The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has scheduled a series of hearings this fall to gather information in preparation for its fiscal year 2016 budget recommendation. These hearings offer you and members of your communities an opportunity to share your opinions and priorities as we begin the budget development process.

The ISBE Finance and Audit Committee will host the first of five public hearings immediately following the Oct. 15 Board meeting at CityView Banquet and Meeting Center in downtown Champaign. The Board hosts these budget hearings every fall to begin the process of developing its recommendation by receiving feedback from education partners and constituents. This year, the Board is also interested in hearing from you about Senate Bill 16, legislation that was introduced this spring to change the state’s education funding formula. Testimony from the FY 2016 budget hearings with regard to SB16 will be shared with legislators and staff as they move forward.

Illinois requires state agencies to use a “Budgeting for Results” model to establish spending priorities. This year, budget hearing participants will once again be asked to align their testimony with the following:

- Outcomes: What outcomes will the funding allotment achieve?
- Measures: What are the measurable results of these outcomes?
- Value: What is the value of the outcomes?
- Historical: What outcomes have been achieved in the past?
- Moving forward: How does your organization plan to improve the value of services it provides using funding and other resources?

Those who are unable to attend one of the five public hearings are encouraged to email any guidance or feedback to ISBE at isbefy16@isbe.net. The public budget hearings for FY 2016 will be conducted at the following dates and locations:

- Oct. 15 – Immediately following Board meeting (3 to 5 p.m.) – Champaign – CityView Meeting Center, 45 E. University Ave.
- Nov. 10 – 3 to 5 p.m. – Quincy – Adams County Health Department, 330 Vermont St.
Weekly Message – State Board of Education – Oct. 6, 2014

- Nov. 12 – 5 to 7 p.m. – Round Lake – John T. Magee Middle School Cafeteria, 500 Cedar Lake Road.
- Nov. 17 – 3:45 to 5:45 p.m. – Granite City – GCHS Atrium, 3101 Madison Ave.
- Nov. 21 – Immediately following Board meeting (3 to 5 p.m.) – Chicago – Thompson Center, Conference Room 16-503, 100 W. Randolph St.

The Board will continue to work on its FY 2016 budget recommendation through its January meeting, when members will vote on their final recommendation, which will then be sent to the Governor and General Assembly for their consideration.

Later this month, we will honor more than 230 of Illinois’ outstanding educators at the 40th annual Those Who Excel/Teacher of the Year banquet in Normal. Among the educators will be the 12 Teacher of the Year finalists, one of whom will be named the top Illinois educator for 2015.

A total of 232 awards will be distributed during the Oct. 25 banquet with the following breakdown of winners:
- 64 recipients of the highest award level, Excellence
- 77 recipients of the Award of Merit
- 91 recipients of the Award of Recognition

All teachers receiving an Award of Excellence are among the 12 finalists for the 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year. Pam Reilly, a second-grade teacher at Woodbury Elementary School in Sandwich Community Unit School District 430, was named the 2014 Illinois Teacher at last year’s banquet.

We have also recently launched a new Those Who Excel webpage at www.isbe.net/those-who-excel/default.htm, which includes the latest news about the award program. You can also access a list of local recipients by county directly at www.isbe.net/those-who-excel/2015/Those-Who-Excel-2014-15.pdf.

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.

- ISBE offices closed for Columbus Day – Oct. 13
- Great Central U.S. ShakeOut – Oct. 16 (www.shakeout.org/centralus/)
- Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 26 (Endorsements in Early Childhood Education and in Elementary Education) and Part 375 (Student Records) – Public comment period ends Oct. 20
- FY 2015 Supplemental General State Aid Plan deadline – Oct. 30
- Nomination deadline for U.S. Presidential Scholar Program – Oct. 31 (www.ed.gov/psp)
- FY 2015 School District Budget/Joint Agreement Forms – Must be submitted to ISBE no later than Oct. 31 (http://www.isbe.net/sfms/budget/default.htm)
- Registration deadline for the Eighth Annual Conference on Best Practices in Nonpublic Special Education Programs – Nov. 1 (www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/np_handouts/default.htm)
- Special Education Summer School claim deadline – Nov. 3
- 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)
- Deadline to complete all revisions to the Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim – Nov. 10
- ISBE offices closed for Veterans Day – Nov. 11
- Deadline to complete the 2014-15 Unfilled Positions Survey in IWAS – Nov. 13
- Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet deadline – Nov. 14 (www.isbe.net/sfms/AdminCaps/AdminCaps.htm)
- Part 425 (Voluntary Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Schools) – Public comment period ends Nov. 17
- Green Ribbon Schools Award applications due – Nov. 19 (www.isbe.net/green_ribbon/pdfs/green-ribbon-app-14-15.pdf)
- School District Library Grant program deadline – Nov. 21 (www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/grants/schoolpercapgrant.html)
- ISBE offices closed for Thanksgiving – Nov. 27-28
- FY 2015 NCLB Monitoring Instrument – Nov. 30
- FY 2015 NCLB Title I Comparability Analysis – Nov. 30
- Deadline to enter the 2015 Illinois Arts Education Week Poster Contest – Dec. 2 (www.isbe.net/arts-week/default.htm)
- Annual Statement of Affairs (ISBE 50-37) – To be filed with ISBE by Dec. 15 (http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afir/asp.htm)
- ISBE offices closed for Christmas Day – Dec. 25
- Deadline to submit written opt-out petition to regional superintendent of schools for Summer Food Service Program mandate (Public Act 096-0734) – Jan. 15
- Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in spring 2015 – Friday, Jan. 16, 2015 (See http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) testing window – March 23-May 1
- 2015 Illinois Arts Education Week – March 16-22

**Educator Licensure**

**General Administrative Endorsement No Longer Available to be Issued**

The General Administrative endorsement is no longer available to be issued as of Sept. 1, 2014.

Any educator who already holds the General Administrative endorsement will continue to hold the endorsement and be able to serve in the same roles as before. ISBE is not taking the General Administrative endorsement away from any educator who already holds the endorsement or the ability to serve in the positions that required the General Administrative endorsement.
After Sept. 1, those wishing to become a principal or an assistant principal who do not hold the General Administrative endorsement will have to earn the Principal endorsement.

**Funding and Disbursement**

**Correction Period Open for Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claims**

The correction period for fiscal year 2015 (2013-14 school year) annual claims for Pupil Transportation Reimbursement is now open.

All local education entities are hereby notified that the review and amendment (if needed) process is open and will end at midnight on Nov. 10. All revisions to the Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim must be completed and transmitted on or before midnight on Nov. 10. No revisions will be accepted after this date in order to close the claim file and schedule the three remaining quarterly payments.

Instructions for reviewing the claim are as follows:

1. Log into the ISBE Web Application Security system (IWAS).
2. Click on “System Listing” on the IWAS homepage.
3. Select "Pupil Transportation Claim Reimbursement System" under the "Annual Claims" heading.
4. Click on "Review Claim" under the "Reimbursement Claim" heading on the homepage. Do not click on "Revise Claim" button unless you need to make revisions.
5. The claim will be loaded to the screen in read-only format. Carefully review each line on the claim for possible revisions. If you entered transportation assets on the Depreciation Schedule, don't forget to click on the "Depreciation Schedule" button at the bottom of the screen and review the depreciation schedule data for possible revisions.

If you do not have revisions, you do not need to do anything. Your claim will remain as originally submitted by the statutory Aug. 15 due date.

If you have reviewed the claim and found that revisions are needed to the depreciation schedule and/or the pupil transportation reimbursement claim:

1. Click on the "Revise Claim" link under the "Reimbursement Claim" heading on the homepage.
2. You may enter notes in the "Your Comments" text box to help you remember why revisions were needed. Click on the "Revise Claim" button at the bottom of the screen to proceed with revisions to the depreciation schedule (if needed) and the pupil transportation reimbursement claim.
3. Note that all links for the reimbursement claim are open and may be revised as needed. The "Depreciation Schedule Summary" link under the "Depreciation Schedule" heading has been changed to "Calculate Depreciation Allowance." If you made any changes to transportation assets after the August submit date, you must click on this link and update the Depreciation Schedule.
4. After all revisions have been made, click on the "Review & Submit Claim." All revised claims must be resubmitted to ISBE through the proper channels (document author to the district superintendent and district superintendent to ISBE.)

