Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week the Board met in Springfield and Chicago through videoconference and spent a significant portion of time discussing the pending K-12 education budget and funding formula decisions before the General Assembly. The legislature has left Springfield for two weeks for their spring break, but this is still quite an active time as discussion on the FY15 budget and Senate Bill 16 (SB16) continues.

During the State Board meeting, Senator Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill) presented an overview of SB16 as it has been introduced. SB16 proposes a system where most state funding for schools is means-tested and distributed based on local ability to pay, thus increasing equity. Resources are prioritized through a weighted formula based on student need and provide greater transparency on how funds are spent at the school level. SB16 proposes a progressive three-year phase in period.

Board members had numerous questions and a thoughtful discussion around SB16. The Board unanimously agreed to support the initial legislation as it moves through the process. We have posted a SB16 fact sheet (http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY15/fy15-fact-sheet3-sb16.pdf) to provide an overview of the legislation and a PowerPoint presentation (http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY15/fy15-sb16-ppt.pdf).

Agency staff is working to develop draft models for the impact on local districts, but there are dozens of data points that must be considered and, depending on how the bill changes, it will be sometime before we have a final formula to model. We would hope to have a draft model looking at the district impact, depending upon the legislative process, sometime in mid-May.

Additionally, we have modeled the possible impact of Senate Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 589 (SB 589) which would alter the method of implementing a funding shortfall in General State Aid (GSA). The amendment would require the state to implement a funding shortfall by means of a per-pupil cut rather than proration. ISBE would determine the shortfall amount, determine a per-pupil cut necessary to meet that shortfall and cap losses to districts at the weighted average loss compared to Operating Expense per Pupil. We have modeled the possible impact to districts if SB 589 were in place for FY14, which is located at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/gsa-fy14-sb589.pdf.

The Board also discussed the various budget scenarios currently pending. Essentially, there are four budgets in play right now. The Board’s recommendation, which is an aggressive ask, that fully funds
GSA and mandated categoricals seeks an additional $1 billion for education. The House and Senate budget discussions are centering around a $1 billion reduction based on anticipated revenue shortfalls.

The Governor proposed two budgets, one keeps the income tax rate at its current level while his “not recommended” budget allows the temporary tax increase to expire. The recommended budget calls for an increase of $291 million, while the “not recommended” budget would reduce FY14 levels by $633 million. A spreadsheet comparing FY14 GSA amounts per district to the Governor’s recommended and not recommended budgets is at http://www.isbe.net/budget/fy15/fy15-gsa-district-comparison.xlsx. An additional overview of the various budgets can be found at www.isbe.net/budget/FY15/fy15-budget.htm.

Finally, more than 475,000 field tests have been started throughout the states participating in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. More than 66,000 of those field tests have been administered here in Illinois. Thank you for your assistance in this test of the test.

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.

- Illinois 5Essentials Survey – To be conducted March 17 through April 25
- Arts and Foreign Language Planning Assistance Grant Deadline – April 14
- Request for Applications for the HealthierUS School Challenge Curricula Reimbursement Program Due – April 15 (www.isbe.net/funding_opps/htmls/rfp.htm)
- Deadline to Complete IEP Facilitation System Pilot Project Survey – April 18 (www.surveymonkey.com/s/8KZ7DSMFACILITATIONINTERESTSURVEY)
- Every Kid Healthy Week – April 21-25
- PSAE Day 1 and Day 2 Initial Standard Time Testing Dates – April 23-24
- PSAE Day 1 Accommodations Testing Window – April 23-May 7
- PSAE Day 2 Accommodations Testing Window – April 24-May 8
- Deadline to Apply to be an SES Provider for the 2014-2015 School Year – April 24 (www.isbe.net/ses/pdf/application_instructions.pdf)
- Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) FY 2015 RFP and Continuation Application Deadline – April 28
- Optional Alternative Evaluation Dismissal Process Training Applications Due – May 1 (http://isbe.net/pera/html/oaed.htm)
- 2014 National Youth Science Camp Applications Due – May 4 (www.isbe.net/career/html/msp.htm#nysc)
- ISBE No Child Left Behind Technical Assistance Workshop Registration Deadline – May 5 (www.isbe.net/grants/html/nclb-workshops.htm)
• School Nutrition Employee Week – May 5-9
• National School Nurse Day – May 7 (http://www.nasn.org/AboutNASN/NationalSchoolNurseDay)
• PSAE Day 1 and Day 2 Makeup Standard Time Testing Dates – May 7-8
• Part 25 (Educator Licensure) – Public comment period ends May 12
• Applications for the Exception to the 1.0 Percent Cap Due – May 16
• ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day – May 26
• Part 33 (Programs for the Preparation of Superintendents in Illinois) – Public comment period ends May 27
• 2014-2015 ISBE Student Advisory Council Application Deadline – May 30
• Part 50 (Evaluation of Certified Employees under Articles 24A and 34 of the School Code) – Public comment period ends June 9
• Student Health Data – Vision system report deadline – June 30
• Student Health Data – Dental system report deadline – June 30
• ISBE offices closed for Independence Day – July 4
• Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Fall 2014 – Friday, August 15, 2014 (See http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)

