Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

As we have reviewed the initial results from the 5Essentials survey there have been a number of questions raised, both internally and from many of you. We take the integrity and validity of the survey very seriously and I want you to know we are taking some additional steps to ensure that this year’s results are something that we can stand behind.

We will be rescoring the 5Essentials survey with a new benchmark and re-releasing those to districts for examination. Previously, the University of Chicago had used 2011 Chicago Public Schools results as a benchmark for the 2013 statewide survey. We have decided to use the 2013 statewide administration as our baseline, the point at which we begin comparing future administrations of the survey.

The intention of this survey is to provide additional information to the public as well as additional data points to schools and districts for reflection and improvement. We have historically often only had test and AYP results to share with the public and we must provide multiple measures to districts and schools so that we can tell the positive stories of public education and more easily identify areas for improvement.

The 2012-13 school year was the first time schools were required to give this survey to students and teachers on a statewide level. I appreciate your feedback and we are working to improve the report so that it is relevant and transparent for you, teachers and your communities. I believe this rescore will take about a month and we will again open up the data for you to review.

We have also re-opened the Educator Certification System (ECS) last Tuesday for districts to view credentials for verification purposes and for educators to apply, renew, register and view credential information. Any changes made in the ECS system will be reflected in our Educator Licensure Information System when the needed revisions are completed and ELIS becomes available.

Finally, I will be hosting a back to school webinar at 11 a.m. Monday, Aug. 12. We will be sending out an invitation to administrators this week via IWAS. We will touch on a variety of issues, including implementation of the new Illinois Learning Standards and assessments based on the Common Core, increased cut scores, 5Essentials survey and the new report card.

I know there is an awful lot on our plates right now. Thank you for all of your constructive feedback during the past few weeks. I continue to have deep appreciation for everything you are doing to support the success of our Illinois students.

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.

- 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/rsssp_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)
- Enhance Physical Education Task Force Meeting – Aug. 2 (For more information, go to http://www.isbe.net/EPE/html/EPETF.htm.)
- Rising Star Collaborative Forum in Bloomington – Aug. 13 (http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/)
- Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Fall 2013 – Aug. 16 (See http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm for new public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- National School Lunch Week/National Take Your Parents to Lunch Day – Oct. 14-18
- National School Breakfast Week – March 3-7
- School Nutrition Employee Week – May 5-9
- Applications for the Exception to the 1.0 Percent Cap due – May 16

Center for Innovation and Improvement

Registration Under Way for Rising Star Collaborative Forum Scheduled for Aug. 13

The Rising Star Collaborative Forum is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 13, at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, located at 201 Broadway Ave. in Normal. Sign-in is from 9:30-10 a.m. Lunch will be provided at the forum.

The intended audience for this training is district and school level Rising Star users, specifically superintendents, principals, and process managers. If you are a member of a Rising Star continuous Improvement Leadership Team, please register by Aug. 6 at http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/.

The Rising Star Collaborative Forum will convene a group of Rising Star Continuous Improvement team members to engage in a candid, informational dialogue with the Illinois State Board of Education’s Statewide System of Support (SSOS) and District Intervention Division.

Rising Star Leadership Team members will share their triumphs and challenges while engaging with the Rising Star tool and the process of continuous improvement. The intent of this forum is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of technical assistance provided to Rising Star users delivered under a re-designed SSOS.

Special Education Services

2011-2012 District Special Education Profiles Available for District Administrative Review

In a continuing effort to disseminate data to local education agencies and to the public, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will again post District Special Education Profiles on its website. District Special Education Profiles allow the reader to access all special education performance information in one location. The reader has the ability to view a district's progress toward improving results on critical performance indicators in the areas of student performance, educational environment and school completion.

For the next two weeks school district superintendents can preview their profile using their ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) District Admin user login name at https://sec1.isbe.net/iwas/. The District Special Education Profiles system can be found under the category of Reporting on the IWAS “System Listing” page. The 2011-12 Profiles will be open to the public after the initial district superintendent review period and will be found via the ISBE Special Education Profiles site (http://webprod1.isbe.net/LEAProfile/Searchcriteria1.asp) after Aug. 12, 2013.

Questions regarding the District Special Education Profiles can be directed to Gwen Williams at (217) 782-5589.


**English Language Learning**

**New Leadership Academy Set for Aug. 6 and 7 in Springfield**

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Division of English Language Learning is pleased to announce a New Leadership Academy at the Crowne Plaza Springfield scheduled for Aug. 6-7.

This one-day academy, which is repeated on the second day, is geared for school district administrators (up to a team of three individuals per district) with a focus on state bilingual/ESL program requirements, featuring ISBE English Language Learning staff and education specialists John Hilliard and Cristina Sanchez-Lopez. The academy is particularly designed to support bilingual/ESL program leaders and school district teams new to the field. Topics will include the following: review of federal and state requirements; resources for program directors; program timelines and administrative procedures, and an overview and major considerations with regard to bilingual/ESL program design, early childhood and special education.

Special education program administrators who also serve as ELL program administrators will want to attend either the day before or the morning of the annual Special Education Directors’ Conference 2013, also scheduled at the Crowne Plaza Springfield.

There is no charge to attend the one-day academy, and CPDUs will be provided. Click [here](https://) for registration. Space is limited.

