Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This week we will be releasing the statewide averages for the state assessments administered this past spring. As expected, there was a significant reduction in the number of students meeting and exceeding state standards because of the increase in performance levels on the ISAT.

While we will acknowledge the drop, our focus will be on looking at the growth over previous year’s scores based on the new performance levels. We have provided you with this information and I know many of you are also taking this approach. Additional resources to assist you as you discuss the release of your scores can be accessed at [http://www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/isat-cut-scores13.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/isat-cut-scores13.htm) and [http://www.isbe.net/hot-topics.htm](http://www.isbe.net/hot-topics.htm).

Also today we announced the finalists for the Illinois Teacher of the Year to be named during our Those Who Excel banquet in Normal, which celebrates the contributions and accomplishments of educators and school service personnel throughout Illinois.

A selection committee reviewed approximately 200 nominations this year. Nominations are scored based on personal background information, the nominating recommendation and letters of support from colleagues, parents and students. In addition, nominees must respond to questions focusing on student success, collaboration, continuous learning and leadership. Scores are compiled and averaged to determine one of three levels of recognition: Excellence, Merit or Recognition.

Teachers earning an Award of Excellence are finalists for Illinois Teacher of the Year. The following 11 teachers have been chosen as finalists:

- **John Bierbaum** teaches U.S. history, world history and psychology at Normal Community West High School in McLean County Unit School District 5.

- **Mark Buesing** is a science and physics teacher at Libertyville High School in Community High School District 128 in Vernon Hills.

- **Amanda Dearmond** teaches reading and language arts to seventh- and eighth-grade students at DuQuoin Middle School in DuQuoin Community Unit District 300.

- **William Fritz** is a communication arts teacher at Adlai E. Stevenson High School in Adlai E. Stevenson High School District 125 in Lincolnshire.
• **DeLores Mannes** teaches language arts to sixth grade students at Parker Junior High School in Flossmoor School District 161.

• **Kerry (Fran) Meyers** is a math, science and ancient civilizations teacher of sixth-grade students at Brimfield Grade School in Brimfield Community Unit School District 309.

• **Pam Reilly** teaches second grade at Woodbury Elementary School in Sandwich Community Unit School District 430.

• **Sina Rowe** is a kindergarten to third grade special education teacher at Goshen Elementary School in Edwardsville Community Unit School District 7.

• **Aaron Sitze** teaches English at Oregon High School in Oregon Community Unit School District 220.

• **Amy Walsh** is a fourth-grade teacher at Tioga School in Bensenville Elementary School District 2.

• **Donna Whitaker** teaches science to seventh-graders at West Junior High School in Belleville District 118.

The 2013-14 Illinois Teacher of the Year will be announced during the Those Who Excel banquet Saturday, Oct. 19, at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Normal. The Teacher of the Year will represent Illinois at NASA Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala., and in the Council of Chief State School Officers’ National Teacher of the Year Program.

Brian Curtin is the 2013-2014 Illinois Teacher of the Year. Brian teaches English at Schaumburg High School in Township High School District 211.

Congratulations to the finalists and all of those nominated.

Chris

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**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](http://www.isbe.net).

• **Title I Directors Pre-Conference and Conference** – Sept. 16-18 ([http://www.iatd.net/](http://www.iatd.net/))
• **ISBE offices closed for Columbus Day** – Oct. 14
• **National School Lunch Week/National Take Your Parents to Lunch Day** – Oct. 14-18
• **Thomas Lay Burroughs Award for the State’s Outstanding School Board President nomination deadline** – Oct. 18 ([http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf))
• **ISBE offices closed for Veterans Day** – Nov. 11
• **ISBE offices closed for Thanksgiving** – Nov. 28-29
• **ISBE offices closed for Christmas** – Dec. 25
• **ISBE offices closed for New Year’s Day** – Jan. 1
• **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Spring 2014** – Friday, January 17, 2014 (See [http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm) for new public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
• ISBE offices closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Jan. 20
• ISBE offices closed for Lincoln’s Birthday – Feb. 12
• ISBE offices closed for Presidents’ Day – Feb. 17
• 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

**Upcoming Webinar**

**Registration Open for ‘ISBE Math Model Curriculum Assessments and Lessons’**

Registration is open for the next ISBE model math curriculum webinar to take place from 3-4 p.m. on Sept. 26. The purpose of this webinar is to explain the ISBE Mathematics Model Curriculum K-12 assessment and lesson development process as well as the intended use of the various assessment and lesson tools. Time will be provided for participants to ask questions about both the process and the tools.

