Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Steven Elza, an automotive technology teacher at William Fremd High School in Township High School District 211 (THSD 211), has been named our 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year. Steve, one of 12 finalists, was chosen as this year’s top educator in Normal Saturday night at our 40th annual Those Who Excel banquet.

Steve is a role model for his students, colleagues and people thinking about a career as a teacher. His pathway into teaching, including his experience in being mentored, is an important story for others to hear. As a career technical educator, he also is able to provide insights into the preparation of students for high-paying and rewarding careers.

A graduate of Southern Illinois University with a Bachelor of Science in automotive technology, Steve also holds two Master of Education degrees from Southern and has earned numerous other certifications. Steve’s automotive technology program has achieved National Automotive Technician Education Foundation certification. THSD 211 is the first high school district in the state to have all of its schools achieve this distinction. Only 4 percent of all high schools in the United States achieve this certification. Additionally, Steve has led students to multiple state and national competitions, where his students have earned hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships and materials.

Last year’s Teacher of the Year was Pam Reilly, a second-grade teacher at Woodbury Elementary School in Sandwich CUSD 430.

This year, there were more than 230 nominations for Those Who Excel. Principals, faculty, parents and students submit letters on behalf of candidates as part of the nomination process.

As Illinois Teacher of the Year, Steve will have opportunities to share his knowledge and expertise outside the classroom. Beginning in the 2015 spring semester, Steve will be available to speak at teaching workshops, educational conferences and community meetings. He will represent Illinois at the NASA Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala., and in the National Teacher of the Year program sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers and ING. Steve will also receive products from SMARTer Kids.
You can find out more information about the Teacher of the Year and Those Who Excel at www.isbe.net/those-who-excel/default.htm.

As we move forward into the school year, there continue to be a number of questions about the new assessment we will be administering next spring – the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). We have developed a number of resources you can use when communicating with your communities. These can be accessed at www.isbe.net/hot-topics.htm?col2=open#CollapsiblePanel12.

I know some of you have already received questions from parents who would like their children to be able to opt out of taking the test. Opting out of PARCC is not an option.

Schools receiving Title I funds are legally obligated by federal law – specifically, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) – to participate in the state’s academic assessment of all designated students.

To assist school districts that receive requests from parents who want to opt their child out of taking the PARCC assessment, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has made available a two-page, comprehensive letter addressed to parents explaining the reasons why school districts in Illinois are using PARCC, the many benefits of PARCC and the federal law that requires districts to conduct academic assessment of all students.

School districts are welcome to use this letter as they see fit. It is available at www.isbe.net/regionaloffices/word/parcc-opt-out-family-ltr.docx.

Thanks,
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.

- **FY 2015 Supplemental General State Aid Plan deadline** – Oct. 30
- **Deadline for districts to complete learning conditions survey form** – Oct. 31 (www.surveymonkey.com/s/ISBELearningConditions)
- **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
- **Deadline to submit No Child Left Behind performance report** – 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)
- Biennial Preschool for All Administrators’ Forum – Nov. 7 (http://ec.thecenterweb.org/site)
- 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
- Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data – Immunization system – 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)
- Extended deadline for districts to submit plans for an alternate learning conditions survey – Nov. 27 (www.surveymonkey.com/s/ISBELearningConditions)
- 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/afr/asp.htm)
- Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois) – Public comment period ends Dec. 15
- 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.)
- TECH 2015 application deadline – Feb. 3 (www.iceberg.org/tech_2015)
- Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) testing window – March 23-May 1
- 2015 Illinois Arts Education Week – March 16-22
- TECH 2015 student showcase – May 7
- Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data – Vision system - June 30

**Center for Performance**

**Extended Deadline to Submit 2015 Survey of Learning Conditions Administration Plans**

As stated in last week’s newsletter, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will again administer a survey of learning conditions (the Illinois 5Essentials Survey) this year. Districts are asked to provide their plans to take the 5Essentials or an alternate survey via an online response form at www.surveymonkey.com/s/ISBELearningConditions.

ISBE received feedback from districts, stating that our previous suggested deadline of Oct. 31 to submit and obtain the responses was not realistic if districts wish to take an alternate survey, as doing so requires signatures from both the school board and teachers union. We value your feedback. The response deadline is still Oct. 31, but in order to give districts more time to obtain the signatures necessary to take an alternative survey, we are offering the following accommodation.
If your district chooses to participate in an alternate survey but fails to submit your response to ISBE by Oct. 31, your district will automatically be enrolled in the 5Essentials survey as previously explained. However, if ISBE receives the response after Oct. 31 but before Thanksgiving (Nov. 27), we will allow enrollment in the alternate survey of your choice. Your district will continue to receive 5Essentials survey emails and updates, as if your district were taking the 5Essentials, but disregard those updates and continue preparation for administering the alternative survey you selected.