**No revisions to the claim will be accepted after midnight on Nov. 10.**

If you have questions regarding the amendment process, contact Jamie Johnson via telephone at (217) 782-5256 or via email at jjohnson@isbe.net.

**Special Education Summer School State Aid Claim Due to ISBE Nov. 3**

The Special Education Summer School claim authorized under Section 18-4.3 is statutorily required to be received by ISBE on or before Nov. 3. Claims are for eligible students educated in 2014 summer programs and must be filed electronically via ISBE’s Web Application Security System (IWAS). No claims will be accepted or honored after the statutory date.

Eligibility requirements for pupils claimed for summer school are:
1. The pupil must be enrolled in one or more courses offered for at least 60 clock hours in the summer session.
2. The pupil must be eligible pursuant to the requirements for continued summer school services per his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP).
3. There shall not be a tuition charge to families to insure a "free, appropriate public education."

Questions regarding completion of the Special Education Summer School claim should be directed to Jodi Whitlow, Division of Funding and Disbursement Services, at (217) 782-5256 or jwhitlow@isbe.net.

**FY 2015 Supplemental General State Aid Plans Due to ISBE Oct. 30**

Per Section 18-8.05(H)(3) of the School Code, school districts with an average daily attendance of more than 1,000 are required to submit a Supplemental General State Aid (SGSA) plan to ISBE on or before Oct. 30.

The SGSA plan shall include the identification of strategies for the improvement of instruction that give priority to meeting the educational needs of low-income students, i.e., students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 USC 1771 et seq.) or the National School Lunch Act (42 USC 1751 et seq.)

The SGSA plan for qualifying districts must be filed electronically via the ISBE IWAS system. The SGSA system is now open for fiscal year 2015. Critical information is pre-populated for each district. A brief narrative is required along with a budget breakdown of the SGSA funds. SGSA funds may be expended in various ways but must primarily benefit disadvantaged, low-income students who generate the district funding without supplanting other funds already in place.

Questions regarding completion of the Supplemental General State Aid plan should be directed to Ethelene Ferdinand, Division of Funding and Disbursement Services, at (217) 782-5256 or eferdina@isbe.net.

**Preliminary FY 2015 Mandated Categorical Prorations Available**

The first-quarter mandated categorical program payments for fiscal year 2015 were processed to the Office of the Comptroller on Sept. 24. Claims for special education personnel, private facility, transportation and regular/vocational transportation will be opened to local education agencies (LEAs) for correction in October.

After all LEA corrections are processed, final proration and remaining quarterly payments will be calculated in December.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>FY 15 Preliminary Proration</th>
<th>FY 14 Final Proration</th>
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**Federal Interest Income 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
Interest should be returned using the following guidelines:

- Checks for interest earned should be made payable to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).
- Checks should not include the return of unexpended disbursements from ISBE. Even though unexpended disbursements and interest payments are made payable to ISBE, 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.

**Data Analysis and Accountability**

**2014-15 Unfilled Positions Survey Now Available in IWAS for Data Entry**

The 2014-15 Unfilled Positions Survey is now available in IWAS for data entry. The deadline for completing the survey and submitting it to ISBE is Nov. 13.

Districts are to report the number of budgeted positions they were unable to fill as of Oct. 1, 2014. All districts that hire staff are required to complete the survey, even districts that did not have any unfilled positions.

To avoid duplicating unfilled positions reported by public school districts, other reporting entities (e.g., special education cooperatives) should only report their unfilled employee positions.

Questions about the survey content may be directed to Jim Sweeney at jsweeney@isbe.net or Marjurie Ribeiro at mribeiro@isbe.net.