Data Analysis and Accountability

Employment Information System Reopened, Schools Urged to Review Data

ISBE reopened the Employment Information System (EIS) on March 10. By that date, ISBE had completed the necessary enhancements to improve the process for collecting data pertaining to teachers, administrators and other school personnel.

Districts readily started completing and/or correcting their School Year 2013 data for teachers, administrators and other employees. In addition, districts were able to submit their employment and position data for the current school year (2013-2014).

EIS staff along with ISBE Helpdesk staff manned the phones to help guide the schools in completing this work. After five weeks of diligent and sometimes exhausting work by the districts and schools, more than 14,000 Position records and more than 66,000 Salary records were added to EIS. ISBE sends a hearty thank you to those districts and schools and congratulations on a job well done! Keep up the good work as you move to entering your 2014 data.

One of the reasons for accurately completing the 2013 data was for the Illinois 5Essentials Survey. ISBE provided school rosters, which included teacher, total student and sixth- through 12th-grade student counts. For the launch of the survey, 2013 teacher counts were used, pulled from the EIS. Student counts were pulled from the Student Information System (SIS) and were sourced from 2014 data.

Principals and superintendents were emailed access to the survey administration tool prior to the opening of the survey on March 17. Principals should review their student and teacher counts and make any necessary updates directly to ISBE’s EIS or SIS systems. Final counts, which will be used for the generation of detailed school-level reports, will be pulled from these systems at the end of the survey window. In addition, any changes to teacher and student counts will need to be made in the appropriate ISBE database by close of business on April 21 for inclusion in a school’s response rate calculation.

Funding and Disbursements

Employer’s TRS Contribution on Federally-Funded Salary for Summer Activities

The Teachers Retirement System (TRS) requires earnings for summer work to be reported on an accrual
basis. Earnings for work performed in June 2014 must be reported on the 2013-14 TRS Annual Report, even if the member is not paid for the June work until July or August. The 2013-14 TRS and THIS contribution rates apply to accrued earnings for work performed in June, regardless of when the June earnings are paid to the teacher.

Earnings for work performed in July and August 2014 must be reported on the 2014-15 TRS Annual Report. The 2014-15 TRS and THIS contribution rates apply to accrued earnings for work performed in July and August, regardless of when the July and August earnings are paid to the teacher.

Based on several questions from the field regarding what federal TRS rate to use for SUMMER salaries, the Teachers Retirement System (trs.illinois.gov) has instructed LEAs to use the new (revised) employer TRS contribution on federally-funded salaries that are providing services AFTER the new fiscal year (July 1, 2014). Below are three scenarios and what federal TRS rate to use in each scenario:

1. For federally-funded staff/teachers that have completed their assignments by **June 30, 2014**, but being paid in July, August and September 2014: The CURRENT RATE (FY14) applies (35.41 percent).
2. For federally-funded staff/teachers ACTUALLY providing services in July, August and September 2014 and being paid in July, August and September, 2014: The NEW RATE (FY15) applies (7.44 percent).
3. FY15 federal grant staff: The NEW RATE applies (7.44 percent).