Teachers, students and parents can take the 5Essentials survey any time between Jan. 12 and March 13, 2015. The survey will be required for all districts that did not participate in last year’s survey and all Race to the Top districts. The survey will also be available at no cost for school districts that participated in the 2014 survey.

ISBE hopes that this deadline extension will better accommodate districts that wish to administer an alternative survey. We again appreciate your feedback and look forward to a successful third year administering the survey of learning conditions.

Applications Now Available for Annual TECH 2015 Student Showcase in May

Applications are now being accepted for the annual TECH 2015 student showcase on May 7, 2015, at the Illinois State Capitol building.

TECH 2015 is a not-for-profit initiative supported by a broad range of education and business organizations. Its purpose is twofold – to raise awareness of the critical role technology plays in preparing students to succeed in today’s world and show the need for increased funding for classroom technology.

All state schools are invited to apply. Selected schools will send a team of two or three students to Springfield, accompanied by one teacher or administrator. Each team will share a classroom project with state legislators from approximately 12:30 to 3 p.m. at the Capitol.

For more information about TECH 2015 and to apply, visit the TECH 2015 website at www.iceberg.org/tech_2015. Applications will be accepted through Feb. 3, 2015.

Assessment

ACCESS for ELLs Materials Available To Order for 2014-15 School Year

The window for ordering ACCESS for English language learners (ELLs) materials for the current school year ends Nov. 16, 2014.

Ordering instructions will be sent out via email by the ACCESS material vendor, MetriTech, shortly before the beginning of the ordering window. Please ensure that MetriTech has current email addresses for staff in your district who will be involved in the ordering process. To update MetriTech’s contact database, simply call their main number at (800) 747-4868 and ask for Customer Service.

Pre-ID labels for the ACCESS tests will be generated from student data in the state’s Student Information System (SIS) and sent along with the materials. However, ACCESS materials must be ordered from MetriTech. The deadline for updating Pre-ID label information in SIS is Nov. 7 at 4 p.m.

Every student identified as an English learner is required to participate in ACCESS testing. If you have questions about ACCESS testing, contact Barry Pedersen at (866) 317-6034.

Data Analysis and Accountability

2014-15 Immunization/Health Examination Data Collection Now Available in IWAS

The Student Health Data – Immunization system is now available in IWAS for the 2014-15 school year data submission. Student data must be reported on the status of all students as of Oct. 15 in all grades serving in the school and submitted to ISBE no later than Nov. 17, 2014.

Below are important links to reference when submitting your data. The links are available at www.isbe.net/research/htmls/immunization.htm#immu.
• Student Health Data – Immunization System – IWAS: https://sec1.isbe.net/iwas/asp/login.asp?js=true
• Immunization Data Entry Worksheet: http://www.isbe.net/research/xls/immunization_worksheet.xlsx
• How to Calculate Actual Unduplicated Count of Students: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/UnduplicatedCount.pdf
• Immunizations and Compliance with State Law: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/immunization_requirements.pdf

A report must be submitted for every eligible school, without exception. Schools that are not the home school for any student should submit the report by selecting the option that allows them to declare they have no data to report. All eligible schools should receive IWAS inbox messages regarding the Student Health Data –Immunization data collection. Please check your IWAS inbox for reminders and updates.

Please share this information with school nurses, health technicians and individuals responsible for submitting your immunization/health examination data to ISBE. For data entry assistance, contact ISBE’s Data Analysis and Accountability Division at (217) 782-3950. For school health issues, contact Jessica Gerdes, ISBE principal consultant and school nurse, at (312) 814-5560. For technical assistance, please contact ISBE’s Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

2014-15 Eye Examination Data Collection Now Available in IWAS

The Student Health Data – Vision system is now available in IWAS for the 2014-15 school year data submission. All students in kindergarten and any student enrolled for the first time in an Illinois school as of Oct. 15, 2014, must have their data reported. Completed reports must be received by ISBE no later than June 30, 2015.

Below are links to important related documents available at www.isbe.net/research/htmls/immunization.htm#eyes. Please use them for assistance with submitting your data.

• Eye Examination Data Entry Worksheet: www.isbe.net/research/xls/eye_exam_wksht.xls
• School Eye Examinations – Information Sheet: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/eye_examinations.pdf

A report must be submitted for every eligible school, without exception. Schools that are not the home school for any student should submit the report by selecting the option that allows them to declare they have no data to report. This option may also be selected by home schools that do not serve kindergarten students and had no students in grades 1 through 12 enrolling for the first time in an Illinois school. All eligible schools should receive IWAS inbox messages regarding Student Health Data –Vision data collection. Please check your IWAS inbox for reminders and updates.