Call the Call Center at (217) 558-3600 for technical issues or questions about your IWAS account.

**2014-15 Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report in IWAS**

The Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report for the 2014-15 school year is available in IWAS through Nov. 15.

Completed reports must be received by ISBE no later than Nov. 15. (Effective Jan. 26, 2012, the nonpublic school registration renewal deadline in state rules, i.e., 23 Illinois Administrative Code 425.20, was changed from Dec. 31 to Nov. 15.)

Nonpublic school registration is voluntary and annual. Nonpublic schools that have registered with ISBE at least once in the past must submit their data online via IWAS. All eligible schools should receive IWAS inbox messages regarding the Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report. Please check your IWAS inbox for reminders and updates.

Nonpublic schools that have never registered with ISBE must submit their data using the paper form 87-01 that is available at www.isbe.net/research/htmls/np_entity.htm.

Public district administrators should communicate with nonpublic school administrators within their district boundaries and encourage them to submit registration, enrollment and staff data. A portion of the public district funding allocation calculated for the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) uses nonpublic enrollment data that are reported voluntarily by nonprofit elementary and secondary schools.

Nonpublic schools seeking recognition must submit their Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report before they can apply for recognition. Refer to the following link for more information: www.isbe.net/career/html/np_recognition.htm.

For questions related to the registration, contact ISBE’s Data Analysis and Accountability Division at (217) 782-3950.

For technical assistance, contact the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.
School Business Services

Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet Due to ISBE Nov. 14

Section 17-1.5 of the School Code requires school districts to limit the growth of “administrative” expenditures to a maximum of 5 percent from one fiscal year to the next. School districts must file the Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet with the ISBE’s School Business Services Division by Nov. 14.

A blank Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet is available on ISBE’s website at www.isbe.net/sfms/AdminCaps/AdminCaps.htm.

Additionally, the Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet is included in the Illinois School District Annual Financial Report – June 30, 2014 (ISBE 50-35). If a completed Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet is submitted along with the school district’s Annual Financial Report, a separate worksheet does not have to be submitted. Please note that the worksheet included in the School District Budget Form July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015 (ISBE 50-36) is a working document for local use only and will not be accepted for official submission of the Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet.

Submitted Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheets will be reviewed to ensure figures match to the district’s submitted School District Budget Form July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015 (ISBE 50-36) and the district’s submitted Annual Financial Report – June 30, 2014 (ISBE 50-35). Inaccurate Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheets will be returned to districts for correction.

Districts exceeding the limitation may amend their budgets prior to June 30, 2015, to become in compliance with the limitation. Districts unable to amend their budgets would have to waive the limitation in order to become compliant. School districts with administrative expenditures in the 25th percentile or below (fourth quartile) may waive the limitation following a public hearing and with the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the school board. Any district waiving the limitation shall notify ISBE within 45 days of such action. If a school district that is ineligible to waive the limitation by board action exceeds the limitation solely because of circumstances beyond the control of the district, and the district has exhausted all available and reasonable remedies to comply with the limitation, the district may request a waiver from the General Assembly pursuant to Section 2-3.25g of the School Code. Procedures for requesting a waiver in accordance with Section 2-3.25g of the School Code can be found at www.isbe.net/ibsewaivers/default.htm.

Quartile rankings for all school districts and a sample waiver resolution for qualifying districts can be found at www.isbe.net/sfms/AdminCaps/AdminCaps.htm.

If you have any questions, contact Michelle Heninger, School Business Services Division, at (217) 785-8779 or mheninge@isbe.net.

School Health Issues

School Compliance with Mandatory Health Exams and Vaccinations for Students

Students entering certain grades are required to obtain health examinations and immunizations, with few exceptions. Any student who does not have the required health examination or required vaccinations completed and proof submitted to the school, without valid exemption, must be excluded from school after Oct. 15 until those requirements are met.

Some school districts have established earlier exclusion dates, by which those students must have met those requirements or remain excluded from school. Parents, as well as school districts, are subject to sanctions being imposed on them for not meeting those requirements. Parents who do not comply nor have valid exemptions are subject to the penalties imposed by the state’s compulsory attendance laws; school districts that do not enforce the requirements are subject to sanction against the school by ISBE.

The only valid exemptions recognized in Illinois are for:

1. Parental objection to any exam or immunization based on religious beliefs
2. Medical exemption due to health condition verified by the physician
3. Medical schedule written by the health care provider based on medical reason for
not being able to be given the required immunization by the exclusion date
4. Verified homeless status
5. Transfer from out of state with an extension up to 30 days

No other exemptions or reasons for noncompliance are recognized in Illinois. This requirement pertains to all students in all Illinois schools, both public and private, at all required grade levels.

Reminder: Last year’s temporary shortage of Tdap vaccine is not in effect this year and no exemptions are allowable based on a health-care provider’s temporary lack of supply.

**Legal Division**

**New Website Explains ISBE's Educator Misconduct Project**

The Educator Misconduct Project encompasses tenured teacher dismissals, review of licensure applications with impediments, automatic disqualification/revocation of licenses, investigations of misconduct by licensed educators and actions to suspend or revoke licenses.

ISBE has recently released a webpage at [www.isbe.net/EMP/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/EMP/default.htm) that explains the project and includes project statistics and the Orders for Licensure Sanctions issued by the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board (SEPLB) or State Superintendent Koch. There is also a complaint form (optional) that can be used to file a complaint about a licensed educator and a designated email address for complaints at reportmisconduct@isbe.net.

**Special Education Services**

**8th Annual Conference on Best Practices in Nonpublic Special Education Programs**

Registration for the annual Conference on Best Practices in Nonpublic Special Education Programs is now open. The conference will be held Nov. 6-7 at the Hilton Oak Lawn.

Joshua Schneider is the keynote speaker for Nov. 6 and will kick off the conference with a talk on “Embracing Change and Helping Others Adapt.”

Breakout sessions will review the latest in special education trends, school program and policy sessions, services, legal issues, public perspectives and the latest in clinical updates. Nonpublic administrators, other leaders in the field of education, researchers and ISBE staff will lead the sessions.

This year’s conference will feature a social event sponsored by the Illinois Association of Private Special Education Centers (IAPSEC) and the National Association of Private Special Education Centers (NAPSEC).

The conference rate is $150 and includes two days of keynotes, breakout sessions, meals, networking, a mobile application and the social event. Registration closes Nov. 1. The registration page is available at [www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed np_handouts/default.htm](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed np_handouts/default.htm). If you have questions, please contact npconf@isbe.net.

**ISELA Sponsoring Fall Conferences**

The Illinois Special Education Leadership Academy (ISELA) is sponsoring fall drive-around conferences presented by Dr. George M. Batsche titled “Implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) within a Multi-tiered System of Supports: An Integrated Approach to Teaching and Learning.”

For more information and/or to register for a conference, please go to [www.bhased.org](http://www.bhased.org).

Once at the site, click on “SELA 2014-15 Events & Registration,” choose the event and location from the calendar of events, complete the online registration form and pay by credit card online.

**Nutrition and Wellness Programs**

**Webinar on HealthierUS School Challenge Scheduled for Oct. 23**


Smarter Lunchrooms is the focus of the newly revised HealthierUS School Challenge criteria for 2014. The HUSSC: SL is a voluntary certification initiative recognizing those schools enrolled in Team Nutrition.
that have created healthier school environments through promotion of nutrition and physical activity. The USDA recently revised the criteria to include the Smarter Lunchroom Self-Assessment Scorecard.

Attend this webinar to learn more about the changes to the application and the new criteria. Additionally, learn about the modifications to the nutrition education requirements for schools, as well as tips and resources to help you complete all areas of the HUSSC application.

- HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchrooms webinar
- Date: Oct. 23
- Time: 2 to 3 p.m.
- Sponsor: ISBE’s Division of Nutrition and Wellness Programs and Illinois Action for Healthy Kids
- Register: [https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/395769057](https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/395769057)

### Summer Breakfast and/or Lunch Program Mandate for Summer School Programs

Public Act 096-0734 (amends Public Act 095-0155) amends Section 20 of the Childhood Hunger Relief Act (105 ILCS 126/20). This amendment requires a school district to implement a summer breakfast and/or lunch program for the duration of the summer school program in all schools where 50 percent or more of the student population is eligible for free or reduced-price meals AND that have a summer school program. This amendment applies to all schools that meet the above criteria, including those schools not currently participating in any federal child nutrition program.

The legislation, along with question and answers, is posted at [www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/summer.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/summer.htm) under “Regulations and Policies.” It is also posted on ISBE’s National School Lunch Program webpage at [www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/national_school_lunch.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/national_school_lunch.htm) under “Public Act 096-0734 – Summer Food Service Program.”

Staff from the Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division is available at (800) 545-7892 or (217) 782-2491 for technical assistance with reimbursement or program operations.

### Green Ribbon Schools

#### Green Schools Application Now Available

Applications are now available for the U.S. Department of Education’s Green Ribbon Schools Award program, recognizing schools that are leading the way to promote sustainability and environmental education. ISBE will accept applications from schools that have integrated best practices in energy, water and waste management, healthy school environments and environmental education.

School districts with fewer than 200,000 students may select one school for which they submit an application. School districts with more than 200,000 students may select two schools for which they submit applications. Additionally, a district may apply as a district rather than selecting an individual school.

Applications are available on ISBE’s website at [www.isbe.net/green_ribbon/pdfs/green-ribbon-app-14-15.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/green_ribbon/pdfs/green-ribbon-app-14-15.pdf), and must be submitted online or to the Springfield ISBE office by 5 p.m. Nov. 19.

Illinois will announce its winners in late December. Applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel of individuals with expertise in the field of environmental science. Those applicants with the highest scores will be forwarded to compete in the U.S. Department of Education’s Green Ribbon Schools program. The U.S. Department of Education will announce its winners in April 2015, followed by an award ceremony in Washington, D.C.

### U.S. Department of Education


The U.S. Department of Education, through its Office for Civil Rights (OCR), has released guidance in the form of a “Dear Colleague” letter to ensure that students have equal access to educational resources. The guidance provides detailed and concrete information to educators on the standards established by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The guidance is one part of President Barack Obama’s larger equity agenda and takes into account the ongoing efforts of states, school districts and schools to improve equity. All students – regardless of race,
color, national origin or ZIP code – deserve a high-quality education that includes resources such as academic and extracurricular programs, strong teaching, technology and instructional materials and safe school facilities.

The guidance is directed to all federal fund recipients that oversee or operate elementary and secondary education programs, including state and local superintendents, school board members, principals and other education officials. It will help educators, parents, students and advocates understand how OCR addresses resource equity in our nation’s schools. The guidance builds upon the resource equity guidance issued by the Department in 2001.

To read the new “Dear Colleague” letter and related materials, please visit www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/resourcecomparability.html.

**Federal and State Monitoring**

**NCLB Monitoring Instrument and NCLB Title I Comparability**

The fiscal year 2015 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Monitoring Instrument is now available for completion and submission in the IWAS system. The due date is Sunday, Nov. 30.

All districts receiving NCLB funding are required to submit the document every year. As before, the previous year’s information will be imported to the document, and the district should ensure its accuracy before submitting. Each “Comment/Proof Indicator” will need to have a comment that identifies the documents that support your answers or clarifies your “yes,” “no” or “N/A” response. You will not be able to submit the form without providing an answer in each box. There are additional validation and status questions that will require your attention. The form has changed in conjunction with the NCLB waiver approval concerning Supplemental Educational Services (SES)/Choice and other NCLB components that were previously required.

