Last week the Illinois State Board of Education announced the Illinois Honor Schools, recognizing 177 schools for their continued academic progress or excellence in 2013. This annual recognition program, based on the last spring’s state standardized tests and demographic information, shows a dozen schools that are being recognized for the 10th or 11th consecutive year.

The State Board establishes criteria, identifies winners of the awards and administers the Illinois Honor Roll. The 2013 Illinois Honor Roll roster includes elementary, middle and high schools, including charter schools, and represents 99 public school districts statewide. Downstate schools represent 47 percent of the Honor Roll schools, Chicago schools make up 38 percent and suburban schools represent the final 15 percent this year. The schools earned a total of 185 awards in the three categories. You may access additional information on this year’s Honor Roll at http://www.ilhonorroll.niu.edu/.

We have not yet modeled the impact of SB 16, the legislation aimed to improve the states’ education funding formula. 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.

ISBE staff is in the process of modeling the possible impact of SB 16 and we hope to have something by mid-May for lawmakers and districts to review. SB16 is still very much a work in progress and we are aware of changes that will be proposed soon based on feedback from the field. Once we have a model we can share with you we will inform you via this column.

The first window for the Partnership for Assessment of College and Careers (PARCC) field test closed earlier this month and the End of Year (EOY) portion will begin May 5 and continue through June 6. Tens of thousands of Illinois students participated in the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) window from March 24 through April 11. PARCC and the Illinois State Board of Education have received incredible feedback from Illinois staff and students during this process. Many problematic aspects of the
test have been successfully identified prior to next year’s implementation. The technology aspects of the computer-based test have held up with no consortium-wide outages. Isolated incidents have been logged and improvements will be made in this field as well.

My thanks to all of you who have or will participate. Approximately 650 districts, 1,800 schools, and 125,000 students in Illinois will participate in the field test before it is over. This opportunity was designed to essentially “test the test” in preparation for the first operational year in 2014-15.

Finally, congratulations to Woodland Primary School in Gages Lake for being named a U.S. Green Ribbon Schools award winner for its strong environmental practices and curriculum. Woodland is one of 48 schools across the country being recognized this year under the three-year-old federal program. The 48 awarded schools were selected from submissions made by 30 state education agencies. The Green Ribbon Schools recognition award honors schools that work to reduce their environmental impact and utility costs, promote better health, and ensure environmental education, including civics and green career pathways.

Woodland Primary School, Oak Lawn-Hometown Middle School in Oak Lawn, and Evanston Skokie School District 65 in Evanston were named Illinois Green School award winners in March and were submitted for the nationwide award program.

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

- **PSAE Day 1 Accommodations Testing Window** – April 23-May 7
- **PSAE Day 2 Accommodations Testing Window** – April 24-May 8
- **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](http://isbe.net/pera/html/oaed.htm))
- **2014 National Youth Science Camp Applications Due** – May 4 ([www.isbe.net/career/html/msp.htm#nysc](http://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](http://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](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.)

Funding and Disbursement

2013-14 Final Public School Calendars

The ability to file the 2013-14 Final Public School Calendar will be available May 1, 2014, via IWAS. Please complete and transmit the Final Calendar to the appropriate Regional Office of Education (ROE)/Intermediate Service Center (ISC) by the last day of school. REMINDER: The document type Final Calendar must be submitted even if the district has submitted a document type Amended Calendar previously. A Final Public School Calendar must be transmitted and approved prior to filing the 2013-14 claims for General State Aid, Pupil Transportation and 18-3 Regular Education Orphanage. If an Amended Calendar is in Draft status, i.e. has not been submitted for RCDT Administrator or ROE/ISC approval, please leave it in Draft status and proceed entering the Final calendar.

HELPFUL HINT: The unused proposed emergency days (calendar code XED) that are coded at the end of the school calendar may be removed by correcting the Regular School End Date to the last day of actual school activity. Once the Regular School End Date has been corrected, the calendar codes after that date will be omitted.

If you have questions that are not addressed in the Public School Calendar Guidelines, or Final/Proposed Calendar Checkpoints you may contact the ROE/ISC office or Marj Beck mbeck@isbe.net, telephone (217) 782-5256.

If you encounter technical issues with the Public School Calendar in IWAS please contact the ISBE Call Center at (217) 558-3600 during business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

2012-13 Driver Education Cost Report

Per Public Act 97-1025 effective January 1, 2013, the State Board of Education is required to provide an annual report of the per capita Driver Education cost. The 2012-13 report has been compiled and can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/driver-ed-cost-rpt-12-13.pdf. The report utilizes expenditure and revenue data submitted by school districts via their audited Annual Financial Report (AFR) ending June 30 as well as the number of students provided Driver Education in the same year. District Annual Financial Reports for FY 2013 can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/sfms/html/financial_archive.htm.

Questions can be directed to Lisa Willhoit, lwillhoi@isbe.net, in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at (217) 782-5256.