**Upcoming Webinar**

**Student Suicide Prevention Training Initiative for Illinois Middle and High School Personnel**

Suicide prevention training is mandated in the school code for Illinois school personnel. Please join us for a free webinar on Aug. 7 to learn how you can access no-cost online suicide prevention gatekeeper training that meets the school code requirement, made freely available to all Illinois school personnel by the Illinois Youth Suicide Prevention Project, Illinois Department of Public Health. The online gatekeeper training also qualifies for ISBE-approved continuing education credit.

Join this one-hour webinar to learn more about this valuable resource. Jennifer Martin, coordinator of the Illinois Youth Suicide Prevention Project, will discuss the importance of this training and how it can be used statewide to support students.

**Who should attend:** Principals and administrators of Illinois middle and high schools, social workers and school guidance counselors, school nurses and other school health providers for Illinois youth.

The webinar will be facilitated by Lori Janjigian, vice president of marketing at Kognito Interactive, who will conduct a live demonstration of the training tool and review research results supporting its effectiveness. Kognito is a developer of online role-playing and gatekeeper training simulations in the areas of health and behavioral health. Seven trainings are included in the SPRC Best Practices Registry for Suicide Prevention and three are included in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. Live demos can be viewed at [www.kognito.com](http://www.kognito.com).


After registering, participants will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Webinar.

- **Title:** Online Student Suicide Prevention Training Initiative for all Illinois Middle and High School Personnel
- **Date:** Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2013
- **Time:** 10-11 a.m. CDT
- **System Requirements:** Windows 7, Vista, XP or 2003 Server required for PC-based attendees. Mac OS X 10.6 or newer required for Mac-based attendees. For mobile attendees, iPhone, iPad, Android phone or Android tablet is required.

**College and Career Readiness**

**Illinois Youth Win Awards at Annual FCCLA National Leadership Conference**

Illinois students brought home 71 medals from the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America’s 2013 National Leadership Conference held recently in Nashville, Tenn. Illinois earned 39 gold, 27 silver and five bronze medals competing against about 3,600 students from across the country in 31 different events.

These youth are members of local FCCLA chapters, an integral part of family and consumer sciences and career and technical education programs in middle, high, and career and technical schools across the nation. Top state placers advanced to the national competition to compete in
such categories as Interior Design, Fashion Design, Culinary Arts, Parliamentary Procedure and more. Students earn gold, silver, or bronze ratings based on their mastery of the event specifications.

Several youth who brought home gold medals were ranked highest in the nation. Chris Reusz of Downer Grove South, placed first in the nation, competing in Food Innovations. Phoebe Mondala of Bolingbrook High School, placed first in the nation in the Senior Category for Fashion Construction. Camp Point Central High School’s FCCLA Parliamentary Procedure Team placed second in the nation. Team members were Mikaela Cantrell, Brianna Clevenger, Anthony Hollschlag, Jessica Mowen, Martin Nall and Megan Scheiter. Jessica Musto of Wheeling High School placed third in the nation in Fashion Design, occupational category.


Illinois Center for School Improvement

Former Carlinville Principal Dick Spohr Named the Interim Director of Center

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and American Institutes for Research (AIR) are pleased to introduce Dick Spohr as interim director of the Illinois Center for School Improvement (CSI).

Spohr will draw from his local, state and national leadership experience to ensure Illinois CSI is ready for the 2013–14 school year as ISBE and AIR continue the nationwide search for a permanent director.

Spohr began his career in 1967, teaching science and mathematics at Unity High School in Mendon, Ill. From 1979 until his retirement in 2001, Spohr was principal of Carlinville High School. In 1997, Spohr was named Illinois Secondary Principal of the Year by MetLife and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Two years later, the U.S. Department of Education named Carlinville a Blue Ribbon School.

Spohr has held leadership positions with numerous organizations, including the Illinois Reading Council, Illinois Principals Association, North Central Association, and the ISBE/IPA New Principal Mentoring Program. He also has served on the Illinois Workforce Investment Board and ISBE’s Performance Evaluation Advisory Council.

Spohr and his wife, Ruth, reside near Atwater, about 40 miles south of Springfield. They have two daughters and five grandchildren.

In Brief

Professional Development

- “Writing IEP Goals: A Workshop for School Nurses” will be offered by the University of Illinois at Chicago from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sept. 14. Cost is $95, which includes class materials, credit of four CNE and four CPDU, and lunch. To register, visit www.uic.edu/nursing/hsi. Contact Patti McDonough at pattimcd@uic.edu or (312) 413-2978 for additional information.
- Registration is under way for the Illinois RtI Network’s second annual statewide conference, “Integrating Initiatives and Advancing Implementation.” The conference is scheduled for Sept. 23-24 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield. For more information, visit http://bit.ly/1dzMQ0y.

Grant Opportunities

- Apply for a field trip grant offered by the Winnick Family Foundation to visit the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum. The grants are for grades 4-12 in public and private schools and help defray costs of transportation and provide free admission. Visit http://www.illinois.gov/alplm/museum/Learning/Documents/Winnick%20Grant%20Application.pdf for details. The deadline is Sept. 1.
Weekly News Clips


Employment Opportunities

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