Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

We are still waiting to hear from the U. S. Department of Education (ED) about our most recent submission for waiver from some components of No Child Left Behind, but in the near future we will seek additional waivers related to testing flexibility. ED recently issued guidelines to consider requests for one-year waivers for field testing new reading/language arts and mathematics assessments. These waivers relate to two aspects of these field tests: the first is related to testing ("double-testing flexibility") and the second is related to accountability determinations based on those assessments ("determination flexibility").

We are reviewing the guidelines and will submit an application this fall. We hope that ED will have a short turnaround on these applications and let us know the outcome shortly after the Nov. 22, 2013, deadline for submission.

Also, congratulations to the Illinois schools that were selected as National Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education. ED selected the following 21 Illinois public and private high performing schools:

- Frazier International Magnet School, City of Chicago SD 299
- Greenbriar Elementary School, Northbrook SD 28
- Lincoln Elementary School, Morton CUSD 709
- Mark T. Skinner West Elementary School, City of Chicago SD 299
- Northside Catholic Academy, Archdiocese of Chicago
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy, Archdiocese of Chicago
- Prairie Crossing Charter School, Grayslake
- Queen of Angels School, Archdiocese of Chicago
- Roslyn Road Elementary School, Barrington CUSD 220
- St. Joan of Arc School, Archdiocese of Chicago
- Saint Andrew School, Archdiocese of Chicago
- St. Francis Xavier School, Archdiocese of Chicago
- St. Michael School, Archdiocese of Chicago
- Saint Norbert School, Archdiocese of Chicago
- St. Peter Lutheran School, Arlington Heights
- Sandburg Middle School, Elmhurst SD 205
- Scott Elementary School, Mascoutah CUSD 19
- The Skokie School, Winnetka School District 36
- Twin Groves Middle School, Kildeer Countryside CCSD 96
• United North Elementary School, United CUSD 304
• Wescott Elementary School, Northbrook/Glenview SD 30

A list of all the Blue Ribbon schools is online at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/2013/index.html.

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.

- U.S. Senate Youth Program and Hearst Scholarship application deadline – Oct. 4 (http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/42-60-hearst.pdf)
- 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)
- FY14 Supplemental General State Aid Plan deadline – Oct 30
- Correction Period Open for 2012-13 Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim – Ends at midnight, Nov. 4
- ISBE offices closed for Veterans Day – Nov. 11
- 2013-2014 Unfilled Positions Survey available on IWAS for data entry – Deadline is Nov. 15
- Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) – Public comment period ends November 18
- School Energy Efficiency Grant and School Maintenance Project Grant application deadline – (http://www.isbe.net/sbss/default.htm) Nov. 27
- ISBE offices closed for Thanksgiving – Nov. 28-29
- FY14 NCLB Monitoring Instrument available for completion and submission in IWAS – Due by Nov. 30
- FY14 NCLB Title I Comparability document deadline (Available in IWAS) – Nov. 30
- 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 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

School Business Services Division

School Energy Efficiency and School Maintenance Grant Applications Available

On Aug. 22, 2013, Gov. Pat Quinn announced the release of $20 million for the School Energy Efficiency Grant Program and $50 million for the School Maintenance Project Grant Program. These are both a part of the Illinois Jobs Now! Capital Program.

As announced to all districts through an IWAS email, the application materials for both grants were made available beginning Sept. 23 on the IWAS System. Applications must be submitted in IWAS to the Regional Offices of Education by Nov. 27, 2013.
The Energy Efficiency Grant Program is a dollar for dollar state matching grant program providing up to $250,000 for energy efficiency projects in schools. The grants can be used for insulation, windows, doors, energy controls, lighting, energy recovery, energy conservation, alternative energy systems and other projects designed to reduce energy consumption. All school districts, charter schools, vocational center or public university laboratory schools are eligible. For detailed information, go to http://www.isbe.net/sbss/ee_grants.htm or contact Debbie Hemberger with the School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779.

The School Maintenance Project 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. Funding from the School Maintenance Project Grant Program can go toward an array of improvement activities. All school districts, cooperative high schools and Type 40 area vocational centers are eligible. For detailed information, go to http://www.isbe.net/sbss/smp_grants.htm or contact Kimberly Beachy with the School Business Services Division at (217) 785-8779.