Please share this information with school nurses, health technicians and individuals responsible for submitting your eye examination data to ISBE. For questions related to the data entry, contact ISBE’s Data Analysis and Accountability Division at (217) 782-3950. For technical assistance, contact the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

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 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois): Aligns Part 30 to the requirements of P.A. 98-917, effective Aug. 15, 2014, regarding the requirements for selection of candidates
for principal preparation programs; includes a technical change to cross-reference the rules for the new superintendent endorsement found in Part 25.

Public comment period ends Dec. 15, 2014.

**English Language Learning**

**Free One-Day Workshop on Differentiating Instruction for English Learners**

Registration is still open for a free one-day workshop about differentiating instruction for English learners. The “English Language Development Standards in Action: Differentiation Workshop” is scheduled for Nov. 19 in Springfield.

English language learners (ELLs) need instruction that is differentiated for their diverse proficiency levels. Participants will collaborate on how to customize instruction for ELLs utilizing World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) tools while taking academic language into consideration. This workshop is appropriate for classroom teachers, English language specialists, administrators, curriculum development specialists and support staff who are familiar with WIDA standards.

Participants will be able to:

- Define what language differentiation means in the instruction and assessment of ELLs.
- Describe how scaffolds and supports engage ELLs at various levels in the language and content of a lesson.
- Describe how content, product, process, and environment are taken into account for language differentiation.
- Describe the relationship between proficiency level and domain in differentiation.

Please visit the “Professional Development Opportunities At-a-Glance” at [www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/prof-dev.htm](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/prof-dev.htm) for other free 2014-15 workshops related to English learners. Email Sonia Serrano at sserrano@isbe.net to register.

**School Health Issues**

**IDPH Issues Ebola Guidance for Schools**

The possibility of a school student or staff member or visitor having the infectious disease Ebola is exceedingly rare, and measures have been put in place to identify such carriers at entry points to this state and country.

However, because the possibility of transmission of any virus found in bodily fluids exists, ISBE is issuing this reminder that all schools should follow safe infection control measures and use personal protective equipment (gloves, masks and gowns) when handling any bodily fluids.

Although ISBE staff members stand ready to assist schools with the threat of this disease, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is the lead agency regarding infectious diseases that pose a public health threat. Schools should follow recommendations from their state and local health departments related to prevention, protection, isolation, exclusion and any other measures related to this disease.

**ISBE and IDPH Provide Posters About Mandatory Disease-Reporting to Schools**

IDPH and ISBE recently partnered to send each school and district office a poster listing the infectious diseases that must be reported to the state health department.

This poster, titled “STOP and Report Infectious Disease,” should be readily available to school nurses (registered nurses) who are mandated as health care providers to report a specific disease a student or staff member may have. Both suspected and confirmed cases must be reported.

While the poster does not include specific reference to either Ebola or enterovirus D68, both fall into the classification of “unusual case or cluster of cases that may indicate a public health hazard.” Therefore, reporting is required by authority of the state of Illinois and the Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 690). Suspected or confirmed cases of Ebola are required to be reported “immediately” (defined as within three hours) to the local health department where the diagnosis is originating. Mandated reporters include health care providers, hospitals and laboratories or essentially anyone who has knowledge of a newly identified suspect case of Ebola.
IDPH set up a hotline for the public at (800) 889-3931. Residents can call anytime with questions, such as how Ebola is spread, who is at risk of being infected and when should someone go to the doctor.

In the case of a report of a suspected or confirmed case in a student with one of the diseases required to be reported, schools must adhere to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In general, a school staff member may not release the name of the student or other identifying information to anyone outside the school district, including the local or state health department, without permission from the parent/guardian. If the school or health department official deems the disease a public health emergency, FERPA allows disclosure without permission from the parent or guardian. In the case of Ebola, such a situation is present. (www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html?src=rn)

ISBE advises the registered nurse, as the school’s mandated reporter, to contact the parent for permission (written permission or oral with a second witness) in cases. If permission is not obtained, nurses must still report the case (without identifying the student) and allow the health department to begin its investigation by obtaining information through other methods. If the suspected disease is Ebola or another declared public health threat, the health department will be able to continue its investigation with such identifying information. Routine reporting of student names associated with diseases on the list on the poster, however, must be accompanied with parental permission. If permission is not received, the school nurse may ask for permission to contact the physician and assure that the physician has reported the disease.

For more information on Ebola and other matters of school health, go to www.isbe.net/school_health.htm.

**Illinois Task Force on Civic Education**

**Public Hearings Scheduled to Discuss Civic Education Task Force Report**

The Illinois Task Force on Civic Education invites the public to participate in the last of a series of public hearings to discuss its recent report to the governor and General Assembly. A copy of the report is available at www.isbe.net/reports/il-civic-ed-task-force2014.pdf.

The remaining hearing is scheduled for 4 to 6 p.m. on Nov. 6 at Carbondale Community High School.