Further questions can be directed to the Teachers Retirement System at (888) 877-0890.

**Title Grant Administration**

**FY 2015 No Child Left Behind Technical Assistance Workshops Scheduled**

ISBE Title Grants and Federal and State Monitoring division staff invites you to attend a one-day No Child Left Behind (NCLB) technical assistance workshop that will be offered throughout the state this summer.

This interactive workshop will focus on what’s new in the Fiscal Year 2015 NCLB Consolidated Application, audits, school-wide and Title I Districts’ plans in Rising Star and related flexibility, allowable use of funds/proper grants management and Choice and SES issues. A pre-session will be held early, especially for new directors, which will focus on the application in its entirety. The agenda allows for time at the end of the day to meet one-on-one with your principal consultant.

If ISBE is granted the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, the agenda will change to accommodate time to discuss waiver implementation. Notification of such change and an updated agenda will be sent prior to the event.

There is no fee to attend, and lunch will be provided. Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged. For more information about these workshops, including instructions for registering, please visit [www.isbe.net/grants/html/nclb-workshops.htm](http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/nclb-workshops.htm). Participants are asked to sign up for only one session. The deadline to register is Monday, May 5.

**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 [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 50 (Evaluation of Certified Employees under Articles 24A and 34 of the School Code):** Adjusts the method to be used to determine the school districts whose performance ranks in the lowest 20 percent of districts statewide for purposes of implementing performance evaluation systems starting September 1, 2015; aligns terminology used in the Part to the educator licensure system that took effect July 1, 2013. Public comment period ends June 9, 2014.

**Innovation and Improvement**

**Statewide System of Support Foundational Services Offer Professional Development**

ISBE has partnered with the Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers across the state to deliver high quality, coordinated and consistent
professional development, technical assistance and networking. Districts seeking more information about professional development for the new Illinois ELA Learning Standards should contact their local Regional Office of Education/Intermediate Service Center.

- ELA Instructional Shift Kits: which include links to resources for teachers to better understand and be better prepared to address the instructional shifts that are needed to meet the demands of the new Illinois Learning Standards.
- EQuIP (Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products) Rubric: a quality review process designed to determine the quality and alignment of instructional lessons and units to the CCSS.

In cooperation with the Illinois Center for School Improvement, locally-identified ROE/ISC Service Providers will offer professional development using ISBE-designed and approved resources and networking opportunities for sharing between schools and districts.

**SIG 1003(g) School Improvement Grant Request for Proposals Now Available**

The System of Support and District Intervention Division announces the posting of the SIG 1003(g) School Improvement Grant Request for Proposal (RFP).

Annual grant awards to districts will range from not less than $50,000 to $2 million per year for each Priority Services eligible school, subject to available funds. Actual allocations are based on the intervention model chosen (Turnaround, Transformation, Restart or Closure) and ISBE guidelines as outlined in this RFP. The grant period will begin during Fiscal Year 2015 and may be renewed through FY 2017.

To access the RFP, associated Needs Assessment and Application Forms, refer to the SIG 1003(g) home page at www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/sip_1003.htm. Links to resources and the list of eligible schools can also be accessed from that page.

Applicants should also reference the SIG 1003(g) Lead Partner webpage at www.isbe.net/apl/default.htm for more information about Lead Partner organizations that have been pre-approved by ISBE. The deadline for submission of applications is Wednesday, May 7, 2014 at 4 p.m.

The SIG 1003(g) Team has also developed a series of technical assistance webinars to assist priority schools in the application process. Three pre-recorded webinars and associated resources will be made available on the SIG 1003(g) webpage shortly. They include:

- **Introduction to the SIG 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (Pre-Recorded)** located at http://web-dev.isbe.state.il.us/asx/2014/SIG_Intro_040814.asx.
- **SIG 1003(g) Developing the Needs Assessment (Pre-Recorded)** located at Step 1 - http://web-dev.isbe.state.il.us/asx/2014/SIG_Dev_Needs_St1_040814.asx
  Step 2 - http://web-dev.isbe.state.il.us/asx/2014/SIG_Dev_Needs_St2_040814.asx
- **SIG Budget – (Pre-Recorded)** located at http://web-dev.isbe.state.il.us/asx/2014/SIG_Budget_040814.asx

The SIG 1003(g) team will also provide two live webinars:

- **SIG 1003(g) Successful Applications “by Design”** to be presented on Wednesday, April 16, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- **SIG 1003(g) Compiling and Submitting Application** to be presented on Thursday, April 17, from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Access the SIG 1003(g) webpage at www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/sip_1003.htm in order to register for these webinars.