**Funding and Disbursements Division**

**Correction Period Open for 2012-13 Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim**

All local education entities are hereby notified that the review and amendment (if needed) process is now open and will end at midnight on Monday, Nov. 4, 2013. All revisions to the 2012-13 (FY14) Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim must be completed and transmitted on or before midnight on Nov. 4, 2013. No revisions will be accepted after midnight on Nov. 4, 2013, in order to close the claim file and schedule the three remaining quarterly payments.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR REVIEWING THE CLAIM**

1. Log into the ISBE Web Application Security system.
2. Click on “System Listing” on the IWAS homepage.
3. Select “Pupil Transportation Claim Reimbursement System” under the “Annual Claims” heading.
4. Click on “Review Claim” under the “Reimbursement Claim” heading on the homepage. Do not click on “Revise Claim” button unless you need to make revisions.
5. The claim will be loaded to the screen in read-only format. Carefully review each line on the claim for possible revisions. If you entered transportation assets on the Depreciation Schedule, don’t forget to click on the “Depreciation Schedule” button at the bottom of the screen and review the depreciation schedule data for possible revisions.

If you do not have any revisions, you do not need to do anything. Your claim will remain as originally submitted by the statutory Aug. 15 due date.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR REVISING THE CLAIM**

If you have reviewed the claim and found that revisions are needed to the depreciation schedule and/or the pupil transportation reimbursement claim:

1. Click on the “Revise Claim” link under the “Reimbursement Claim” heading on the homepage.
2. You may enter notes in the “Your Comments” text box to help you remember why revisions were needed. Click on the “Revise Claim” button at the bottom of the screen to proceed with revisions to the depreciation schedule (if needed) and the pupil transportation reimbursement claim.
3. Note that all links for the reimbursement claim are open and may be revised as needed. The “Depreciation Schedule Summary” link under the “Depreciation Schedule” heading has been changed to “Calculate Depreciation Allowance.” If you made any changes to transportation assets after the August submit date, you must click on this link and update the Depreciation Schedule.
4. After all revisions have been made, click on the “Review & Submit Claim.” All revised claims must be resubmitted to ISBE through the proper channels (Document Author to the District Superintendent and District Superintendent to ISBE.)

**NO REVISIONS TO THE CLAIM WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER MIDNIGHT ON MONDAY, NOV. 4, 2013.**

If you have questions regarding the amendment process, contact Jamie Johnson via telephone at (217) 782-5256 or via email at jjohnson@isbe.net.
Fiscal Year 2014 Supplemental General State Aid Plans Due Oct. 30

Per Section 18-8.05(H)(3) of the School Code, school districts with an average daily attendance of more than 1,000 are required to submit a Supplemental General State Aid (SGSA) plan to the Illinois State Board of Education on or before Oct. 30 for the use of the funds resulting from the supplemental General State Aid for the improvement of instruction in which priority is given to meeting the education needs of disadvantaged children.

The SGSA plan for qualifying districts must be filed electronically via the ISBE IWAS System. The SGSA system is now open for fiscal year 2014. Critical information is pre-populated for each district. A brief narrative is required along with a budget breakdown of the SGSA funds. SGSA funds may be expended in various ways but must primarily benefit disadvantaged, low-income students that generate the district funding without supplanting other funds already in place.

If you have questions regarding the SGSA program, please contact Jim Mathes (jmathes@isbe.net) in the Division of Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

School Health Issues

Important Memorandum Regarding Shortage of Tdap Vaccine Issued

A memorandum to district and school administrators, school nurses, and regional superintendents of schools was issued Sept. 23 by the Illinois State Board of Education regarding a shortage of Tdap vaccine and ISBE’s decision on how to address the records of students who have not provided evidence of compliance by the date required for mandatory exclusion (Oct. 15 or an earlier date established by local policy).

This agreement is in accord with the immunization branch at the Illinois Department of Public Health. It is recommended that a copy of the memo is inserted into each student’s permanent health record that does not have the Tdap vaccine and meets the criteria on this memorandum, which is available online at http://www.isbe.net/pdf/school_health/tdap-shortage-memo0913.pdf.

The memorandum states:

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is aware that there is a national shortage of Tdap vaccine, a vaccine for immunization against pertussis, diphtheria and tetanus that is required for school entry at grades 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Although ISBE cannot waive the requirement nor approve a delay in implementation, ISBE will consider this shortage in gauging school and district compliance with requirements for school attendance. Provided that certain conditions are met, there will be no recognition sanctions (pursuant to 23 Ill Admin. Code 1.20) against schools or districts that are not in compliance during the shortage.

