Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

We have submitted to the U.S. Department of Education a request for “field test flexibility,” to avoid potential “double-testing” as states transition from current statewide assessments to new assessments that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards. The field test flexibility would apply to those schools that are administering both portions of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) field test or all three testlets of the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) at a given grade level. If all students in a classroom participate in the full field test, then the students do not have to participate in the ISAT for that area (either ELA/Literacy or mathematics). Additionally, the school may have their accountability determination held static from the 2012-2013 school year if classrooms within the school administer the full field test for either DLM or PARCC. For one-school districts, their status may also be held static if an entire classroom is taking the full field test.

The department has assured states that they will be informed about the acceptance of applications in a few weeks, and we will pass on that news to all of you in a timely manner.

We also wanted to share with you the results of the survey that many of you completed regarding the flexibility application. Of the respondents to our survey regarding the field test flexibility application, 93 percent indicated they were participating in the PARCC field test and 11 percent of respondents indicated they were participating in the DLM field test. An overwhelming 95 percent of respondents supported ISBE’s application for field test flexibility and showed similar support (96 percent) for the determination flexibility application. Many respondents appreciated the chance to relieve some testing for students.

Additionally, I want to congratulate two individuals who were recently honored during the Joint Annual Conference, co-sponsored by the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO) and the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA).

Brenda Murphy of Des Plaines Community Consolidated School District 62 accepted the 2013 Thomas Lay Burroughs Award during the Chicago-based conference. The ISBE award annually honors an outstanding school board president in the state. Brenda Murphy has served nine years as president of her local school board and 14 years total on the board. During that time, her leadership and keen focus on data-driven decisions has helped the Chicago suburban district narrow its achievement gap, improve early education and increase technology, among other accomplishments.

IASA selected Dr. Kelly Stewart, Superintendent of Benton Consolidated High School District 103, as the 2014 Illinois Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Stewart has been an educator for 30 years, including the last 12 as superintendent of the Benton district in Southern Illinois. Those who nominated her noted that she has led the district through changes such as implementing a successful reading program, offering more dual-credit classes than ever before; and providing financial stability through innovative leadership.

Have a great week.

Chris

Upcoming ISBE 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

PARCC

Opportunity to Include More Students in PARCC Field Tests

We would like to invite schools and districts to consider participating or increasing their participation in the PARCC field tests occurring in March and May. We have the opportunity to include more Illinois students in this field test. We can accommodate schools who would like to administer the paper and pencil version as well as the computer version of the field test. We can accommodate schools who would like to administer either ELA/Literacy or mathematics and schools that would like to administer the Performance-based assessment or the End-of-Year assessment (or both).

If you are interested in your schools taking advantage of this opportunity, please contact the PARCC Field Test Coordinator, Dan Frederking, at dfrederk@isbe.net or (866) 317-6034. We need to have the names of participants by Wednesday, Dec. 11. Thank you for your consideration of this opportunity.

Integrated Math Model

Upcoming Forums Feature Free Research-Based Resources for Schools

ISBE will be hosting a series of forums this winter focusing on how schools and districts transition to the use of the integrated math model. Please join us for one of our forums on either Jan. 28 in Mount Vernon, Jan. 29 in
Springfield, or Feb. 27 in Lisle. Reserve your slot now at http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/.

During the day’s sessions, participants will get an opportunity to develop an understanding of the advantages of using the integrated math model, the free research-based resources available, the alignment of the model with the Common Core state standards and PARCC, the impact on learning and engagement for students, and the impact on teacher practices.

Participants will gain a first-hand perspective of how to navigate the ISBE website and the LiveBinder tool. ISBE has been working diligently to provide school districts and schools resources to assist with their math curriculum, including the recent release of the ISBE integrated math model framework, http://www.isbe.net/common_core/htmls/math-models.htm. All materials are aligned with the Common Core state standards as well as the PARCC assessment.

The opportunity to collaboratively interact with local peers about math curriculum challenges and opportunities will also be provided to participants during the forums. In addition, a panel of local Illinois teachers and administrators in various stages of planning and implementing the integrated math model will host a question and answer session to share lessons learned.

For more information about the integrated math model, please call (217) 524-4832 or email rfilson@isbe.net.

As ISBE looks forward to the implementation of the Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools, we are hosting a joint webinar with the Illinois School Nutrition Association (ILSNA) on the operational implementation of these rules. Please join us at 2 p.m. on Dec. 10, 2013, for this webinar. Register at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/767896808. 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.

Finally, as we move forward with ISBE’s proposed rules related to the fundraising exemptions as required in the USDA Interim Final Rule, we would like your input. Please complete a short survey related to this subject at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ILFundraiserExemption.

Recently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Education released a joint letter on this subject. That is posted under the NSLP USDA Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools link under “What’s New?” at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition. We will continue to update participating schools on the implementation of these rules via the website and the Outlook Newsletter.

