Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

The General Assembly is heading into the final days of their spring session and many issues continue to be unresolved. The two biggest issues that remain for us continue to be the debate on possible changes to the education funding formula through various amendments to Senate Bill 16 and the budget for Fiscal Year 2015, which begins July 1.

Board members and I have been meeting with legislators to ensure they understand the impacts of the various budget scenarios that were being considered, and I know many of you have been engaged in this activity as well. Last week the House passed a version of the FY 15 education budget that very closely resembles the Governor’s recommended budget. It includes an additional $291 million for education and would mean an approximate 90 percent proration to General State Aid. It also includes an increase of $54 million for transportation, as well as the Board-recommended levels of increases in Early Childhood and Bilingual. It also includes sufficient funding to allow us to implement the PARCC assessment in third through eighth grade and at least once in high school, along with components of the ACT and WorkKeys for districts to administer on an optional basis.

During these final days of session we will continue to work with legislators to provide them with the information they need as they work to complete their tasks. I encourage you to work with your statewide organizations to provide them with support as they also work to engage legislators during these waning days of the spring legislative session.

Chairman Chico and I were called to testify before the Latino Family Commission about the FY 15 budget and its possible impact on this important segment of our populations. The Commission includes several current legislators and they were very concerned about the impact of the budget on English Language Learners and our Latino subgroup. They are supportive of our waiver from aspects of No Child Left Behind, but they also are concerned about the flexibility districts now have with Title I Choice and Supplemental Education Service (SES) funds. These legislators want to know how districts will use those funds now that they have increased flexibility and ultimately want to ensure we meet the needs of ELL’s and Latino students. Please keep this in mind as you make decisions on how you will be spending these funds in the coming years.

Table of Contents

| PARCC                                      | ............................................................2 |
| Title Grant Administration                  | ............................................................3 |
| School Business Services                    | ............................................................3 |
| Nutrition and Wellness Programs             | ............................................................3 |
| Innovation and Improvement                  | ............................................................3 |
| Departments of Education and Justice        | ............................................................4 |
| Illinois General Assembly                   | ............................................................5 |
| PEAC                                       | ............................................................5 |
| Funding and Disbursements                  | ............................................................5 |
| Rules and Waivers                          | ............................................................5 |
| In Brief                                   | ............................................................6 |
Finally, I want to thank the teachers and administrators at Kaneland Community Unit School District 302 for their hospitality last week during my visit to Kaneland Senior High School in Maple Park. Kaneland is one of just 43 high schools in the state to have made the 2013 Illinois Honor Roll. We also recognized Nicholson Elementary School of West Aurora School District 129. These schools each earned an Academic Improvement Award. My visit to Kane County marked the end of our Honor Roll visits for this year but I look forward to visiting more improving and high-performing schools next year.

I hope you, your students and staff have a safe Memorial Day weekend. Please encourage your students to think about those men and women who have paid the highest price so that we may enjoy our freedom.

Chris

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**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).*

- **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/](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
- **Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education) and Part 650 (Charter Schools)** – Public comment period ends July 14
- **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](http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm) for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- **Eighth annual Conference on Best Practices in Nonpublic Special Education Programs** – Nov. 6-7 ([http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/np_handouts/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/np_handouts/default.htm))

**PARCC**

**Update on Field Tests; Feedback Sought From Test Administrators, Coordinators**

Thank you all for your continued participation in the PARCC Field Test. During this EOY window, roughly 1,800 computer-based test sessions have been started with more than 31,000 students having completed an online EOY test. Over 1,000 test sessions are still scheduled, yet not started for this period so please remember to complete your testing by June 6.

In addition, once every student has completed testing, don’t forget the final step of stopping the test session in PearsonAccess. Also, we welcome all feedback on the Test Administrator Survey and the Test Coordinator and Technology Coordinator Survey.
Visit ISBE’s PARCC Field Test webpage at http://www.isbe.net/assessment/parcc-field-test.htm for more announcements and resources.

**Title Grant Administration**

**Supplement vs. Supplant Considerations for FY 15**

A new e-bulletin has been posted that provides an update on the supplement not supplant provision in light of the increased flexibility in use of Title I funds made possible in FY 15 by the Illinois Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver.

The e-bulletin also addresses supplement not supplant issues as it relates to the change in employer TRS rate for TRS employees paid with federal funds. To view this e-bulletin, visit ISBE’s website at http://www.isbe.net/e-bulletins/pdf/01-14.pdf.