1. The student’s permanent health record contains a statement from the health care provider that expects to provide the Tdap vaccine indicating that the student is not able to receive the vaccine currently due to its lack of availability; and

2. A verifiable record of appointment (health care provider name and contact information) to receive the Tdap vaccine on a specific date during the school year is in the student’s permanent record. The appointment made by the health care provider is an estimate of when the vaccine should become available and held for that student. Note: because these students are on an approved schedule, and the health care provider is declaring intent to vaccinate once the provider receives the vaccine, these appointment letters are not medical exemption requests and the letters are not to be submitted to IDPH for medical review; and

3. The date of the appointment (item 2 above) has not passed on the date that the record is audited;

For purposes of entering the required vaccine data on the IWAS later this year, numbers of students with an approved appointment and confirmation that the reason for the delay is the unavailability of the vaccine would be approved to be listed under the “approved schedule” field in IWAS.

This consideration applies only to the Tdap vaccine requirement. Any other lack of immunization, without valid medical or religious exemption, will be subject to sanction against the school. We recognize that this shortage in Tdap places an additional burden on school staff to monitor the student to ensure that the student does submit proof of vaccination on or immediately after the appointment date. If a child is delinquent for a scheduled appointment for immunization, he/she is no longer considered to be in compliance.
Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division

Upcoming Webinars Focus on Physical Education in Illinois


Members of this task force provided an overview of this report during the “Leading the Nation: Illinois Enhance P.E. Task Force Recommendations & Revised Learning Standards” webinar on Sept. 17. This webinar will replay 10 a.m. CST on Tuesday, Oct. 8, with a live Q&A session with the speakers. For details and to register, visit http://iphionline.org/pdf/EPE_Sept_17_webinar_81513.pdf. Participants who complete evaluations are eligible for one CDPU hour.

In addition, the first of eight webinars on the Common Core Standards and their relationship to physical education and health is set for noon to 1 p.m. CST on Tuesday, Oct. 1. Participants are eligible for one hour towards teaching recertification or license renewal for each webinar they attend. To view the full schedule and to register, go to http://www.aahperd.org/whatwedo/prodev/common-core-state-standards-webinars.cfm.

2013 USDA Foods Show and Conference Scheduled for Oct. 17

The Illinois School Nutrition Association, along with the Illinois State Board of Education, invite you to come on Oct. 17 to the Abbington Distinctive Banquet in Glen Ellyn from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and learn about USDA Foods (government donated commodities) reprocessing procedures through educational sessions that will assist you in selecting processed end products that will meet your school district’s needs.

Jim Copp, a principal consultant with the Illinois State Board of Education, will be the General Session Speaker. Approved USDA NPA Commodity Processors will be available during the food show to answer questions and provide samples of available end products.

Education materials, including product cut sheets, pricing information and summary end product data schedule (SEPDS), will be available for you to take back to your school to assist you in making informed decisions when planning your menus and preparing to enter the USDA Foods order for SY2014-2015.

For agenda and registration information, go to http://www.ilsna.net/USDA_foods_show.asp.

Illinois Receives Team Nutrition Training Grant From the USDA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has notified the Illinois State Board of Education of the 2013 Illinois Team Nutrition Training (TNT) Grant award of approximately $350,000.

ISBE will administer the 2013 Illinois Team Nutrition Training Grant, with the overarching goal of supporting Illinois schools and child-care centers in increasing and enhancing wellness efforts to assist children to develop life-long healthy eating and physical activity behaviors.


Watch for further announcements on these initiatives later this fall.

Upcoming Trainings Announced on the New Administrative Review Process

The Administrative Review is an assessment conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) of the School Food Authority’s (SFA) administration of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP) and other school nutrition programs. The objectives of the Administrative Review are to determine whether the SFA meets program requirements, provide technical assistance, secure any needed corrective action, and assess fiscal action, if applicable.

ISBE must conduct Administrative Reviews of all SFAs participating in the NSLP and/or SBP at least once during each three-year review cycle period. The first three-year review cycle begins SY2013-2014. A list of tentative SFAs that will be reviewed during SY2013-2014 as well as resource materials related to the Administrative Review are available online.

Beginning with SY2013-2014, the format of the Administrative Review will be updated. While the overall topics will remain similar from prior reviews, in
some instances the manner in which the topic is reviewed will change and some new topics may be added. In order to provide our SFAs an overview of the new Administrative Review, including all USDA checklists and resources, ISBE Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division staff will host in-person, as well as a webinar, training on this topic.