Federal Interest Income – Quarterly Reminder

The Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34-Education, Part 80 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, Subpart C-Post Award Requirements, Section 80.21 Payment, requires grantees and subgrantees to promptly, but at least quarterly, remit interest earned on advances to the appropriate federal agency. The grantee or subgrantee may keep actual interest amounts up to $100 per year gained on Federal deposits per bank account, if applicable, for administrative purposes. Grant recipients have discretion to set up account(s) that are non-interest bearing to avoid returning interest.
To ensure compliance with federal administrative requirements, local education agency fiscal officials should develop internal controls and a sound methodology to calculate and return, at least quarterly, interest earned in excess of $100 on federal program funds. Interest calculation methodologies must be based on actual, not estimated, interest earnings on federal funds. Further details as to how federal interest should be calculated and remitted can be found on Pages 10-12 of the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures, which is online at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf.

Interest should be returned using the following guidelines:

- Checks for interest earned should be made payable to the Illinois State Board of Education.
- Checks should not include the return of unexpended disbursements from the Illinois State Board of Education. Even though unexpended disbursements and interest payments are made payable to the Illinois State Board of Education, separate checks should be issued for both.
- Checks should be accompanied by a statement identifying the program and the program year from which the interest was earned.

All checks must be mailed to: Illinois State Board of Education, Funding and Disbursements Services Division (E-320), 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL 62777-0001.

**School Business Services**

**FY 2013 Operating Expense Per Pupil and Per Capita Tuition Charge Now Available**

The FY2013 Operating Expense per Pupil (OEPP) and Per Capita Tuition Charge (PCTC) are now available on the Illinois State Board of Education website at http://www.isbe.net/finance/verification.htm.

Districts are not required to verify the amounts, but an Excel calculation worksheet is available to check against the audited Annual Financial Report (AFR).

These are considered the official OEPP/PCTC for each district.

If necessary, the detailed calculation is available upon request. If you have any questions, please contact Toby Turek, School Business Services Division, at (217) 785-8779 or email finance1@isbe.net.

**Special Education Services**

**Conference on Best Practices in Nonpublic Special Education Programs Nov. 6 and 7**

ISBE’s Special Education Services Division has announced that the eighth annual Conference on Best Practices in Nonpublic Special Education Programs is set for Nov. 6-7 in Oak Lawn. The conference will be held at the Oak Lawn Hilton.

For more information, including a Call for Presentations and Presentation Submission Form, visit http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/np_handouts/default.htm. Registration information will be announced at a later date. For questions, contact Heather Zeman at npconf@isbe.net or (312) 814-8251.

**Nutrition and Wellness Programs**

**Community Eligibility Provision Details and Application to Participate Available**

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is an alternative to collecting, approving and verifying household eligibility applications for free and reduced price eligible students in high poverty local educational agencies (LEAs) for schools participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Illinois was one of the first states selected to participate in the CEP, and we are now in our third year of implementing this provision, which will be going nation-wide next school year.

For a LEA to be eligible to use the CEP for next school year, the LEA must have one or more schools that have an identified student percentage of 40 percent or greater in the current school year (SY2013-2014). Just to be clear, Identified Students are different from your free and reduced eligibility numbers.

Identified Students include the following:
Weekly Message – State Board of Education – April 28, 2014

- Directly certified students including SNAP, TANF, Medicaid (available in some but not all schools), & Foster Children.
- Extension of benefits students
- Homeless, migrant, runaway and headstart students signed off on by the programs coordinator.

The Identified Student numbers must be specifically from April 1, 2014.

The LEA and school must also agree to offer all students school breakfasts and lunches at no cost and to cover any cost above the federal reimbursement received with non-Federal funds. Reimbursement for schools participating in CEP will be based on claiming percentages derived from the percentages of identified students.

For more information about CEP, to view recorded webinars and/or to apply, please visit our website at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/nslp-hhfka-ceo.htm.

The application to participate is available now and is due to ISBE by June 30, 2014.

If you have any questions, please contact our office via email at lblough@isbe.net or via telephone at (800) 545-7892.

**Upcoming Events**

**ISBE and Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents to Present Conference**

The Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents and Illinois State Board of Education will present the two-day summer conference “Lead … Focus … Connect: Every Student College and Career Ready” on June 17-18 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield. Registration information will be coming soon. Please save the date.

The conference is designed to update and expand educators’ knowledge of current Illinois initiatives, provide classroom teachers with practical application focusing on key topics, and promote sharing of expertise and ideas among educators.

ISBE speakers will present key topics regarding agency policy, regulation and mandates. Featured speakers are expected to include:

- Susie Morrison, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Education Officer
- Amy Jo Clemens, Assistant Superintendent for Innovation and Improvement.
- Dr. Mary O’Brien, Director of Assessment
- Dr. Jason Helfer, Assistant Superintendent for Teacher and Leader Effectiveness.

Breakout sessions will showcase practical application of key topics, including ELA Writing, Math Strategies, NGSS, Balanced Assessment, Equip Rubric, PARCC: Evidence Tables, PARCC Accommodations, Technology Collaboration, Tech Apps, Writing IEP Goals, Licensure, Teacher and Principal Evaluation, RtI and PBIS, ELL, and Continuous Improvement.

All teachers and administrators are encouraged to attend. A limited block of rooms are being held at the Hilton and Abraham Lincoln hotels in Springfield.