**Nutrition and Wellness Programs**

**HealthierUS School Challenge Curricula Reimbursement Program Opportunity**

The Request for Applications (RFA) for the HealthierUS School Challenge Curricula (HUSSC) Reimbursement Program has been extended until funding is depleted.

Fifty Team Nutrition schools, statewide will receive up to $650 to purchase approved nutrition, physical education and wellness curricula or educational software that will assist the schools in meeting the nutrition education/physical education and physical activity criteria in the HUSSC initiative.

The reimbursement program RFA is posted at www.isbe.net/funding_opps/htmls/rfp.htm. If you have questions regarding this grant, contact Joan Love at jlove@isbe.net or (217) 782-2491.

**School Business Services**

**Capital Needs Assessment Survey Distributed to Illinois School Districts**

Public Act 93-0489 requires the State Board of Education and the Capital Development Board to file a comprehensive assessment report of the capital needs of all school districts to the General Assembly every two years. Jan. 1, 2015, is the due date of the next report.

We are requesting all districts complete and submit the Capital Needs Assessment Survey. While the survey will be open until Sept. 1, 2014, we are sending it out early to afford districts the flexibility of completing the survey prior to summer recess and the startup of school in August/September. Full participation in the assessment will help ensure an accurate portrayal of the capital needs of all districts throughout the state.

On May 8, 2014, all district superintendents and regional superintendents were emailed a copy of the Capital Needs Assessment Survey along with a cover letter. If you did not receive a copy of the email, please let us know.

Additional forms, if needed, can be accessed on either the following websites: www.isbe.net/finance or www.cdb.state.il.us. Completed forms can be submitted to School Business Services, 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL 62777-0001 or by emailing finance1@isbe.net.

Further questions can be directed to School Business Services, Christine Kolaz, (217) 785-8779.

**Innovation and Improvement**

**Family Engagement Framework Guide Webinar Series Continues on May 22**

ISBE will host a webinar entitled “Rethinking the Connection: Enhancing Communication with Family, Community Stakeholders and Schools” at 3:15 p.m. on May 22. It will be focused on strengthening and building ongoing and meaningful two-way-exchanges of information with families to support student learning and healthy development. Co-facilitated by ISBE and the Academic Development Institute, the webinar will feature district and school-level practitioners representing urban, suburban and rural communities involved with elementary and high schools. Field-tested experiences, research, tools and additional resources will be shared. Register for this informative webinar at http://www.illinoisparents.org. For additional information contact Sarah Ogeto at sogeto@isbe.net.
This webinar is part of a series of webinars centered on the four principles of ISBE’s draft Family Engagement Framework Guide. Enhancing communication is one of the core ways districts and schools partner with families to build stronger and effective educational and support systems for children. The guide is a resource for schools and districts in understanding evidence-based practices identified in the guide as Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice. ISBE intends for this framework guide to strengthen and build systems to engage families in meaningful ways.

ISBE is asking for the feedback of school and district personnel, parents, community organizations and other education partners. View the draft Family Engagement Framework Guide here. Once you have viewed the framework, please click on the survey link to provide feedback. Take the survey and give us your feedback at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Lm7RyloXRNNfcY7wnrs4muwXx8SAFyv27XmbpFH3z_g/viewform.

U.S. Departments of Education and Justice

Guidance to Ensure Equal Educational Opportunity for All Children, Regardless of Immigration Status

On May 8, Secretary Arne Duncan and Attorney General Eric Holder announced updated guidance to assist public elementary and secondary schools to ensure enrollment processes are consistent with the law and fulfill their obligation to provide all children – no matter their background – equal access to an education.

In 2011, the Departments of Justice and Education issued guidance to help schools understand their responsibilities under the Supreme Court’s decision in Plyler v. Doe and federal civil rights laws to provide all children with equal access to an education regardless of their or their parents’ immigration status. The departments are issuing important updates to that guidance, including examples of permissible enrollment practices, as well as examples of the types of information that may not be used as a basis for denying a student entrance to school.

The updated guidance documents – including a guidance letter to states and school districts and a fact sheet and Q and A document – emphasize the need for flexibility in accepting documents from parents to prove a child’s age and to show that a child resides within a school’s attendance area. They also provide specific examples of the types of documents that many schools have accepted. And the guidance documents remind schools that they may not require certain documents – such as a parent’s state-issued driver’s license – where such a requirement would prevent a student from enrolling because of his or her parent’s immigration status.

In the three years since the guidance was initially issued in 2011, the departments have worked collaboratively with states and school districts across the country to meet their obligations under Plyler and federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin. The important changes announced today will provide districts with the additional tools and practical guidance needed to make sure the schoolhouse door is open to all students and that undocumented children and children from immigrant families no longer face barriers to enrollment in school and starting down the path to a better future.

To view the guidance letter in Spanish, please click here. The fact sheet and Q and A document can be viewed in Spanish here and here, respectively.

Letter Issued After Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, et al., Decision

On Tuesday, May 6, the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice issued a joint letter confirming that the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court issued on April 22, 2014, in Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, et al., leaves intact the Court’s prior holdings recognizing that institutions of higher education and elementary and secondary schools may use all legally permissible methods to achieve their diversity goals. These include, absent any restrictions in state law, appropriately tailored programs that consider the race of individual applicants as one of several factors in an individualized process to achieve the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body.

To read the letter in its entirety, go to http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201405-schuette-guidance.pdf. The letter includes links to guidance documents.
Illinois General Assembly

Special Week to Help Share Physical Therapy Career Options With Students

Lawmakers in the Illinois House of Representatives passed a resolution on April 7 designating the second week of October in 2014 as a Physical Therapy Shadow Week for high school students who are interested in learning about a career in physical therapy.

The resolution shows support for events that give students the opportunity to observe physical therapy practices throughout the state. It was sponsored by state Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia, D-Aurora. More information, including a copy of the resolution, is online here.

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, 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.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Two 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 www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.
Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education): Makes several changes, including incorporation of English development standards for English learners in preschool programs; establishing flexibility for school districts to choose the prescribed screening instrument for English learners who are in the second semester of grade 1 through 12; clarifying that transitional programs of instruction include instruction in English as a second language under Article 14C of the School Code; and modifying the deadline from July 1, 2014, to July 1, 2016, for teachers in preschool bilingual education programs to meet the requirements needed to be fully qualified to provide home language or English as a second language instruction, and requiring submission of a staffing plan for those districts unable to meet the deadline.

Public comment period ends July 14, 2014.

Part 650 (Charter Schools): Lists requirements for biennial reporting by charter school authorizers; sets forth the process for monitoring authorizers and withdrawing their power to authorize in certain circumstances; establishes standards for high-quality charter school authorizing; and states that certain forms be provided when a school board submits reports of approved applications for, revisions of or renewals for charter schools to the State Board.

Public comment period ends July 14, 2014.

In Brief

Professional Development

- Registration is open for the “Re-Connecting the Pathways: Equipping Leaders for Juvenile Justice 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 apattern@fs.fed.us or (618) 253-1031.
- Registration is underway for the 2014 Summer School Nurse Emergency Care (SNEC) courses. This three-day course is open to all registered nurses in Illinois and is designed to enhance the assessment, triaging and treatment skills of the school nurse when confronted with the acutely ill or injured student. Registration is limited. For more information and to register online, go to www.luc.edu/sneccourses.
- Econ Illinois, the Illinois Finance Learning Exchange Lead Entity, invites educators to register for a joint conference of Econ Illinois, the Missouri Council on Economic Education, and the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis called “Getting to the Core Through Economics and History: A Conference for Middle and High School Teachers in Illinois and Missouri (6-12).” This conference, scheduled to take place at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis on June 17, offers a wealth of materials and programs that will satisfy standards and engage students in exciting active lessons. Registration is free and open until June 10; reduced-rate hotel accommodations are available through May 26. For more information, visit http://www.stlouisfed.org/newsroom/events/index.cfm?id=553.

In the News

- Congratulations to Juanita Gryfinski, a school nurse administrator with St. Charles School District 303, who received an honorable mention in the Healthy Schools Campaign inaugural School Nurse Leadership Awards. Gryfinski is one of nine winners nationwide. To read more, go to http://healthyschoolscampaign.org/blog/meet-our-first-ever-school-nurse-leadership-award-winners/.
- Econ Illinois congratulates the 2014 Illinois Personal Finance Challenge Champion Team of students from Naperville Central High School who earned second place at the National Personal Finance Challenge on May 2 in St. Louis. Coached by teacher Eleanor Barbino with support from principal William Wiesbrook, this team of students took first place at Econ Illinois’ 2014 Illinois Personal Finance Challenge State Finals in April 25. The press release and photographs are on

**Employment Opportunities**

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