Please direct any questions to staff with the Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division of the Illinois State Board of Education at cnp@isbe.net or (800) 545-7892.

Nutrition and Wellness Programs
New ‘Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools’ Webinar Set for Dec. 10

The USDA’s Interim Final Rule referred to as “Smart Snacks in Schools” was released on June 28, 2013, by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The Interim Final Rule is officially titled “Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.” Such rules will impact ALL foods and beverages sold to students at school by all groups and will be in effect July 1, 2014, the start of school year 2014-2015, as required by Section 208 (Sec. 208) of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA). The complete interim final rule is available online at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-28/pdf/2013-15249.pdf. A recorded ISBE webinar (Sept. 6, 2013) providing an overview of the proposed requirements is available online under “Archived Webinars.”

Title Grants Administration Division
Please Take a Moment to Complete a Short NCLB Summer Workshops Survey

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Title Grants Administration Division is conducting a 2014 NCLB Summer Workshops Survey. To assist the staff of ISBE’s Title Grants Administration Division in developing meaningful and relevant NCLB workshops in the summer of 2014, we would like to ask your responses to a short six-question survey by Dec. 31: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NCLBSummerWorkshops. Thank you for participating!

School Business Services Division
AFR, Annual Statement of Affairs and Certificate of Tax Levy Deadlines

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT (AFR) (ISBE FORM 50-35) WITH EXTENSION’S DUE DEC. 15:
School District/Joint Agreements AFRs must be submitted to ISBE by no later than Dec. 15, 2013.
For more details and instructions see the following website: http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/afr.htm.

**ANNUAL STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS (ISBE FORM 50-37)**

School Districts/Joint Agreements must display specific pages in the local newspaper no later than Dec. 1, 2013. The form must also be submitted electronically to ISBE by no later than Dec. 15, 2013. For more details, specific pages to be displayed in the newspaper and ISBE submission instructions see the following website: http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/asp.htm.

**CERTIFICATE OF TAX LEVY (ISBE FORM 50-02)**

must be certified and filed to the county clerk by the last Tuesday in December annually. For more details, the form and instructions see the following website: http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/ctl.htm.

**U.S. Food and Drug Administration**

**Safety Communication on HeartStart Automated External Defibrillators**

The FDA has issued a safety communication with recommendations related to the recall initiated in September 2012 by Philips Healthcare. The recommendations are related to inspection, monitoring and emergency use of the recalled devices, which include the HeartStart FRx, HeartStart HS1 Home and HeartStart HS1 OnSite AEDs. Links to the communication and other resources can be found in this press announcement: http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm377433.htm.

**Federal and State Monitoring Division**

**NCLB Monitoring Instrument and NCLB Title I Comparability**

Please remember that you must maintain all your supporting documentation for your FY 2014 Comparability Reports that were submitted on Nov. 30, 2013. When our field auditors are in your district they will need that supporting documentation to complete their review. If you are unable to provide supporting documents that verify our analysis, the Title I funding will be called into question. If you are scheduled to receive an audit, you will be notified approximately 45 days in advance of this process via a letter in the mail.

It is also a good time to remind you to submit your NCLB Monitoring Instrument. The due date has past and freezing NCLB funding for non-compliance is required. There were approximately 162 districts slated to have their NCLB funding frozen this week for failure to submit the Monitoring Instrument. For most of you, it will load your previous year’s data. All that is required is to review this information for accuracy and submit it. Please remember that for all questions answered “yes” on the Monitoring Instrument you must provide sufficient detail in the comment boxes. If you are answering “no” or “N/A” and your program requirements suggest you should be answering “yes,” you should offer a clarifying statement in the comment box so auditors can understand why you are providing that answer. You should also maintain the supporting documentation and evidence for the Federal and State Monitoring Division review should your district be scheduled for an audit. Your comments and descriptions of supporting documentation will help to eliminate calls from staff for clarification at a later date.

If you have any questions, contact Paul Williams in ISBE’s Federal and State Monitoring Division at (217) 782-7970 or pwilliam@isbe.net.

**Illinois Teacher of the Year**

**New Illinois Teacher of the Year Available for Speaking Engagements**

Do you need an enthusiastic, energetic, exciting speaker for an upcoming conference, in-service, meeting or workshop? If so, look no further than ISBE’s 2014 Illinois Teacher of the Year!

Pam Reilly, a second-grade teacher at Woodbury Elementary School in Sandwich CUSD 430, is described by colleagues as an excellent collaborator and a natural leader. Students are immediately drawn to her sincere and caring attitude. A passionate advocate for children and education, Pam seeks advice and guidance from teachers in higher grades so that she can find ways to best help her students succeed and prepare them for future learning success.

If you would like to learn more about Pam’s strategies and her commitment to helping all children succeed, please contact her at Woodbury Elementary School, (815) 786-6316 or via email at reillypc@comcast.net.