**Illinois 5Essentials Survey**

**Reminder: ISBE Conducting Annual 5Essentials Survey Through April 25**

ISBE reminds districts that the agency is conducting its second annual survey of learning conditions, the Illinois 5Essentials Survey, through April 25.
The 5Essentials Survey is a proven diagnostic tool developed by researchers at the University of Chicago. It provides schools with fine-grained data on five leading indicators for school improvement: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Involved Families, Supportive Environment and Ambitious Instruction.

More than 70 percent of all teachers and students in grades 6 through 12 across the state took part in the inaugural Illinois 5Essentials Survey last year. Survey reports will be released in June to principals and superintendents, and a summary of the results will be reported on the State School Report Card website at http://illinoisreportcard.com.

This year, only districts participating in Race to the Top, Chicago Public Schools and those that did not participate in the survey last year are required to participate. However, all districts have the option to participate and are strongly encouraged to do so. Visit http://illinois.5-essentials.org before April 25 to take the survey or contact 5essentials@uchicago.edu or (866) 440-1874 with questions.

### Early Childhood Division

**Third Year Implementation for KIDS Survey Currently Underway, Webinars Scheduled**

Adopted by ISBE in 2012, the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) is a comprehensive process designed to assess kindergarten students’ growth and development and provide information about students’ competencies across developmental domains, with the goal of generating more effective classroom instruction. Based upon developmental research and theory, KIDS uses an observation-based assessment instrument to record students’ progress over time.

During Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014, 128 school districts have participated in the KIDS pilot and received training on how to implement KIDS in their kindergarten classrooms. FY 15 will be the third implementation year for KIDS, with statewide implementation in 2015-2016. KIDS trainings will be held regionally throughout the state beginning in July.

### College and Career Readiness

**Presidential Awards for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching Nominations Open**

The National Science Foundation is currently accepting nominations and applications for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) program.

PAEMST is the highest recognition that a kindergarten through 12th-grade mathematics or science (including computer science) teacher may receive for outstanding teaching in the United States. Anyone – principals, teachers, parents, students or members of the general public – may nominate exceptional mathematics or science teachers who are currently teaching grades K-6 for the 2014 award year. Teachers may also apply directly at www.paemst.org.

The nomination deadline is April 15. This date gives the nominated teacher time to prepare an application prior to the application deadline, which is May 15. Secondary school teachers (grades 7-12) are eligible to apply in 2015.

Presidential awardees receive a certificate signed by the president, a trip for two to Washington, D.C., to attend a series of recognition events and professional development opportunities, and a $10,000 award from the National Science Foundation. The National Science Foundation administers PAEMST on behalf of The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Contacts for PAEMST in Illinois are Tara Bell, state coordinator for the science award, at
IllinoisPAEMST@gmail.com and Claran Einfeldt, state coordinator for the mathematics award, at claran@cmath2.com.

**ISBE Student Advisory Council**

**Student Advisory Council Application Available Online for 2014-2015 School Year**

Applications are currently being accepted for ISBE’s Student Advisory Council for the 2014-2015 school year.

Students attending a public high school in Illinois who are entering the fall semester as a sophomore, junior or senior are eligible to apply. The application is now available on the ISBE website at www.isbe.net/sac.

Interested candidates must complete an application and essay. The application closing date is Friday, May 30, at 5 p.m.

Eleven positions are open for the 2014-15 school year. Four face-to-face meetings are required if selected.

If you have questions, please contact Vince Camille at (217) 782-3007 or vcamille@isbe.net.

