Editor’s note: ISBE’s Weekly Message will be taking next week off. The State Superintendent will return with a message on Jan. 6. Happy holidays! We’ll see you in 2014.

PARCC

ISBE Releases PARCC Testing Windows for 2014-15 School Year

The Illinois State Board of Education has released the PARCC testing windows for 2014-15. See the memo at http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/parcc/parcc-test-windows14-15.pdf. The memo was also distributed on Thursday, Dec. 19, to Regional Offices of Education, public schools and districts, charter schools and other state funded schools and districts via email. For more information on the PARCC test and its structure, visit http://www.parcconline.org/.

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.

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-focus.eventbrite.com.

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**College and Career Readiness Division**

**Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships I-STEM Network Program**

The state board has released an RFP for a partnerships comprised of a high-need LEA, IHE faculty from the departments of education, science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics, (this may include departments or schools of education), Regional Office of Education (ROE)/Intermediate Service Centers (ISC) and membership from scientists, mathematicians, engineers, or other professionals from businesses, industries, not-for-profit organizations, and/or for-profit organizations with demonstrated interest in improving the quality of mathematics and science teachers. The partnerships will design and implement a regional support network that will support K-12 student achievement in mathematics and science as described in the RFP.

The RFP is available at the following site: http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/html/math.htm. For more information, contact Gil Downey in the ISBE College and Career Readiness Division at gdowney@isbe.net or (217) 782-4620.

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**School Health Issues**

**Meningococcal Vaccine Requirements Expected to Start for 2015-16 School Year**

The Illinois Department of Public Health recently issued a notice with information and clarification about the start date for the new meningococcal vaccine requirements.

House Bill 3190 was signed into law as Public Act 098-0480 to become effective Jan. 1, 2014. However, the new law allows that the requirement would not be implemented until at least six months after the IDPH established administrative rules for implementing the law. It is anticipated the meningococcal requirement will be implemented for the 2015-2016 school year.

Visit http://www.isbe.net/pdf/school_health/idph-menin-imm-start-memo1213.pdf to read the memorandum from IDPH.

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**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
The 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/1GJBLEiLROFUyY3Qak69xO5sOCf6SvciHuPjVSp72b9Q/viewform.

**Rules and Waivers**

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

Three 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 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision):** Makes technical changes to conform to the new licensure system that took effect July 1, 2013, and acknowledges changes in receipt of the elementary education and middle grades endorsements. 

*Public comment period ends February 18, 2014.*

**Part 25 (Educator Licensure):** Responds to recently enacted statutory changes and makes other technical changes; eliminates the limit on the number of times a licensure candidate or applicant may take a required test; and proposes minimum scores to be used for the ACT and SAT writing components that are comparable to the minimum writing score on the Illinois test of basic skills.

*Public comment period ends February 18, 2014.*

**Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois):** Proposes flexibility in requirements specific to internship sites and the number of candidates for which a mentor has responsibility; responds to P.A. 97-581, effective August 27, 2013, regarding the content-area test.

*Public comment period ends February 18, 2014.*

**In Brief**

**Professional Development**

- The [Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Education](http://dnr.state.il.us/education/podcasts.htm)’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](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)](http://www.luc.edu/sneccourses) 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](http://www.luc.edu/sneccourses).


**Educator Opportunities**

- PBS is looking for 100 of America’s most innovative educators. Applications for [2014 PBS LearningMedia Digital Innovator](http://www.pbs.org/learningmedia/digitalinnovator) will be accepted.
This year-long program is designed to foster and reward a community of 100 digitally-savvy K-12 educators. Get started at [http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/digitalinnovators/](http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/digitalinnovators/).

### 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/).

- The **Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago**, in conjunction with IIT Chicago-Kent Institute on the Supreme Court of the United States, is accepting applications from high school students for **You(th) Decide: A High School Student Forum** on the U.S. Supreme Court on March 7. The deadline to apply is Jan. 10. Teachers can also nominate students. For details, visit [http://www.crfc.org/YouthDecide2014](http://www.crfc.org/YouthDecide2014).

### 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](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](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](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm).