Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week we successfully concluded the field test for the new Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC). I thank all of you who participated in this “test of the test” to allow Illinois to put its stamp on our new assessment. Nationally, nearly 800,000 students, including 110,888 from Illinois, participated in the PARCC field testing this spring. That is a tremendous showing.

The field test was successful. While there were some minor issues, there were no systemwide problems. All technical issues that were reported were investigated and staff have been able to learn from the issues to make corrections for next year when the test is live. PARCC has received a lot of helpful feedback on logistical issues and will use that to improve the administration going forward.

As I mentioned in last week’s column, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 220, which reverses a Teachers Retirement System (TRS) Board of Trustees decision that would have lowered the federal funds contribution rate to 7.4 percent. Gov. Quinn has not yet signed SB 220 into law, but is expected to do so. TRS has determined that if SB 220 is signed into law, the contribution rate for salaries paid from federal funds will be 33 percent and the rate would be effective July 1, 2014. Please contact staff at TRS if you have questions about this issue.

On Wednesday we will partner with the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) and the Illinois Education Association (IEA) to recognize teachers from throughout Illinois whose professional organization selected them as tops in their subject areas. We will recognize these 29 outstanding teachers at the Governor’s Mansion in Springfield as part of the fourth annual Exemplary Teacher Recognition Award Luncheon. A listing of the 29 educators to be honored is below.

Have a great week!

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).*

- **Part 50 (Evaluation of Certified Employees under Articles 24A and 34 of the School Code) – Public comment period ends June 9**
• eReport Card Data Collection – June 30
• 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
• 2013-14 Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim – Aug. 15
• 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.)
• ISBE offices closed for Labor Day – Sept. 1
• ISBE offices closed for Columbus Day – Oct. 13
• ISBE offices closed for Election Day – Nov. 4
• Eighth annual Conference on Best Practices in Nonpublic Special Education Programs – Nov. 6-7 (http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/np_handouts/default.htm)

Title Grant Administration

Fiscal Year 2015 NCLB Consolidated Application Now Available in IWAS

The FY 2015 NCLB Consolidated Application is now available in IWAS. The application, including the FY 15 projected district allocations for Titles I and II-A, incorporates the following grants:

• Title I, Part A, Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged
• Title II, Part A, Teacher Quality
• Please make sure that your approval groups are properly assigned through IWAS in order to access the system and submit your application.

The start date for use of grant funds is July 1, 2014, or the date a substantially approvable application has been received by ISBE, whichever is later. The application is due no later than Nov. 5, 2014.

PLEASE NOTE:
• FY 14 carryover will be available for FY 15 applications once FY 14 final expenditure reports have been submitted.
• Title II-D, Title IV and Title V funds were not appropriated for this application for FY 15.
• We anticipate a high user volume immediately after this notice is released and applicants may experience delayed system response times. If this occurs, please try again later before calling the Helpdesk for assistance.

WEBINAR RESOURCES: A webinar will be published shortly that will guide users through the application process. A note will go out via IWAS when they are released.

If you have questions concerning Title I and Title II-A, contact your area consultant at (217) 524-4832. To confirm who your FY 15 consultant is, please go here: http://www.isbe.net/grants/pdf/nclb_pc_reg_asmt.pdf.

Funding and Disbursements Division

Important Changes in the Electronic Expenditure Reporting (EER) System

As local education agencies (LEAs) prepare to transmit June 30 expenditure reports, please be aware of the following changes to the Electronic Expenditure Reporting system accessed via IWAS (ISBE Web Application Security system).

State Programs ONLY (Revenue Codes prefixed with 3xxx):
• Expenditure Through Date Selection Screen: User will be able to choose either the current month end report or report as of the current calendar date; however, if a required quarterly report has not been transmitted, the only choice is to transmit the required report. This
change is consistent with the federal grants expenditure reporting process.

Federal and State Programs:

- LEAs will be able to include obligated payroll expenditures (e.g. staff paid on 12 month basis) on the June 30 or later report (entered as an outstanding obligation) when the project end date is after June 30 (e.g. usually August 31).
- LEAs will be able to include a commitment amount (i.e. advance) greater than the amount entered as an outstanding obligation on the June 30 or later reports. Please note that a pop-up message will appear for the user to verify that anticipated expenditures reported as a commitment amount will occur in the next month which are NOT obligated (e.g. a summer school salary that has not yet been earned).
- Administrators only: The APPROVE button has been moved to the right side of the screen.

Questions can be directed to the Division of Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

2013-14 (FY 15) Pupil Transportation Claim Reimbursement System Now Available

Please be advised that the Pupil Transportation Claim Reimbursement System (PTCRS) is now available for local education agencies to enter claim data for the 2013-14 school year. Please refer to the 2013-14 Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim Instructions which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/pupil_reimburse_instruct.pdf for assistance in completing the claim.

