Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This week the second part of the field test of the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) will resume. The End-of-Year (EOY) testing window runs from May 5 through June 6. In the first half of our field test last month for the Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) portion more than 1,800 schools in about 650 districts took part and even more schools and districts this month will get a chance to “test the test” as they field test the “EOY” portion prior to next year’s full PARCC implementation in all schools.

PARCC and the state of Illinois have already received an incredible amount of feedback on the assessment and we are looking forward to receiving more of your input through administration of the practice End-of-Year exam.

I wanted to take this opportunity to clarify the difference between the two required portions of the PARCC; the Performance-Based Assessment and the End of Year Assessment. The PBA, which will be administered to students at about the three-fourths mark in the school year, measures different things than the EOY, which comes late in spring. The PBA measures critical thinking and problem solving (i.e. reasoning and real world problems in math and writing short essays in English Language Arts). The End-of-Year assessments measure understanding of key concepts and fluency in math and reading comprehension in English. Together they generate a comprehensive picture of knowledge, and these scores can be compared to student scores from prior year to determine growth. PARRC is also working on other assessments that would be ready much earlier in the school year as optional additions for states or districts. The two portions of the PARRC assessment that we’re field testing – the PBA and the EOY – comprise the summative score. The summative exams on academic proficiency are required under federal law, even in states like ours that were just awarded a waiver.

The waiver will, however, allow us to add other metrics to determine performance and progress. We plan to implement a Multiple Measure Index, which includes graduation rates, achievement gap progress, growth over time, school climate and course offerings as well as annual performance. The waiver allows school districts flexibility with spending Title dollars and more flexibility with school improvement plans. We will have additional information on the waiver, which will go into effect during the 2014-15 school year soon and you may access the full waiver at http://www.isbe.net/nclb_waivers/default.htm.

I am proud of the way our education community is stepping up to truly make the PARCC assessment our own. Whether through the tens of thousands of students “testing the test” or the hundreds of Illinois
teachers who have used the knowledge and expertise to review and develop questions for the assessment, or the hundreds of administrators who want their schools to be a part of this field test, Illinois’ education community is truly putting its stamp on this new assessment. My thanks to all of you for participating in this “test of the test,” which will help all districts as we use the PARCC next year as part of our more comprehensive accountability system, replacing the one-snapshot-in-time accountability system of NCLB.

We have received some student feedback from the first part of the field test, which I believe is very positive. On the English Language Arts assessment, 52 percent of students that responded to a survey said they found the test to be about the same level of difficulty as their classroom work and 15 percent said it was easier. In addition, 78 percent of students responding said they preferred taking the assessment on computer over pencil and paper. I hope to have some additional feedback to share with you in the coming weeks as we move forward in the field test process.

Finally, we are now taking applications from eligible high school students interested in serving on the State Board’s Student Advisory Council (SAC) for the 2014-15 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 Student Advisory Council, which was established in 1975, represents a diverse group of students who have demonstrated a strong work ethic and the ability to think creatively and work well in groups. Members share student concerns and can provide thoughts on ISBE’s existing and proposed programs, policies and regulations.

The deadline to submit an application for the 2014-15 Student Advisory Council is 5 p.m. Friday, May 30, 2014. Interviews will be scheduled in July for those applicants chosen as possible members. Applications and additional information about SAC is available on ISBE’s website at http://www.isbe.net/sac/.

Thanks and 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.

- PSAE Day 1 Accommodations Testing Window – April 23-May 7
- PSAE Day 2 Accommodations Testing Window – April 24-May 8
- 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
• Final grant amendments and end date extension requests for projects ending June 30 – May 31
• “Re-Connecting the Pathways: Equipping Leaders for Juvenile Justice Improvement” conference – June 2-4, Springfield (https://sites.google.com/site/reconnectingpathways/)
• 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.)

**PEAC**

**Districts Can Submit Questions Regarding Teacher and Principal Evaluation Process**

ISBE is aware that many districts are currently grappling with a variety of questions about the process and responsibilities of teacher and principal evaluation. PEAC has been working diligently on developing non-regulatory guidance for a variety of issues regarding teacher and principal evaluation. This material is available at http://www.isbe.net/peac/.