The in-person trainings will take place as outlined below with registration beginning at 8 a.m., and the workshop from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Watch for registration information on the Nutrition and Wellness Programs web page: http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/default.htm.

- Oct. 22 – Carbondale
- Oct. 23 – Collinsville
- Oct. 25 – Bloomington
- Oct. 29 – Springfield
- Oct. 30 – Rockford
- Oct. 31 – St. Charles

In addition, we will host a webinar on this topic at 2 p.m. on Nov. 19 as one of our Training Tuesday Webinars. If you are unable to attend the webinar at this time, it will be recorded and available on our website approximately one week after the live webinar date.

If you have any questions, please contact our division staff at (800) 545-7892 or cnp@isbe.net.

Data Analysis and Accountability Division

2013-2014 Unfilled Positions Survey Now Available on IWAS

The 2013-2014 Unfilled Positions Survey is now available on IWAS for data entry. The deadline for completing the survey and submitting it to ISBE is Nov. 15, 2013. Districts are to report the number of budgeted positions they were unable to fill as of Oct. 1, 2013. All districts that hire staff are required to complete the survey, even if districts did not have any unfilled positions.

To avoid duplicating unfilled positions reported by public school districts; other reporting entities (e.g., special education cooperatives) should only report their unfilled employee positions.

For questions concerning the survey content, email Jim Sweeney at jsweeney@isbe.net. For IWAS technical support, call the Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

A set of proposed amendments recently reviewed by the Illinois State Board of Education is available for public comment. The proposal has 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 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision): Incorporates the Next Generation Science Standards into the State Goals for Learning, beginning in the 2016-17 school year; modifies the Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health in response to recommendations of the Illinois Enhanced Physical Education Task Force; makes technical changes to conform to the new licensure system that took effect.

Title Grant Administration Division

Fiscal Year 2014 Allocations and Schoolwide Consolidation Flexibility

ISBE is introducing the option of consolidation of funds to increase the flexibility in use of these funds to support comprehensive reform work as described in the Title I, Part A schoolwide program plan. Schoolwide buildings will have the option to consolidate their Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A funds. Once these funds are consolidated, the traditional supplement not supplant test is replaced with a more flexible method of determining allowable expenditures, providing for a truly comprehensive reform strategy to be put in place within schoolwide building.

ISBE is announcing this new flexibility in conjunction with the release of Title I and II allocations so that districts need only amend their NCLB Consolidated Application once to avail themselves of both.

A joint live webinar will be held 10 a.m. to noon on Oct. 3 to allow you to ask questions on either the allocation release or the increased flexibility. To register, go to https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/622303817. Changes to the NCLB Consolidated Application will be made following the webinar.

Please review the one pager for more information which can be found on the ISBE website at http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/title1_schoolwide-programs.htm. An e-bulletin and the PowerPoint for the webinar will be posted in the coming days.
Assessment Division

National Career Readiness Certificate and WorkKeys Locating Information on IWAS

For the first time in spring 2013, ISBE provided the ACT WorkKeys Locating Information test. Students who earned an eligible score on this test and the two WorkKeys tests that are part of PSAE Day 2, are eligible to receive ACT’s National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). ISBE is making these two-page certificates available in the Student Information System (SIS).

To access NCRC and WorkKeys Locating Information data in SIS:

1. Login to SIS via IWAS.
2. Click the “Reports” link on the SIS homepage.
3. Click the “Plus” sign next to “Assessments” to expand the selection.
4. Choose which report(s) you would like. Descriptions are below:
   a. To view a roster that includes all students with NCRC information, click on “Detail” for “National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) Level.”
   b. To view a summary of all students’ NCRC results, click on “Summary” for “National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) Level.”
   c. To access printable versions of students’ two-page NCRCs, click on “Detail” for “National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) 2-Page Certificate.”
   d. To view a roster that includes all students with Locating Information data, click on “Detail” for “Locating Information Score.”
   e. To view a summary of all students’ Locating Information results, click on “Summary” for “Locating Information Score.”
5. Select desired report criteria, using “Sort By” (click the dropdown arrow and select a sort criteria if desired).
6. Click “Create PDF Report” to display report.

NCRC Matching: ACT uses five detailed matching criteria from the three WorkKeys tests (Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information and Locating Information) to produce NCRCs. Specifically, first name, last name, month of birth, day of birth and state ID. If any of these five criteria did not match exactly when answer documents were submitted for scoring, ACT was not able to make a match and award a certificate. If you believe that a student should have earned this NCRC, please contact ACT directly at (800) 967-5539, and they will be able to assist you. Students must earn a valid minimum level score of 3 on each test to be eligible for this NCRC. The use of certain accommodations prohibits WorkKeys scores from being NCRC eligible (e.g., Spanish video DVD use does not allow scores to be eligible for NCRC).

For more information about ACT’s NCRC, see http://www.act.org/certificate/about.html.

WorkKeys Locating Information File: If the answer document for Locating Information contained a Pre-ID label, score data are matched to the corresponding record in the Assessment Correction file. If student demographic data were gridded and different from what is stored in the Assessment Correction file, the gridded information is displayed in the last two columns so the differences are available.

For more information about ACT’s WorkKeys Locating Information test, see http://www.act.org/workkeys/assess/locate/.

If you require technical assistance, after reviewing the online help, please contact our Call Center at (217) 558-3600 during our business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Federal and State Monitoring Division

NCLB Monitoring Instrument and NCLB Title I Comparability

The FY14 NCLB Monitoring Instrument is available for completion and submission in the IWAS system. The due date is Nov. 30.

All districts receiving NCLB funding are required to submit the document every year. As before, the previous year’s information will be imported to the document and the district should ensure its accuracy before submitting. Each “Comment/Proof Indicator” should contain a list of documents, activities or an explanation that supports your answers.
There is a sample list of proof indicators on ISBE’s Federal and State Monitoring Division web page at http://www.isbe.net/ea/htm/proof_indicators.doc.

The NCLB Title I Comparability analysis will load your previous year’s data as it relates to teacher’s names and positions if you used the “pupil/staff” ratio in your comparison. This application is also located on the IWAS system, districts that are “exempt” may simply select the “Exempt” radio button and then “Submit.” Their submittal requirements will have been met when the superintendent submits it. New tools have been added for districts that are using the Pupil/Staff ratio. They can now select and edit each FTE individually without deleting the whole line of information. Districts may move FTEs from one building to another, change assignments, names, and FTE amounts. After selecting the “View All FTEs” function, sorting the names alphabetically will allow districts to see where each employee is showing up in the district should they be used in multiple schools or have multiple assignments in one school. Viewing all FTEs at one time will help prevent assigning FTE totals in excess of 1.0 for each employee.

Districts will have to account for all of their buildings through exclusions or in a comparison with other schools of similar student enrollment and grade spans. The written procedures and board approved equivalency policies and salary schedules for districts will need to be added in their appropriate window. The data can be from a word processor or accounting software such as Word or Excel. These windows will not recognize a pdf file or pictures. Current student enrollment for each building will need to be supplied for any of the comparison ratios you select to use.

Districts will have to account for all of their buildings through exclusions or in a comparison with other schools of similar student enrollment and grade spans. The written procedures and board approved equivalency policies and salary schedules for districts will need to be added in their appropriate window. The data can be from a word processor or accounting software such as Word or Excel. These windows will not recognize a pdf file or pictures. Current student enrollment for each building will need to be supplied for any of the comparison ratios you select to use. It is also required to enter percentages of low income for all schools in the comparison, both Title I and non-Title I schools.

All districts receiving Title I funds must complete the document. Failure to comply will result in program funds being frozen and a recovery of expenditures of Title I funds in buildings where they are determined to be non-comparable.

If you have questions concerning the Title I Comparability or the Monitoring Instrument, contact Paul Williams, Federal and State Monitoring, at (217) 782-7970 or pwilliam@isbe.net.

**Special Education Services Division**

‘Mapping Media to the Common Core’
Presentation Scheduled for Oct. 29-30


Fryer aims to inspire you to become a better multimedia communicator and a pioneer with digital media in this presentation. Learn how to “expand the map” of assessment options in your classroom to include student products like narrated slide shows, enhanced eBooks including recorded audio, five photo stories with images, and more. Learn practical ways to overcome the anxiety and fear which often accompanies technology integration proposals by creating personal media products.

BYOD (bring your own device) to create a project with Fryer that you can apply to your classroom, school or district. For details and registration information, go to http://bit.ly/YCgdeO.

**Illinois Emergency Management Agency**

Schools Encouraged to Participate in Annual Earthquake Awareness Drill

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency is encouraging participation in the Great Central U.S. ShakeOut at 10:17 a.m. on Oct. 17. The goal of this “Drop, Cover and Hold On” drill is to draw attention to the earthquake hazard that exists in Illinois, across the country and around the world.

Last February, more than 2.9 million people across the region participated in ShakeOut. More than 592,600 of those participants were Illinoisans.

Some of the worst earthquakes in the U.S. occurred during the winter of 1811-1812 when earthquakes shook the Mississippi River Valley along the New Madrid Seismic Zone.
To participate in the ShakeOut log on to the ShakeOut website, [http://www.shakeout.org/centralus/](http://www.shakeout.org/centralus/), where you can register for the drill and obtain details and reference materials. If an organization cannot participate on Oct. 17, another day may be selected to conduct a “Drop, Cover and Hold On” drill. If another day is selected, the organization should still register on the ShakeOut website.

Additional earthquake preparedness and mitigation information is available on the following websites: [http://www.ready.illinois.gov](http://www.ready.illinois.gov) and [http://www.cusec.org](http://www.cusec.org).

For questions, contact Kate Mackz at IEMA at (217) 785-9925 or [kate.mackz@illinois.gov](mailto:kate.mackz@illinois.gov).

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### In Brief

#### Professional Development

- The [National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform](http://www.middlegradesforum.org/), in conjunction with the Association of Middle-Grade Schools, will present a day-long national conversation on student engagement and motivation on Oct. 10 in Countryside, Ill., near Chicago. For more information, visit [http://www.middlegradesforum.org/](http://www.middlegradesforum.org/).

- The [Illinois Association of School Nurses’ annual conference](http://www.iasn.org) 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.jasn.org](http://www.jasn.org).


#### Educator Awards


### School Opportunities

- Schools are invited to participate in the annual [Global Enterprise Challenge](http://www.globalenterprisechallenge.com/). The GEC is an international online enterprise skills competition for teams of high school students (Those born in 1996, 1997 or 1998 are eligible this year). In 2014, the GEC will take the form of a 12-hour challenge on June 14, 2014. For more information and to register, visit [http://www.globalenterprisechallenge.com/](http://www.globalenterprisechallenge.com/).

- Join the Pearson Foundation and Jumpstart on Oct. 3 for the annual [Read for the Record](http://www.wegivebooks.org/readfortherecord). Each year, readers everywhere join together on one day to read a single book to break the world record and to show their support for early childhood literacy. For more information, including a Read for the Record toolkit, visit [http://www.wegivebooks.org/readfortherecord](http://www.wegivebooks.org/readfortherecord).

- The [National Center for Urban School Transformation](http://www.ncust.org) is seeking applications from the nation’s best urban schools for the annual National Excellence in Urban Education Award. The criteria and the award application are available online at [http://www.ncust.org](http://www.ncust.org). The deadline to apply is Nov. 15.

### Student Opportunities

- The [Midwest Student Exchange Program](http://msep.mhec.org) is a tuition reduction program that helps students attend participating out-of-state college and universities. Visit [http://msep.mhec.org](http://msep.mhec.org) for more information.

- 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](https://cogito.cty.jhu.edu/?p=39168), which will provide funds and mentors to up to 10 students, visit [https://cogito.cty.jhu.edu/?p=39168](https://cogito.cty.jhu.edu/?p=39168).

- The Cyber Aces Foundation invites students to register for the [Illinois Cyber Aces State Championship](http://www.cyberaces.org). The free statewide competition aims to discover and develop the state’s top cyber talent. To learn more, visit [www.cyberaces.org](http://www.cyberaces.org). The Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in Aurora and Wheeling High School are leading in registrations so far. The deadline is Oct. 12.

- Applications for the 2014 [Prudential Spirit of Community Awards](http://spirt.prudential.com) for middle level and high school youth volunteers are available online at [http://spirit.prudential.com](http://spirt.prudential.com). The application deadline is Nov. 5. The awards are sponsored by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals.
• 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 Illinois Historic Preservation Agency’s Student Historian Program invites students in grades 6-12 to compete in the annual Illinois History Expo. For more information about the 2014 contest, visit http://www.illinoishistory.gov/PDF/2014%20ILHistoryExpo%20Flyer%20Final%20.pdf.

• 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.

• High school and college students can enter the seventh annual Create-A-Greeting-Card Scholarship sponsored by The Gallery Collection. The deadline for submissions is Jan. 15. For more information, go to http://www.gallerycollection.com/greeting-cards-scholarship.htm.

Weekly News Clips

• The Illinois State Board of Education has posted highlights from recent education news clips at http://www.isbe.net/news/2013/newscleips/130930.htm.

Employment Opportunities

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