Please note the following changes to the claim for 2013-14:

- A new column has been added to the pupil head count page and on the mileage page titled “last year view.” This column will allow districts to compare last year’s numbers to current year numbers.
- Page 32: Vehicles can only be depreciated for a total of five years. Example: A school district leases a bus for three years. The district is permitted to claim 20 percent of the purchase price or the lease payment (whichever is less) on the depreciation schedule for those three years. At the end of the three-year lease, the district decides to purchase that same bus. The district would only be entitled to claim that bus for two more years on the depreciation schedule. The five year timeframe does not reset based on the district’s decision to purchase that bus.

Per statute, the Annual Pupil Transportation Reimbursement claim is due to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) on Aug. 15. If you have questions regarding PTCRS, please contact Jamie Johnson at jjohnson@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.

Innovation and Improvement

Family Engagement Webinar June 12; Feedback Sought on Draft Framework

More research is emerging that indicates that when parents are included in the decision making process, parental involvement increases and student outcomes improve. From 1-2 p.m. on June 12, ISBE will host a webinar exploring the research and specific strategies of ways schools and districts ensure families are involved with school improvement efforts. This interactive webinar entitled “If You Build It, They Won’t Come: Redefining Partnerships With Families,” will be co-facilitated by ISBE and the Academic Development Institute. A panel including district and school-based practitioners will highlight the challenges, strengths and opportunities of this work. Register at http://www.illinoisparents.org/.

This webinar is part of a series of webinars centered on the four principles of ISBE’s draft Family Engagement Framework Guide. Including families in the decision-making process 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. There are several tools available in the guide that include the Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice, a research and legislative review as well as a matrix highlighting how the standards align to the Eight Essential Elements of School Improvement. ISBE intends this framework guide will 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. Click on the link here to view the draft framework. Once you have viewed the framework, click on the survey link here to provide your feedback. For more information contact Sarah Ogeto at sogeto@isbe.net.

**Center for Performance**

**Join the ISBE District Data Advisory Committee (DDAC)**

In the spring of 2013, ISBE established a school District Data Advisory Committee (DDAC). The purpose of this committee is to help us improve our communication with the school districts concerning ISBE data collection systems – the Student Information System (SIS) and the Employment Information System (EIS) – on a more regular and dedicated means.

This group provides a channel for ISBE to give more timely updates, allow the ‘give and take’ of ideas for improving the systems, and for communicating all new enhancements and future revisions of the systems. The collaborative effort put forth between the DDAC and the ISBE staff helps in anticipating the impact of data collection on districts as well as identifying new methods of reducing the data collection burden.

Since the conception of the committee, this collaboration has resulted in the following enhancements/modifications.

**In EIS:**
- Non-Certified aggregate collection
- Full Time Equivalence (FTE) change
- Maximum Salary per Position
- Substitute Educators not included in collection unless considered long-term

**In SIS:**
- Immigrant Student data collection
- Special education Student data collection
- Migrant Student data collection

Currently there are about 23 committee members. We would like to have more members, many more – SIS users as well as EIS users. The committee is a valuable resource for us, but we need more members to give us input. DDAC meets at ISBE about twice a year to discuss issues, concerns and updates to the SIS and EIS systems. In addition, we try to have a few webinars each year to alert the committee of future new enhancements or revisions.

No new data collection or revisions to data collections are undertaken without first running it by the committee. The district representatives must understand the proposed changes and provide feedback to those changes. It is our goal to have data collection systems that are effective, easy to use and efficient for the school district users. Receiving thoughtful, insightful and constructive feedback from the district reps on any system or process changes will enable us to meet that goal.

If you are interested on becoming a committee member, please call (217) 782-3950 or email datahelp@isbe.net.

We will soon be scheduling another District Data Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the 2015 enhancements to EIS. We need your input!

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

**CDC Releases New Toolkit on Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools**

CDC’s new toolkit, “Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools,” helps schools make the healthy choice the easy choice for all students by ensuring access to free drinking water as an alternative to sugar-sweetened beverages before, during, and after school. The easy-to-use tool kit includes needs assessment tools, implementation strategies and evaluation guidance to improve access to drinking water as part of a healthier nutrition environment in schools.
Drinking water in place of sugar-sweetened beverages can help students stay hydrated and may improve cognitive function. Children and adolescents spend much of their time at school, and by providing access to healthier choices, students can stay healthy and ready to learn.

School health councils, nutrition services providers, principals, teachers, parents and other school staff can follow key steps and use the planning guide and resources to:

- Meet USDA Smart Snacks in School requirements to provide free drinking water in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program.
- Help make free drinking water readily available across the school campus.
- Promote water as a healthy beverage.


**Nutrition and Wellness Programs**

**Equipment Grant Funds Available to Support National School Lunch Programs**

ISBE released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grants. These grants will provide $1,318,438 to approved SFAs on a reimbursement basis to assist in purchasing equipment needed to meet the new nutritional standards as required by the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Each school food authority (SFA) participating in the federally-funded National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is eligible to submit an application for schools under their jurisdiction where not less than 50 percent of the enrolled students were eligible for free or reduced-price meals in October 2013. (If needed, refer to the FY2014 eligibility listing posted online at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/eligibility_listings.htm.)

Priority will be given to eligible SFAs 1) that did not receive equipment assistance grants in any of its schools in FY2009 or FY2010. (If needed, refer to the SFAs Previously Funded listing at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/nslp_grant.htm); 2) that demonstrate high need, i.e., are able to show schools for which they are applying are in an underserved area, have limited access to other resources/funding to purchase equipment, current equipment is outdated, non-functioning or non-existent; 3) that commit to using funds to improve the quality and safety of school meals, overall energy efficiency, and/or participation; 4) that commit to implementing strategies for adopting smarter lunchrooms; 5) whose applying schools participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP); 6) whose applying schools are self-operated and/or satellite meals to other schools participating in NSLP; and 7) whose applying schools have high free and reduced-price eligibility rates.

The grant period will run July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015, or June 30, 2016, depending on the funding source of award.

This RFP is posted on the ISBE website at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/nslp_grant.htm and the deadline to apply is June 20, 2014. Additional information on the NSLP is available at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/national_school_lunch.htm.

If you have questions regarding this grant, please email Shawn Backs at sbacks@isbe.net or Chad Martel at cmartel@isbe.net or call (217) 782-2491.

**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 … 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.

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, such as ELA Writing, Math Strategies, NGSS, Balanced Assessment, Equip Rubric, PARCC: Evidence Tables, PARCC Accommodations, Tech Apps for the classroom, Writing IEP Goals, Licensure, Teacher and Principal Evaluation, Multi-tier system of support, ELL, and Continuous Improvement.

All teachers and administrators are encouraged to attend. For more information, visit http://www.isbe.net/common_core/pdf/state-conference-0614.pdf.

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**Rules and Waivers**

**Notice of Completed Rulemaking**

Please be advised that three 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 1, 25 and 30.

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

_Affected Section: 1.705, 1.710, 1.720, 1.730, 1.735, 1.736, 1.737, 1.745, 1.755 and 1.APPENDIX A
Effective Date: May 6, 2014_

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

Effective Date: May 6, 2014_

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

_Affected Sections: 30.10, 30.40, 30.60
Effective Date: May 6, 2014_

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**Special Event**

**College Changes Everything Conference Scheduled for July 17 in Tinley Park**

Registration is under way for the 2014 College Changes Everything Conference, which is set for 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. July 17 at the Tinley Park Convention Center.

The fourth annual statewide conference focuses on the goal of increasing the proportion of adults in Illinois with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.

Attendees of the College Changes Everything Conference include high school leaders, counselors and case managers; college and university leaders and administrators; business leaders; leaders from state agencies, non-profits, and community organizations focused on educational opportunity and attainment; and elected officials and policymakers interested in higher education.

Sessions at the one-day conference will include those on student support services, retention, remediation, college readiness, career development, afterschool programs, support systems for undocumented students, students with special needs, and more.

Registration is free but space is limited. Go to http://www.collegechangeseverything.org/events/2014-cce.html for more information. Conference partners include the Illinois State Board of Education.
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Registration Underway for Upcoming ENTICE Workshops for Educators

Register for upcoming ENTICE (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) workshops from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. ENTICE workshops offer training on Illinois-specific topics and supply educators with the tools needed to implement the topic into curriculum immediately.

Participants learn from resources professionals, take part in activities and spend time outdoors (where appropriate). Continuing Professional Development Units are available at all ENTICE workshops. For workshop details and to register, visit https://www.enticeworkshops.com.

Educators throughout Illinois can obtain instant notification about new products, scheduled workshops and many other events and items from IDNR through the IDNR Division of Education's electronic list server. By participating in the list server, you will receive email messages when new educational materials are available from the IDNR. You'll also be made aware of upcoming workshops and special opportunities. To join the list, send an email to subscribe-dnr-education@lists.illinois.gov. You do not need to write any text in the message or the subject line. You may leave the list at any time by sending an email to unsubscribe-dnr-education@lists.illinois.gov. You do not need to write any text in the message or the subject line. Messages are usually titled “Items of Possible Interest” in the subject line.

In Brief

Professional Development


In the News

- Congratulations to 11th-grader Marilyn Chakkalamuri of Woodstock North High School and her English teacher Jennifer Spear. Marilyn earned an honorable mention in the essay category of the nationwide First Freedom Student Competition. Read more about the contest at http://www.firstfreedom.org/education/students.html.

Upcoming Workshops

- The Pathways Resource Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is presenting Administrator Academy #1533 “Getting the Grant: Sustaining and Growing Your STEM Programs Through Grant Funding,” 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. June 19 at the I Hotel, 1900 S. First St. in Champaign. For more information and to register, go to http://pathways.illinois.edu/?page_id=77.

Employment Opportunities

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