Space is limited. Reserve your webinar seat now at [https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/613522289](https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/613522289).

**Funding and Disbursements Division**

**FY 2014 General State Aid Finalized**

The Fiscal Year 2014 General State Aid (GSA) entitlement calculations for all school districts and regional offices of education have been finalized. The $6,119 GSA foundation level established by the General Assembly was utilized in the GSA calculation based on the FY 2014 appropriation of $4,442,198,260.

The final GSA net entitlement based upon local tax revenue and average daily attendance information calculated to $5.004 billion leaving a shortage of $562 million. This shortage requires a proration of 88.7 percent, which has been applied toward the gross entitlement for each district and regional office. The final proration percentage will be proportionally applied equally over the remaining 20 payments scheduled from September 2013 through June 2014.

Computations and individual claim information for school districts and regional offices can be accessed in General State Aid Inquiry at [http://webprod1.isbe.net/gsainquiry/default.aspx](http://webprod1.isbe.net/gsainquiry/default.aspx).

If you have any questions about General State Aid or the computations, please contact Jim Mathes at jmathes@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.

**Public School Calendar**

**Reminder on Use of Interrupted School Days for Adverse Weather Conditions**

The health and safety of students are a primary concern for every school superintendent. Section 18-12 of the School Code allows the use of Interrupted School Days for “adverse weather conditions,” including extreme heat as well as extreme cold. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) allows four options with regard to extreme heat:

- Amend the public school calendar to start school at a later date
- Dismiss after 5-clock-hours of instruction
- Utilize an Emergency Day
- Utilize an Interrupted Day

If an Emergency Day is utilized, it is recommended that an Amended Calendar be submitted electronically through IWAS to the Regional Office of Education (ROE) for approval, to assure that the most up to date Public School Calendar is available online via the School Calendar Inquiry. If an Interrupted Day is utilized, an Amended Calendar must be submitted electronically through IWAS, within 30 days of occurrence, to the ROE, who will forward it to ISBE for approval as required by statute. The Calendar Code for Emergency Day is ED. The Calendar Code for an Interrupted Day is XID. When amending the calendar code to XID, Student Attendance Time is required to verify a minimum of 1 instructional clock hour was conducted as well as a brief explanation of why the day was interrupted.

ISBE’s policy further states that if the announcement is made in advance (i.e., on the previous day) that school will be closing because of heat on any day or days before 5 clock hours of instruction has been provided an emergency day(s) must be used. You cannot count that shortened day as a full-day of attendance under those circumstances.

At this time, all 2013-2014 Public School Calendars should have ROE approval, making the calendar available for interested parties to view on the ISBE’s School Calendar Inquiry. Per Section 10-19 of the School...
Code, any changes to the calendar must be approved by completing and submitting an amended calendar via IWAS prior to the change taking effect.

It is our hope that this information is helpful for the upcoming school year. If you require technical assistance or have further questions regarding the public school calendar, please contact your Regional Office of Education or Marj Beck at mbeck@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.

**Preparation and Evaluation Division**

**New Classroom-Based Assessment Will Be Required for Teacher Licensure**

As of July 1, 2013, teacher preparation programs throughout the state were required to begin phasing in the use of the edTPA, a classroom-based assessment that is conducted during a candidate’s student teaching experience. Beginning on Sept. 1, 2015, all candidates in teacher preparation programs will be required to complete the edTPA as a condition of licensure.

We ask that schools and school districts join in supporting teacher candidates who will be completing the edTPA process. Your support is critical in three key ways:

- First, supporting teacher candidates in completing the edTPA by reviewing policies for the use of video in your classrooms to determine whether current district procedures for obtaining parental permission are adequate and by working with candidates to secure parental permission.
- Second, collaborating with teacher preparation programs to ensure mutually beneficial student teaching placements.
- Third, cooperating teachers support candidates by providing practical support, feedback, and assistance to teacher candidates during their student teaching experiences.