ISBE established the task force to analyze the current state of civic education, examine civic education laws outside of Illinois and make recommendations to the General Assembly, pursuant to Public Act 098-0790. (www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=098-0790&GA=98)

Those who are unable to attend a hearing may submit comments via email at CETFR@isbe.net. Please include your first and last name and city as well as your title and affiliation. Comments will be published and will be received via email until Nov. 7. Please provide concise comments.

**Title Grant Administration**

**No Child Left Behind Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2014 Now Open**

Each year, all districts that received No Child Left Behind (NCLB) funds are required to submit a performance report regarding the previous school year to ISBE. The NCLB performance report is located in IWAS and can be accessed when you log into IWAS under “Reporting” and then under “Annual.”

The NCLB performance report for fiscal year 2014 is now available for you to enter your information. To help with this process, instructions have been added to the report and a short recorded webinar (17 minutes) is available for viewing at www.isbe.net/grants/html/webinar_archive.htm#nclb130913.

Please note that Section III has been removed as that data is being collected elsewhere. Since ISBE received the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver Flexibility for fiscal year 2015, this year will be the last for the collection of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), Choice and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) information. We appreciate your cooperation in providing this data one last time. We are working to further improve this data collection tool and hope to automate and/or populate more data next year.
The deadline to submit is Nov. 3, 2014. Failure to submit a complete report by this date may result in frozen NCLB funds.

If you have any questions about how to submit the performance report, contact Lilibeth Gumia in ISBE’s Title Grants Division at (217) 524-4832.

**Early Childhood**

**Preschool for All Administrators’ Forum Scheduled for Nov. 7 in Champaign**

All Illinois Preschool for All administrators are invited to the Biennial Preschool for All Administrators’ Forum. The forum is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Nov. 7 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1501 S. Neil St., in Champaign.

Dr. Steve Tozer, professor of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Illinois-Chicago, will provide the keynote address on Transformative Leadership ([http://news.uic.edu/experts/steven-tozer](http://news.uic.edu/experts/steven-tozer)).

The forum will provide updates from ISBE and the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development on state and federal initiatives affecting Preschool for All (PFA) programs. Information on budgets, bilingual rules, special education blending and teacher evaluation in early childhood education, including teacher practice and student growth, will be provided.

At least one representative from each program is encouraged to attend, and there is no fee to attend this forum.

A pre-event dessert reception is planned for Nov. 6 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. and will provide an opportunity to meet informally with Reyna Hernandez, ISBE assistant superintendent for the Center for Language and Early Childhood Development, in addition to networking with other PFA administrators and representatives of the ISBE Early Childhood Division.

To register, visit the Early Childhood Center of Professional Development’s website at [http://ec.thecenterweb.org/site](http://ec.thecenterweb.org/site).

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**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 at (217) 782-5256 or 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 ensure 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.

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.

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**In Brief**

**Professional Development**

- The Illinois Education & Technology Conference (IETC 2014) will take place Nov. 12-14 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield. Teachers, technology coordinators, administrators, curriculum specialists, media specialists, special education instructors, school technical staff, business managers and anyone interested in improving education and preparing students to succeed in today’s world are invited to attend. More information is available at www.il-edtech.org/home. Register online at www.il-edtech.org/register by Nov. 4.


- 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.

**Educator Opportunities**

- The Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC) seeks applications for its Mining Awareness Educator Award. The first-place winner receives a gift certificate for $500 worth of classroom resource materials. For more information, visit www.imcc.isa.us/Awards.htm. Applications must be received by Feb. 1.
Student Opportunities

- The 41st annual Illinois Young Author’s Conference will take place at Illinois State University in Bloomington-Normal on May 16, 2015. Sponsored by the Illinois Language and Literacy Council and Illinois Reading Council, this daylong event is designed to honor exceptional writing by K-8 students across the state. Guidelines and registration materials can be found at [www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org/yac.html](http://www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org/yac.html) or [www.isbe.net/young-authors/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/young-authors/default.htm). Volunteers are always needed and appreciated for this event. If interested, please email Dr. Christina Podraza at cpodraza@naperville203.org.

- High school and college students can enter the eighth annual Create-A-Greeting-Card Scholarship contest sponsored by The Gallery Collection. The deadline for submissions is Feb. 18. Contest rules and other details are available at [www.gallerycollection.com/greeting-cards-scholarship.htm](http://www.gallerycollection.com/greeting-cards-scholarship.htm).

- Illinois Partners for Clean Air has launched its annual Shoot for the Skies PSA Video Contest, a creative competition open to Chicago area high school students in Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties. The public service announcements should educate the general public about Chicago area air quality and ways to improve it. For more information, visit [www.cleantheair.org/educational-programs/shoot-for-the-skies-psa-video-contest](http://www.cleantheair.org/educational-programs/shoot-for-the-skies-psa-video-contest). The submission deadline is Dec. 10.

Employment Opportunities

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