In order to assist districts in the development and implementation of teacher and principal evaluation, an email dropbox has been created for districts to submit their questions and concerns regarding PERA. Agency staff, in consultation with PEAC, will respond to questions. Districts are encouraged to submit their questions to pera@isbe.net.

**Funding and Disbursement**

**Deadline for Final FY 14 State and Federal Grant Amendments and End Date Extensions**

Many State and Federal grant projects are approaching a June 30 end date for obligating FY 2014 grant funds. Please be advised that per Policy Statements #2 and #3 on Page 6 of the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures, http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf, all State and Federal project end date extension requests and final budget amendments must be received at ISBE no later than 30 calendar days prior to the end date of the project.

As a reminder, please be advised of the following regarding the need for a project end date extension:

- An end date extension past June 30 is NOT needed for regular term staff salaries paid on a 12 month salary schedule.
- An end date extension past June 30 is NOT needed to pay obligations (e.g. purchase order for supplies) incurred June 30 or prior.
- An end date extension past June 30 IS NEEDED for new activities and obligations incurred July 1 or later (e.g. Summer School, Professional Development).

Final amendments for State and Federal grants with a project end date of June 30, 2014, must be received by ISBE no later than May 31, 2014. For those grants with a project end date of August 31, 2014, the last day amendments will be accepted is August 1, 2014. However, budget increases for State funded grant projects must be received by June 30, even if the project end date has been extended. For grant applications in the electronic Grants Management System (eGMS), the deadline is also referenced on the Program Overview page under “Amendment Due Date.”

**Note to Special Education and Education for Employment Cooperative Administrators:** Member district amendments need to be submitted to the
Cooperative/EFE Administrator timely to accommodate a final review for accuracy and approvability before acceptance and approval to ISBE on or before the May 31/Aug. 1 deadline.

Questions regarding this information can be directed to Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

**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. **REMININDER:** 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.

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**Summer Conference**

**Register for ISBE and Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents Conference**

The Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents and Illinois State Board of Education will present the two-day summer conference “Lead … Focus …

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**Connect:** Every Student College and Career Ready” on June 17-18 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield. Registration is now available at [http://educationregistration.org/index.php/trail](http://educationregistration.org/index.php/trail).

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’Brian, 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.

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**Center for Performance**

**FY 2015 School Technology Revolving Loan Program Applications Available**

The Fiscal Year 2015 School Technology Revolving Loan Program (STRLP) application materials for eligible districts and schools have been posted to ISBE’s webpage at [http://www.isbe.net/ed-technology/html/revolving_loan.htm](http://www.isbe.net/ed-technology/html/revolving_loan.htm). This year the loan will be for school districts serving grades 9-12. Applications will be accepted from June 1 through Dec. 1, 2014.

The loans will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis. The School Technology Revolving Loan Program (STRLP) is a three-year loan with a 2 percent
interest rate. The amount which each district is eligible to apply is listed under “Eligible Applicants.”

**Nutrition and Wellness Programs**

**Training Opportunities for School-Based Child Nutrition Program Sponsors**

ISBE's Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division will host a variety of training opportunities for school nutrition program staff for School Year 2014-2015. There is no registration fee for these workshops. Beverage service only will be available. Please save the date for the workshop(s) in your area that are applicable to your job duties. Registration is now available online. Locations tend to fill up quickly, so complete registration as soon as announced to secure your space.

