Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This week the Board meets at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield. Members will begin their preliminary discussions regarding the FY15 budget request Wednesday morning with the final proposal to be presented at the January Board meeting. We will have a presentation from the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability that will look at revenue projections for next year. In addition, Board members will begin going through individual line items within the budget and will also be discussing additional financial supports for those districts taken over by the state. We will not be discussing General State Aid and Mandated Categorical levels at this meeting, as the information needed for such talks will not be available until after the start of the new year.

The U.S. Congress has made progress on a new budget that would fund the federal government through Oct. 1, 2015. The House of Representatives passed the budget deal last week and it now is before the U.S. Senate, which is expected to vote on the bill this week. This is just the first step in the appropriations process, which would set overall, government-wide funding numbers. Once Congress passes a budget deal, the House and Senate appropriations committees must decide funding levels for agencies and programs.

Overall, the budget deal would set caps for discretionary spending at higher levels than they would have been under the sequester. Therefore, it is very likely that discretionary education programs will see more funding than they would if the sequester had remained in effect, but we don’t yet know which programs would gain or by how much.

We will be working with our national organizations for passage of the budget and also to advocate for sufficient levels of funding within education programs. We will provide more details as the process plays out in Washington.

Also, the School Code requires the lieutenant governor to convene a Service Evaluation Committee to annually evaluate the importance and quality of the services furnished to school districts by ISBE and the Regional Offices of Education. It is not a scientific survey, but does provide us with data to help us see where improvements may be necessary and where we’re doing a good job. The survey was completed last week and we will examine it more closely and use it to help guide us in our future decision making. I think the results are generally positive and would encourage you to review it when you have a chance by clicking here.

Finally, I know this is the last week of school for most of you in 2013. Thank you for all you do for the students of Illinois. On behalf of the Board and all of our agency employees, I wish you happy holidays and a wonderful new year!

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

- NSLP Verification Summary Report deadline – Dec. 16 ([http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/forms_sbn.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/forms_sbn.htm))
- State Board of Education meeting – Dec. 18 ([http://www.isbe.net/board/meetings/2013/dec/schedule.htm](http://www.isbe.net/board/meetings/2013/dec/schedule.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](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
- ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day – May 26
- Student Health Data – Vision system report deadline – June 30
- ISBE offices closed for Independence Day – July 4

PARCC

Central Illinois PARCC Education Leader Cadre Offers Workshop Series

The Central Illinois Regional PARCC Education Leader Cadre will host a professional workshop series on Jan. 10 and Feb. 14 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bloomington. The workshop series focuses on the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and building capacity for the PARCC assessment system through the lens of school and district practitioners.

Break-out sessions will target the English Language Arts and Math Shifts for the Common Core Standards, leveraging technology and effective classroom practices, as well as the role of leadership. The workshop series will also provide current information regarding the PARCC assessments and practical considerations for preparing students, teachers, schools and districts for the new system. Facilitators will provide background, implications for practice based on their own experiences and hands-on examples. The series will be differentiated by readiness level, and a description of all sessions can be found in the registration information at the link listed below.

Registration is open and will be limited. Please visit the link below to register for the event. Questions regarding the content of the day should be directed to Jean Korder, member of the Central Illinois Education Leader Cadre, at [jkorder@usd116.org](mailto:jkorder@usd116.org).

The Illinois Educator Leader Cadre (ELC) is a network of educators who assist the state board staff in building awareness and understanding of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the PARCC assessments. This group of professionals was chosen through an application process as part of the services offered by the PARCC consortium. Over the last two years members have received additional training on the CCSS and PARCC. The ELC members are working together by regions to build understanding through newsletters, workshops and presentations.

Plan now to attend this regional opportunity. Register at [http://shifting-thinking-focu.eventbrite.com](http://shifting-thinking-focu.eventbrite.com).
**Gifted Education**

**ISBE’s Gifted Advisory Council Asks School Districts to Complete Survey**

The Gifted Advisory Council of the Illinois State Board of Education is requesting the school districts’ participation in a survey regarding Gifted Education. The intent and purpose of the survey is to gather information regarding programming across Illinois for high ability and gifted students, pre-k through grade 12. The estimated time to complete the survey should be no more than 15-20 minutes.

Please pass this valuable survey to an individual in your district that is the most knowledgeable about the current status of gifted education in your school district. This information will be utilized by ISBE to inform planning and decision making.

The deadline for completing the survey is Jan. 10, 2013. The following link will take you to the survey: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1GJBLEiLoFUy3Qa

**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.

**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!

**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.

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**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.

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**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
- 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](http://www.ipha.com/Public/Events/EventDetails.aspx?eventId=313).

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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.

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 JumpStart 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 http://intc.education.illinois.edu/events/conf2014/.

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/.

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_challenge.htm.
• The Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color recently launched its third annual COSEBOC
School Awards, which are designed to celebrate schools demonstrating success in educating boys and young men of color. This year the awards will be focused on schools educating preK-6 grade students. For details, visit http://coseboc.org/school-awards. The deadline for applications is Jan. 20.

Employment Opportunities

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