPH_TdapClinics2013.pdf.
- A health fair will be held from noon to 8 p.m. at Access Living, 115 W. Chicago Ave., as part of the Health Matters 4 Kids Today Counts Project. More information on this program can be found at http://www.northpointeresources.org/node/399 or by contacting Parul Arora at (847) 872-0037 hm4kidsinfo@northpointeresources.org.

Weekly News Clips


Employment Opportunities

- An External Vacancy List for ISBE is available at http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm.