Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

Please note this is not a complete list of events, meetings 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.

- NSLP Verification Summary Report deadline – Dec. 16 (http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/forms_sbn.htm)
- Part 22 (Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators), Part 23 (Standards for the School Service Personnel Certificate), Part 28 (Standards for Certification in Special Education) and Part 29 (Standards for Administrative Certification) – Public comment period ends Dec. 23
- 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
- Part 227 (Gifted Education), Part 232 (Summer Bridges Program), Part 240 (Alternative Learning Opportunities Program) and Part 265 (Grants for Arts Education and Foreign Language Education) – Public comment period ends January 21
- 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
- Student Health Data – Vision system report deadline – June 30

Visiting Teachers Program

Informational Meeting Set for Districts Interested in Hiring International Educators

The Ministry of Education in Spain sponsors a program, whereby English-speaking teachers come to the United States to teach for three years and then return home. These teachers cover lots of subject areas — but the chance to have a person from another country “in residence” in an American school is a valuable opportunity for the students, staff and community. The teachers have the appropriate state license, an

International Visiting Teacher license with a bilingual endorsement. Districts interview and hire visiting teachers in much the same way that they hire American teachers.

The visiting teachers make a one to three year commitment to teach in the United States provided that the school district agrees to rehire them. Participating districts employ these teachers in accordance with local regulations and policies. Teachers are paid according to their experience and certification level.
ISBE tests the candidates’ language proficiency and verifies their qualifications for an International Visiting Teacher License.

Visiting Teachers have at least three years of experience. The 45 teachers hired in 2013 to work in 13 Illinois school districts are highly qualified to teach early childhood, elementary, middle and high school in a variety of areas, including special education, ESL, math and science.

Districts interested in learning more about the Visiting Teachers Program may attend a meeting in person or by phone. RSVP by Jan. 17, 2014, by calling Jorge Berne at (312) 814-5696 or by email at jorge.berne@mecd.es or jberne@isbe.net.

Meeting and participation details:
- **Who:** Illinois School Districts Recruiting Teachers for the 2014-2015 School Year
- **What:** Informational Briefing on the Visiting Teachers Program
- **Where:** James Thompson Center, 100 W Randolph, 14th Floor, Chicago, IL 60601
- **When:** Friday, Jan. 24, 2014
- **Conference Call Number:** (888) 494-4032
- **Conference Call Access Code:** 3959821977

For more information, visit the ISBE website at [http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/spanish_exchange.htm](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/spanish_exchange.htm).

**Education and Technology**

**Schools Invited to Apply to Participate in TECH 2014 at the State Capitol Building**

TECH 2014 is a not-for-profit initiative supported by a broad range of education and business organizations. Its purpose is two-fold: 1) to raise awareness of the critical role technology plays in preparing students to succeed in today’s world; and 2) to show the need for increased funding for classroom technology. The TECH 2014 Committee thanks the General Assembly and their corporate partners for their generous support of this program.

The TECH 2014 event strives to present classroom technology projects from across the state of Illinois. All schools and districts in Illinois are invited to apply to participate. Selected schools will send teams of up to four participants to TECH 2014, which will include two or three students accompanied by one teacher and/or administrator. School selections will be made on the basis of the location of the school within the state, grade level, type of demonstration proposed and diversity in student learning styles. Each participating school will be provided a table in the Capitol Building on which to showcase project information. All demonstrations will take place Thursday, May 8, from approximately 12:30-3 p.m. Funding for travel and other expenses incurred by participants will be the responsibility of each participating school.

**APPLICATION PROCESS:** All schools throughout the state of Illinois are invited to apply to participate in TECH 2014. Applications are now open and will be accepted online through Jan. 21, 2014. Get started at [http://tech2000.cpher99.org/](http://tech2000.cpher99.org/). School teams will be selected at the end of January to represent a balanced distribution between legislative districts, grade levels and curricular areas. Preference will be given to those projects that demonstrate improved teaching and learning through the use of technology.

**Funding and Disbursements Division**

**FY 13 and FY 14 IDEA Sp Ed Room and Board Claims Proration**

The 2012-13 Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Sp Ed Room and Board final payment will be issued in December. As a reminder, the deadline to transmit outstanding monthly claims for the 2012-13 cycle (Sept. 1, 2012, to Aug. 31, 2013) to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is Monday, Dec. 2, 2013. Historically, monthly claims are reimbursed at 90 percent during the year. Once all claims for the cycle have been transmitted, a final payment and proration is calculated. Traditionally, sufficient IDEA funds have been available to pay all claims at 100 percent. Please be advised that the 2012-13 statewide claims at 100 percent are projected at approximately $41.8 million. There are
insufficient IDEA funds available this year to finalize claims at 100 percent. A proration slightly higher than 90 percent is projected. The 2012-13 final payment and proration will be communicated in December.

The 2013-14 IDEA Sp Ed Room and Board claim cycle has begun. The FY 14 State set aside amount for Room and Board is $29.5 million. The statewide claim growth over the past two years is approximately 20 percent. This is due to a steady growth of residential student placements, which has averaged 10 percent over the past few years accompanied by a rise of residential per diem rates of 4 percent. If the statewide claim growth is realized for the 2013-14 cycle, claims are projected to be $50 million with an estimated final proration just under 60 percent. This projection does not permit ISBE to reimburse monthly claims at the 90 percent level as in the past. Therefore, all 2013-14 monthly claims will be reimbursed at 50 percent during the year. The 2013-2014 final payment and proration will be calculated at this time next year.

Due to the insufficiency of IDEA funds for the Room and Board program, Special Education Excess Cost claims authorized under Section 14-7.02b, which utilize unexpended IDEA Room and Board funds, will not be reimbursed for the foreseeable future.

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact Marj Beck (mbeck@isbe.net) in ISBE’s Funding and Disbursements Division at (217) 782-5256.

**Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division**

**National School Lunch Program Online Verification Summary Report Available**

Annually, all sponsors operating the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Program must verify the eligibility of students that receive free or reduced price meal benefits based on the use of a Household Eligibility Application. Once the verification process is completed, NSLP sponsors must report the results of verification to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

The new online Verification Summary Report (VSR) is now available. The deadline to submit the results of the verification process to ISBE is Monday, Dec. 16. Submission of incomplete or incorrect information or failure to submit the VSR may result in NSLP sponsors having claim payments being withheld.

Directions related to the verification process and the completion of the online VSR are available at [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/forms_sbn.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/forms_sbn.htm). A recorded webinar explaining the new online VSR is at [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/workshops.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/workshops.htm), under the National School Lunch Program Archived Webinars heading.

The ISBE Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division can be reached at enp@isbe.net or by calling (800) 545-7892.

**Presentation Proposals Sought for Annual Illinois School Wellness Conference**

ISBE and Action for Healthy Kids invite individuals with expertise in school health and wellness to submit session ideas for presentation during the seventh annual Illinois School Wellness Conference, which is scheduled for April 30, 2014, at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1501 S. Neil St., in Champaign.

ISBE and Action for Healthy Kids are specifically interested in presentations that highlight successful school health and wellness-related outreach in schools, innovative projects that improve the overall health of the school community, and emerging issues impacting school health and wellness. Presentations will be selected based on the need for the topic as it relates to school health and wellness and the speaker’s knowledge and expertise on the subject.

For more information, including an application, visit [http://www.a4hk.org/filelib/Call_for_Proposals_7th_Annual_IL_School_Wellness_Conference.doc](http://www.a4hk.org/filelib/Call_for_Proposals_7th_Annual_IL_School_Wellness_Conference.doc), or contact Heidi Knoblock at hknoblock@actionforhealthykids.org. Please call (312) 878-2712 if you have questions.

**Rules and Waivers**

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

Four 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](http://www.isbe.net/rules); choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

**Part 227 (Gifted Education):** Makes technical changes to conform to the new licensure system that took effect July 1, 2013.

*Public comment period ends January 21, 2014.*

**Part 232 (Summer Bridges Program):** Makes technical changes to conform to the new licensure system that took effect July 1, 2013.
Public comment period ends January 21, 2014.

Part 240 (Alternative Learning Opportunities Program): Makes technical changes to conform to the new licensure system that took effect July 1, 2013; additional changes are being made in response to P.A. 97-495, effective January 1, 2012, regarding the enrollment in these programs of students who have been suspended or expelled.

Public comment period ends January 21, 2014.

Part 265 (Grants for Arts Education and Foreign Language Education): Makes technical changes to conform to the new licensure system that took effect July 1, 2013.

Public comment period ends January 21, 2014.

ISTAC

Update on the Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Collaborative

The primary purpose of the ISTAC is to improve educational outcomes for all children in Illinois, including those with significant challenges and disabilities. This is accomplished through a coordinated statewide effort within a regionalized delivery system of training and technical assistance. ISTAC promotes a prevention-based systems change approach, which includes data-based decision-making and research-based instructional practices. The five Training and Technical Assistance Focus Areas under the ISTAC umbrella are:

- Behavior
- Educational Environment (Least Restrictive)
- Family and Community Engagement
- Special Populations (Autism, Behavioral Health, etc.)
- Transition

ISTAC Statewide Collaboration: The ISTAC and other existing ISBE initiatives/partners (Statewide System of Support (SSoS), The Illinois Center for School Improvement (IL-CSI), Illinois Association of Regional State Superintendents (IARSS), the Illinois Response to Intervention (I-RtI) Network, etc.) maintain a collaborative relationship. This collaborative relationship provides a statewide foundation for training content, technical assistance and instructional coaching to build the capacity of schools to promote social, emotional, behavioral, physical and academic success of all students. Such collaboration facilitates the sharing of resources and expertise across initiatives, thereby increasing the statewide reach of all projects. This relationship also leverages resources, reduces duplication of services and increases cost effectiveness while providing high quality and consistent professional development on a regional basis.

ISBE envisions one fully coordinated and comprehensive system of professional development, instructional coaching and other practical support to the LEAs. To that end, continuing during the 2013-14 school year, IL-CSI will lead and coordinate a statewide system of support to LEAs while ISTAC and SSOS are partnering to integrate and transition their work to effectively address each initiative’s purpose and funding requirements. Data-based decisions will be made regarding how ISTAC’s services will be utilized most efficiently and with the highest impact to support all students, especially those with disabilities. The use of federal funds for this work is limited to the applicable allowable use of funds as outlined in federal regulations. For additional information, see the Joint Memorandum from ISBE’s Centers for Specialized Instruction and Wellness and Innovation and Improvement posted at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/Default.htm). On-going updates regarding this statewide collaboration will be provided in ISBE’s Weekly Message.

Family Engagement

Upcoming Webinar Series Features Free Research-Based Resources for Schools

ISBE will be hosting a series of webinars throughout this school year focusing on how schools and districts integrate parents into the school improvement process. Please join us for our first webinar on Dec. 12, 2013, from 1:15-2:15 p.m. CST, as we discuss web-based family engagement resources and the Illinoisparents.org website. Space is limited. Reserve your webinar slot now at [https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/627000096](https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/627000096).

During the webinar, participants will get a first-hand perspective of how to navigate the Family Engagement Tool and the Illinoisparents.org website. ISBE has been working diligently to provide school districts and schools resources to assist with family engagement, including the recent release of the Family Engagement Framework ([http://www.illinoisparents.org/Default.aspx](http://www.illinoisparents.org/Default.aspx)). The framework can be used in partnership with the web-based Family Engagement Tool (FET), which guides a school team (including parents) in assessing and tracking every aspect of its family engagement programs and practices.
The tool allows schools and districts to develop an improvement plan based on indicators of effective practice. FET provides access to a rich library of researched-based family engagement materials. The materials are aligned with the assessment and include hundreds of planning tools, family engagement curricula, and professional development programs. Much of the material designed for families are available in English and Spanish.

The IllinoisParents.org website will also be explored during the webinar. The website connects Illinois families to resources. It also provides information and tools for schools and districts. The Organizations & Events section links families and those who work with families to information, local programs, services, events and community agencies. The website offers a School Community Journal, which is a peer-reviewed journal that includes research and field reports related to the school as a community of teachers, students, parents and staff. The website also features a hot line link to submit “Ask a Question” to family engagement experts or provides the opportunity for anyone to call a hot line toll-free at (877) 275-3227.

For more information about the family engagement tool and the Illinoisparents.org site, call (618) 874-8150 or log onto http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/parent_adi.htm.

**Illinois Emergency Management Agency**

**Information on Disaster Assistance for Victims of Severe Storms and Tornadoes**

If you sustained losses or damage from severe storms and tornadoes you may be eligible for disaster aid. You can call to apply: (800) 621-3362. The TTY number is (800) 462-7585. For 711 or Video Relay Service, call (800) 621-3362. For more information or to apply: www.DisasterAssistance.gov. Or apply on your smartphone at m.fema.gov.

When you apply for disaster assistance please have the following available:

- Social Security Number (including your spouse’s).
- Private insurance information, if available.
- Address and zip code of the damaged property.
- Directions to the damaged home or property.
- Daytime telephone number.
- A telephone number where we can reach you or leave a message.
- An address where you can get mail.
- If you want your disaster assistance funds sent directly to your bank, provide the FEMA agent with your bank account type (savings/checking), account number and routing number.

Disaster recovery assistance for eligible recipients is available without regard to race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status.

**In Brief**

**Professional Development**

- The Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago is recruiting Illinois high school teachers to participate in the 2014 Illinois Youth Summit, which is scheduled for May 2 at the Dirksen Federal Building in Chicago. For more information, visit http://www.crfc.org/youthsummit2014.
- The Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Education’s video podcasts can help educators preview and plan lessons as well as provide teaching tools and tips for completing grant applications. More podcasts have been added recently. Visit http://dnr.state.il.us/education/podcasts.htm or
search for them through the iTunes Store and on YouTube (search for “IDNREducation”).

• The Jump$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy offers scholarship and grant opportunities for educators, students and public schools. For more information, visit http://www.jumpstart.org/states-illinois.html.

In the News

• Congratulations to the FFA Chapter from Pontiac Township High School, which recently received the National Model of Excellence Award at 86th National FFA Convention & Expo in Louisville, Ky. The annual award is presented to the top overall chapter in the country. Read more at http://bit.ly/1cNQV2t.

Employment Opportunities

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