**School Meals Menu Planning 101:** This half-day session will be a hands-on workshop with menu planning activities geared to the school nutrition personnel that plan the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program menus. Meal pattern changes required for SY 2014-15 will be included as well as overall meal pattern information. Each workshop location is limited to 50 attendees, so we request that each school register no more than two staff to attend this training. **Dates and locations include:**

- July 23, 2014 – Arlington Heights (afternoon session)
- July 24, 2014 – Alsip (morning session)
- July 28, 2014 – Bloomington (morning session)
- July 29, 2014 – Carbondale (afternoon session)
- July 30, 2014 – Collinsville (morning session)

**Direct Certification, Certification, and Verification:**

This half-day workshop will be a training on the overall regulations related to the use of the Electronic Direct Certification System, certification of household eligibility applications and verification efforts. Staff who work directly with the overall certification process at your school district would be the best to attend this training session. **Dates and locations include:**

- Aug. 13, 2014 – Arlington Heights (afternoon session)
- Aug. 14, 2014 – Lisle (morning session)

**Overview of the Administrative Review Process:**

This half-day training will provide sponsors an overview of the Administrative Review (AR), including all USDA checklists and resources. The Administrative Review is an assessment conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) of the School Food Authority’s (SFA) administration of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP) and other school nutrition programs. The objectives of the AR are to determine whether the SFA meets program requirements, provide technical assistance, secure any needed corrective action, and assess fiscal action, if applicable. ISBE must conduct ARs of all SFAs participating in the NSLP and/or SBP at least once during each three-year review cycle period. The first three-year review cycle began SY 2013-14. **Dates and locations include:**

- Oct. 15, 2014 – Schaumburg (afternoon session)
- Oct. 16, 2014 – Lisle (morning session)
- Oct. 21, 2014 – East Peoria (morning session)
- Oct. 22, 2014 – Fairview Heights (morning session)

Register today! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our staff at (800) 545-7892 or via email at cnp@isbe.net.

**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:

- 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 and we would be happy to assist with any questions.

### School Health Issues

**FDA Recommends to Discontinue Use of GenStrip Blood Glucose Test**

The FDA is advising people with diabetes and health care professionals to stop using GenStrip Blood Glucose Test Strips because the strips may report incorrect blood glucose levels.

The FDA recommends the use of alternative glucose test strips that are designed for use with the LifeScan OneTouch family of glucose meters (e.g. Ultra, Ultra 2 and Ultra Mini). Read more on the FDA website at [http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/Safety/AlertsandNotices/ucm395180.htm](http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/Safety/AlertsandNotices/ucm395180.htm).

**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 providing or is expected to provide medical/health evaluation and instructional judgment/educational evaluation for students being evaluated or re-evaluated for special education services.

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.

### 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 in Normal. She is a second-grade teacher at Woodbury Elementary in Sandwich Community Unit School District 430.

### 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.

### Early Childhood Division

#### Reminder: New ISBE Bilingual Rules and Early Childhood Teacher Preparation

In an effort to strengthen and support the academic achievement of English Language Learners in Illinois,
new administrative rules went into effect in July 2010 that expanded bilingual services to preschool programs administered by a school district. In accordance with 23 Ill Administrative Code Part 228, effective July 1, 2014, preschool teachers who provide native language or ESL instruction to ELL students must also hold the English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual endorsement that corresponds with the teaching assignment.

For more information, contact the ISBE Division of English Language Learning at (312) 814-3850 or the ISBE Division of Early Childhood at (217) 524-4835.


For additional resources to support your preschool English Language Learners, go to http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/preschool_ell.htm.

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.

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.

• Registration is open for the “Re-Connecting the Pathways: Equipping Leaders for Juvenile Improvement” conference, set for June 2-4 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. The event brings together juvenile justice stakeholders from across the state. For more information, visit https://sites.google.com/site/reconnectingpathways/

• The Illinois Department of Natural Resources will present an educator workshop on invasive species called “Alien Invaders: They Are Here!” from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday, July 18, at the Shawnee National Forest Headquarters Office in Harrisburg. For details on this workshop and other upcoming ENTICE program workshops, visit https://www.enticeworkshops.com.

• A Leopold Education Project (LEP) workshop is set for 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 23, at the Shawnee National Forest Headquarters Office in Harrisburg. LEP is an innovative, interdisciplinary conservation and environmental curriculum based on the essays in “A Sand County Almanac.” For more information, contact Amanda Patrick at apatrick@fs.fed.us or (618) 253-1031.

Employment Opportunities

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