There is a sample list of proof indicators on the Federal and State Monitoring website at www.isbe.net/ea/pdf/proof-indicators.pdf. We have also added two new training presentations that were used at the recent Title I Directors’ Conference addressing “How to prepare for an audit/monitoring visit” and “Updates on the changes to the Super Circular,” as well as “Time and Effort” documentation requirements.

The Title I Comparability analysis is now available for completion and submission in the IWAS system. There are new adjustments to how districts complete their analysis this year.

For those that were not able to attend the Title I Director’s Conference in Springfield, we have posted the training video on our website that explains the changes in the FY 2015 Comparability application and how to submit the form. The video is approximately 33 minutes in length. However, you may fast-forward to the portions that are of most concern to you and repeat them as many times as you like.

Districts that are “exempt” will continue to select the “Exempt” radio button and then “Submit.” Their submittal requirements will have been met when the superintendent submits it.

An updated “Comparability User’s Guide” for FY 2015 is located on the menu bar of the comparability application and on our Federal and State Monitoring website.

All districts receiving Title I funds must complete the document. Failure to comply will result in frozen program funds and a recovery of expenditures of Title I funds in buildings where they are determined to be non-comparable.

If you have questions concerning the Title I Comparability or the Monitoring Instrument, contact Paul Williams, Federal and State Monitoring, at (217) 782-7970 or pwilliam@isbe.net.

**Rules and Waivers**

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

A set of proposed amendments recently reviewed by ISBE is available for public comment. The proposal has been posted on the agency’s website at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.
Part 425 (Voluntary Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Schools): Places in rules the requirement for nonpublic schools to submit proof of nonprofit status when registering with the State Board; clarifies that only nonpublic schools supported wholly or in part by public funds shall be required to have students recite the Pledge of Allegiance; amends requirements for school employees to show freedom from tuberculosis to conform to changes in the rules for tuberculosis control (Illinois Department of Public Health); and in response to P.A. 98-663, effective June 23, 2014, adds the requirement for recognized nonpublic schools to hold an annual meeting for review of their emergency and crisis response plans, to conform the rules to changes in the School Safety Drill Act [105 ILCS 128].

Public comment period ends Nov. 17, 2014.

In Brief

Professional Development

- A free Half Day Conference for the Care of School Age Children is being sponsored by Advocate Children’s Hospital in Oak Lawn on Oct. 28, from 7:30 a.m. to noon. Continuing education units are available. For program content or to register, call (855) 312-KIDS.
- The Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (IAHPERD) state convention will be held Nov. 20-21 at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles. All health and physical education teachers, as well as others interested in promoting physical development and health, can register by clicking here.
- The 2014 annual conference of the Illinois Association of School Nurses (IASN) will be held on Oct. 24-25 in Rockford. The conference is open to registered nurses with an Illinois Professional Educator’s License in school nursing as well as registered nurses working in schools and communities. The brochure is available for download at www.iasn.org.

Educator Opportunities

- The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Division of Education and the Illinois Conservation Foundation in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife program are offering a Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant program. Teachers and youth group leaders may receive up to $1,000 for natural resources projects. For more information and to access the application form, go to http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/grants.htm. The application deadline is Nov. 30.
- IDNR is offering a “virtual” trip for late-elementary school teachers, students and their parents. Wild Illinois History helps students in grades 3-5 focus on early French exploration, along with river and settlement geography. Teachers also get access to lesson plans, activities, photos, posters and correlations to the Illinois Learning Standards. Try it out at www.wildillinois.org/. For more information, contact Bob Bluett, IDNR wildlife diversity coordinator, at (217) 782-7580 or bob.bluett@illinois.gov.

Student Opportunities

- Applications for the 20th annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards for middle school and high school youth volunteers are available online at http://spirit.prudential.com. The application deadline is Nov. 4. Paper application forms are available by calling (877) 525-8491. The awards are sponsored by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

District Opportunities

- The National Center for Urban School Transformation is seeking eligible elementary, middle, high and alternative schools for its 2015 National Excellence in Urban Education Award program. The criteria and award application are available at www.ncust.org. The application deadline is Nov. 14.

Employment Opportunities

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