**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.

Discussions will include the U.S. Department of Education’s recent approval of our waiver application for flexibility from certain aspects of the No Child Left Behind law.

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.
Participants are asked to sign up for only one session. The deadline to register is Monday, May 5.

**Illinois Teacher of the Year**

**2014 Award-Winner Pam Reilly**

Available for Speaking Engagements

Pam Reilly, the 2014 Illinois Teacher of the Year, is available to visit your school or classroom. If you would like to have Pam come and read to your elementary students, speak to your staff, or present at a workshop, please contact her at (815) 786-2187 or preilly@kidsroe.org.

Reilly was announced as the state’s top educator during ISBE’s 39th annual Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year banquet held Oct. 21, 2013, in Normal. She is a second-grade teacher at Woodbury Elementary in Sandwich Community Unit School District 430.

**School Health Issues**

**Special Education Medical Review Training for Registered Nurses**

The spring session of the course “RNs in Special Education” is underway. The summer session will begin June 25 and run for six weeks, and a fall session will be held beginning in October, at a date to be announced. Any nurse who had already applied for the spring session but did not get admitted will need to contact Jessica Gerdes by phone at (312) 814-8252 to discuss details of their current application and provide preference for date of next session. Any new applications will only be accepted May 1-16 by email to jgerdes@isbe.net. Those who are accepted from either current or new applications will be notified beginning May 25.

ISBE is providing this free course as a service to school districts that do not have a sufficient number of RNs who hold a professional educator license endorsed for school nursing. The RNs for this course are those whose duties include providing educational evaluation and instructional judgment for students being evaluated or re-evaluated for special education services. The goal of the course is to assure competence in special education medical review by those RNs over the next two years while the gap in available ISBE-licensed school nurses is expected to narrow. The course will continue as long as there is demand. Space is limited to 90 students each session. This internet-delivered, instructor-facilitated, guided study course runs for six weeks.

The course is designed to meet training requirements of Rule 226.160, Special Education Medical Review (www.isbe.net/rules/archive/default.htm), which allows opportunities other than education licensure (i.e., training, testing) be provided for currently employed staff to become qualified to conduct all components of a student’s Medical Review. Portions of the rule took effect October 2013 and portions will take effect on July 1, 2016. This course does not confer certification or Professional Educator License endorsed for school nursing or any rights and privileges of certified staff. The rule change allows time for more nurses to obtain ISBE licensure/endorsement in school nursing while assuring the competence of currently employed registered nurses to conduct the student evaluation component of Medical Review and assist in planning, implementing and evaluating the Individualized Education Program that a student’s special education team may create, as required by ISBE rule. RNs who successfully complete this course will be able to continue to provide such evaluation and services in special education through the course of their employment in any Illinois public school as long as RN licensure and professional development requirements are met.

RNs who are being asked by their administration to take this course and did not already submit their materials must meet the following requirements and send documents via email only to jgerdes@isbe.net. No mailed or faxed documents will be accepted due to privacy concerns with licensure and other information.

- Cover letter of application with name, contact information (email and phone), nursing degree held (diploma, associate, bachelor’s, master’s) and statement that the RN is not nor has previously held ISBE Professional Educator License endorsement in school nursing. (formerly called certification)
- Copy of current RN licensure (reminder: RN licenses in Illinois expire May 2014, so please provide an updated copy).
- Proof of current employment in an Illinois public school or co-op (contract, pay stub with salary obliterated, etc.). Applicants with
statements of future employment (beginning August or later) will not be taken until August.

- Letter from a school district administrator indicating the RN is required to take this course in order to provide educational evaluation or instructional judgment of students as a result of medical review as required by Rule 226.160 subsection (a) (5) for students being evaluated or re-evaluated for special education services; and that the district currently has no or insufficient number of licensed/endorsed (e.g., “certified”) RNs that would bring the district into full compliance with Rule 226.160 at this time.

**Rules and Waivers**

**Notice of Completed Rulemaking**

Please be advised that four sets of amendments recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education are now in effect. Changes have been posted at http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/default.htm. Please choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to Parts 227, 232, 240 and 265.

**Part 227 (Gifted Education):** Makes technical changes to conform to the new licensure system that took effect July 1, 2013.  
**Affected Section:** 227.25  
**Effective Date:** April 1, 2014

**Part 232 (Summer Bridges Program):** Makes technical changes to conform to the new licensure system that took effect July 1, 2013.  
**Affected Section:** 232.60  
**Effective Date:** April 1, 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.  
**Affected Sections:** 240.20, 240.30, 240.50, 240.60 and 240.100  
**Effective Date:** April 1, 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.  
**Affected Sections:** 265.10 and 265.220  
**Effective Date:** April 1, 2014

**In Brief**

**In the News**

- Pearl Westerlund, a fifth-grader 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 a featured billboard display on a Preferred Meals 24-foot truck that delivers food for the school’s meals.

**Coming Up**

- Celebrate Bike to School Day on May 7. For more information, visit http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/, which is maintained by the National Center for Safe Routes to School with funding provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

**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.

- 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.

**Employment Opportunities**

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