We ask for your support of the edTPA process by working with teacher preparation programs and candidates to ensure that Illinois produces beginning teachers who demonstrate effective planning, instruction, and assessment, and who are prepared to enter successful careers in teaching our students.


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**Illinois Enhance P.E. Task Force**

**Task Force Releases Report on P.E. and Health Standards Recommendations**

A state report released recently calls for new benchmarks and strategies to improve and increase physical education classes, noting the latest neuroscience research linking physical activity with improved academic performance. State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch and Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, director of the Department of Public Health, co-chaired the Illinois Enhance Physical Education (P.E.) Task Force, which developed the 148-page report that has been submitted to Gov. Pat Quinn, the Illinois State General Assembly, and health organizations and community groups interested in turning the tide of childhood obesity and improving health for all students.


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**Teaching Award**

**Lombard District 44 Teacher Named Illinois History Teacher of the Year**

The Illinois State Board of Education is proud to announce Laura Swink Font as the 2013 Illinois History Teacher of the Year. Font is a fourth-grade teacher at Madison School in Lombard, where she works on the math and social studies curriculum committees for District 44.

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History Award is co-sponsored by the HISTORY channel and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation through its Preserve America program. Nominations were sent to the Illinois State Board of Education and a selection committee chose Font for the honor, thus qualifying her for the National History Teacher of the Year award, which will be announced this fall.

Font graduated from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor with a degree in elementary urban education and
also has a master’s degree in learning disabilities from Wayne State University. Her teaching positions have included kindergarten, fifth grade, math/science middle school, special education and 20 years in fourth grade.

Laura is married to Mike Font and has two children, Maureen, a test developer at the American Institute of Research, and Mark, a senior at UIC.

**Early Childhood Division**

**New ISBE Bilingual Rules and Early Childhood Teacher Preparation**

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/ec_bilingual_rules_webinar_pres.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/pdf/ec_bilingual_rules_webinar_pres.pdf). For additional resources to support your preschool English Language Learners, go to [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/preschool_ell.htm](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/preschool_ell.htm).

**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/iee](http://www.uic.edu/nursing/iee). Contact Patti McDonough at pattimcd@uic.edu or (312) 413-2978 for additional information.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will present the webinar “Managing Asthma in Schools” from 1-2 p.m. CDT on Tuesday, Sept. 24. For more information and to register, go to [https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/506376682](https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/506376682).
- The Illinois Association of School Nurses’ annual conference is set for Oct. 25-26 at the Northfield Inn and Conference Center in Springfield. This year’s conference is titled “Offering HOPE – Health, Opportunity, Prevention, Education – Through School Nursing.” For more information, visit [www.iasn.org](http://www.iasn.org).

**Educator Awards**

Student Opportunities

- The Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth is sponsoring a new competition for aspiring scientists ages 13-18. For more information about the CTY Cogito Research Awards, which will provide funds and mentors to up to 10 students, visit https://cogito.cty.jhu.edu/?p=39168.

- The Cyber Aces Foundation invites students to register for the Illinois Cyber Aces State Championship. The free statewide competition aims to discover and develop the state’s top cyber talent. To learn more, visit www.cyberaces.org.

- To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum will hold a variety of educational events designed for students this fall, including a webcast, a workshop, an essay contest and a “Gettysburg Address Puzzle Competition.” For more information, call (217) 558-8953 or email noreen.obriendavis@illinois.gov.

- Registration is under way for the annual First Freedom Student Competition, a national essay and video contest for high school students, which asks students to examine the history and current-day relevance of religious freedom. The deadline to register is Nov. 18. For more information, visit www.firstfreedom.org.


- The Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation is the nation’s oldest and largest provider of need-based scholarships to military children, with particular attention given to those whose parent has been killed or wounded in combat, or who have demonstrated financial need. Learn more at http://www.mcsf.org/.

- The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and its foundation are planning a variety of events this fall for the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, including an essay contest (http://www.alplm.org/272.aspx), a workshop, a webcast and more. For more information, visit http://www.illinois.gov/alplm/GettysburgAddress150/Documents/GettysburgAddressinvitation.pdf.

Weekly News Clips


Employment Opportunities

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