**Office of the Governor**

**Healthy & High Performing Schools Symposium Scheduled for April 18**

Gov. Pat Quinn and the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)-Illinois invite you to attend the Illinois Healthy & High Performing Schools Symposium, hosted by the USGBC-Illinois Chapter, the Illinois Green Governments Coordinating Council and Adlai E. Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire on Friday, April 18, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Attendance is free and includes meals, but registration is required. Gov. Quinn will provide the keynote address. Teachers can earn up to 7.5 CPDUs, and LEED Professionals can earn up to 7.5 GBCI continuing education hours.

This symposium for Illinois K-12 schools is an opportunity to exchange ideas with symposium participants, including school and district administrators, regional superintendents, school board members, facilities managers and custodial staff, teachers, school health practitioners, facility planners and architects, school-related non-profits and agencies and high school student environmental leaders.

Speakers and workshops will cover topics such as sustainable school facility planning and siting, green facilities management, sustainable renovation and construction, energy efficiency and conservation, environmental education and service learning, water conservation, waste reduction and sustainable school transportation.

Registration is offered at no cost to general admission attendees through the generosity of program sponsors. More information on the 2014 program agenda, schedule and attendee registration is available at www.green.illinois.gov and www.usgbc-illinois.org/uncategorized/leed-v4-advantages-and-challenges-of-the-future.

Contact Anthony Cefali at anthony.cefali@illinois.gov for more information.

- **What**: Illinois Healthy & High Performing Schools Symposium
- **When**: April 18, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Where**: Adlai E. Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire

**In Brief**

**In the News**

- Pearl Westerlund, a fifth-grade student at Lincoln Elementary School in Calumet City, is among six national grand prize winners in the 2014 Preferred Meals “Healthy Lunch for a Healthier Me!” Art Contest for fourth- through sixth-graders. Pearl’s winning design is now a featured billboard display on a Preferred Meals 24-foot truck that delivers food for the school’s meals. Pearl was also honored at a special presentation and assembly hosted by fitness expert Martha Sosa, who led students in a
workout and spoke about the importance of making healthy choices.

**Professional Development**

- **The Chicago Botanic Garden** is offering a variety of professional development opportunities throughout the summer, including “STEM in Your Neighborhood” and “Field Research for Educators.” For a full list of upcoming workshops and additional information, go to [http://tiny.cc/hj93dx](http://tiny.cc/hj93dx).

- Loyola University Health System Pediatric Community Outreach is hosting a program for school district health personnel entitled “The World in Which They Live: Children of the 21st Century” on May 7 from 3:30 to 8 p.m. at Loyola University Medical Center, 2160 S. First Ave., in Maywood. Topics include diabetes, concussions, exposure to trauma and bullying. For more information and to register, contact Susan Finn at [sfinn@lumc.edu](mailto:sfinn@lumc.edu). If attending, please note any food restrictions.

- **Pathways Resource Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign** has released a free guide to help educators build and improve rigorous study programs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. The guide is available online at [pathways.illinois.edu/?page_id=372](http://pathways.illinois.edu/?page_id=372).

**Educator Opportunities**

- The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) is accepting applications for the 2014 Conservation Teacher of the Year program to recognize the outstanding conservation education efforts of the state’s teachers in two age categories: grades K-8 and 9-12. The award package includes two meal tickets to the AISWCD Summer Conference, where the award will be presented, a recognition plaque and a $250 Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant opportunity from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Entry instructions are available at [www.aiswcd.org/programs/awards/](http://www.aiswcd.org/programs/awards/).

**Classroom Opportunities**

- Registration remains open for Earth Day in the Parks events from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources at Fort Massac State Park in Metropolis and Mermet Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area in Belknap. An additional class would also be accepted at Argyle Lake State Park in Colchester and Cache River Wetlands Center in Cypress. Access the registration form and more information about the events at [dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/EDITPinstruct.htm](http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/EDITPinstruct.htm). Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

- The ninth annual Endangered Species Day will take place May 16 to help teachers and students learn about the importance of protecting threatened and endangered plant and animal species. Visit [www.endangeredspeciesday.org](http://www.endangeredspeciesday.org) to register your classroom activity and access materials provided in the Endangered Species Day Toolkit. The website also features a Teacher Resource Center/Teacher Forum.

**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).