**School Health Issues**

**Registration Under Way for IDPH School Health Days Conference**

The Illinois Department of Public Health School Health Days Conference will be held at five locations across the state next month:
• Rockford, Jan. 9
• Arlington Heights, Jan. 14.
• Lisle, Jan. 15
• Mount Vernon, Jan. 24
• Springfield, Jan. 28

Sessions include an update on rules from the Illinois State Board of Education, current issues in infectious diseases, suicide prevention resources, immunization requirements and the Affordable Care Act. The conference is set for 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at all five locations.

The daylong conference is targeted for registered nurses, school administrators, school health personnel and social workers. It is presented by IDPH, the Illinois Public Health Association, the Office of Women’s Health & Family Services, School Health Program and Oakton Community College, Alliance for Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education for Health Professionals. Continuing education credit is available.

For more information, including registration, visit the Illinois Public Health Association’s website at http://www.ipha.com/Public/Events/EventDetails.aspx?eventId=313.

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**Education and Technology**

![Image of a learning environment]

**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.cipher99.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.

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**Public Act**

**Reminder: Most School Holidays Do Not Require the Waiver Process**

With the passage of PA 96-640, effective Aug. 24, 2009, districts (and other entities) have the authority to “waive” the requirement of no student or teacher attendance on the five legal school holidays listed below. Districts do not need to submit any waivers for review and approval by the State Board to set local plans for use of these five holidays.

• Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (third Monday in January);
• Birthday of President Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12);
• Birthday of General Casimir Pulaski (first Monday in March);
• Christopher Columbus Day (second Monday in October); and
• Veterans’ Day (Nov. 11).

Districts, joint agreements or schools/programs operated by Regional Offices of Education that plan to have student attendance on any of these holidays, or use the holidays for teachers’ institutes, parent-teacher conferences or staff development, will need to schedule a public hearing (in conjunction with a regular board meeting) to discuss these plans. The law states that advance notice of this hearing shall be given to educators and parents and must include the time, date and place of the hearing; a description of the proposed holiday plans; and the information that testimony will be taken from educators and parents at the hearing.

Holiday plans, once discussed at the hearing and approved by the school board, will not expire within any certain number of years; however, if the district in future wants to change its holiday plans it must publicize and hold another hearing. In all cases, instruction on the person/persons honored by the holiday must be provided to students on the day itself or the first school day preceding or following the holiday. For those districts holding any event at school on Nov. 11, the law requires that a moment of silence be observed to recognize Veterans’ Day.

Districts must continue to notify their Regional Offices of Education/Intermediate Service Centers of their plans for use of the school holidays listed above.

A district wishing to schedule student attendance on a legal school holiday not listed above will have to apply for a modification of Section 24-2 of the School Code to the State Board of Education.

An EXCEL database is available here, showing all current holiday modifications approved by the State Board. It is organized by county and by district. A district holding an approved modification may use it until it expires; if it wishes to continue with the holiday plans approved in the waiver, or make additional plans for the affected holidays, it will need to schedule a public hearing as described above.

Questions on this article can be directed to Winnie Tuthill, Rules and Waivers, at (217) 782-5270 or at wtuthill@isbe.net. The same information is available online at http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/html/waiver-mod.htm#hol.

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; 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.

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.

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). 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.


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.

Here is a list of counties that were declared federal disaster areas from storms and tornadoes that swept through Illinois on Nov. 18: Champaign, Douglas, Fayette, Grundy, Jasper, LaSalle, Massac, Pope, Tazewell, Vermilion, Wabash, Washington, Wayne, Will and Woodford. People in these counties are eligible to apply for federal assistance.

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.
- 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 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”).
- Online registration is available for a School Nurse Emergency Care (SNEC) course being offered on Jan. 17, 18 and 19, 2014, (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) at William Rainey Harper College in Palatine. Register online at www.luc.edu/sneccourses.
- 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.
- The ninth annual Illinois New Teacher Collaborative Induction and Mentoring Conference is set for Feb. 25 and 26 in Springfield. This year’s theme is “The Changing Landscape of Induction and Mentoring.” To register, visit
Student Opportunities

- **Illinois Partners for Clean Air** has launched the 2014 Shoot for the Skies PSA Video Contest, a creative competition open to Chicago area high school (public, private or home school) and college students. The public service announcements aim to educate the general public about Chicago area air quality. For more information, visit [http://www.cleantheair.org/](http://www.cleantheair.org/).

Grant Opportunities

- The Illinois Department of Public Health and the State Health Improvement Plan Implementation Coordination Council have issued a **Video Challenge** for organizations. Up to 10 awardees will receive $1,500 in grant funding to continue health transformation work in their community. Details at [http://healthycommunities.illinois.gov/video_challenger.htm](http://healthycommunities.illinois.gov/video_challenger.htm).

Employment Opportunities

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