Weekly Message from State Superintendent Randy Dunn

Good afternoon.

This week’s opener will briefly highlight some announcements we’ve had in recent weeks to be sure they’re on your radar.

Legislation
SB2829 has passed out of both chambers and awaits the Governor’s signature. This “Less Red Tape” bill reflects input from the field and discussions and negotiations with the management alliance, regional superintendents, teacher’s unions and other interested parties. Once signed, the law will be effective July 1, 2006, SB 2829 and will repeal a Section of the School Code concerning latch key reports and a Section concerning school and district improvement panels. In addition, it will put changes in place related to:

• school building code
• school and district improvement plans
• waiver and modification of mandates
• staff development plans
• statements of affairs
• criminal history records checks of school district employees
• and transportation reimbursement claims.

Arts and Foreign Language Grants
For those of you who know me personally, you will recognize that the next item is an important issue for me. I know the struggle that school districts go through to provide arts education, especially with the ongoing press for ISAT and PSAE test preparation. Yet studies show that we gain nothing by lessening our attention to the arts—indeed, there is a cost in the academic and social development of our students. Along those lines, there is good news to report.

Last week we announced a new grant program to help school districts provide arts and foreign language programming. These grants are targeted to help districts with the planning process to develop curricula for new or existing programs. The grants will range from $10,000 to $50,000 depending on size, scope, and planning required. For more information, call Lou Berkman at 312-814-3853 or Joyce Krumtinger at 217-577-7323 in our Division of Curriculum and Instruction.

Illinois Survey of Critical Technologies
The Public Opinion Lab at NIU has released survey of 1,200 Illinois teachers showing that the majority of math and science teachers don’t feel prepared to instruct their students in cutting-edge fields of study. We’re looking at these survey results as we target our efforts in high school reform, our math and science partnerships and the increased rigor in graduation requirements. The study is available online at http://www.ilcriticaltechnologies.niu.edu.

Have a great week.

Randy Dunn
Upcoming Deadlines

Public Comment Deadline – Gifted Education Rules – **May 15, 2006**
Public Comment Deadline – Part 675 Rules – Supplemental Education Services – **May 15, 2006**
Early Childhood Block Grant – **May 19, 2006**
Public Comment Deadline – Part 1500 – School Emergency and Crisis Response Plans – **May 22, 2006**
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Art Contest – **May 31, 2006**
Proposed Public School Calendar – **June 15, 2006**
Public Comment on Special Education Rulemaking – **September 15, 2006**

Funding and Disbursement

**2005-06 Final Public School Calendars**

The 2005-06 Final Public School Calendar will be accessible May 1, 2006 and should be completed and transmitted to the appropriate Regional Superintendents by the last day of school. In addition, a final calendar must be transmitted and approved prior to filing the 2005-06 General State Aid claim. The suggested deadline for filing the 2006-07 Proposed Public School Calendar is June 15, 2006 to ensure that it is approved prior to the summer vacation season and that it will be available for the general public who may be interested in viewing your school calendar. All public school calendars can be accessed via the School Calendar Inquiry System at [http://www.isbe.net/](http://www.isbe.net/), click on Funding and Disbursements, and then click on the School Calendar Inquiry in the Resource Box.

The Regional Superintendent is responsible for approving all Public School Calendars that do not include irregular days (i.e. Interrupted Day, Delayed Start). Preparation guidelines for completing school calendars are available at [http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/ps_guidelines.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/ps_guidelines.pdf). If you have questions that are not addressed in the guidelines you may contact the office of your regional superintendent or Marj Beck mbeck@isbe.net or telephone 217-782-5256. If you encounter technical issues with the Public School Calendar in IWAS, please contact the ISBE Call Center at 217-558-3600 during business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Legal

**Survey of Before- and After-School Programs**

Last month, we sent a letter to District Superintendents requesting the completion, by June 30, 2006, of a survey on before- and after-school programs. We require districts to respond to this survey because, under Section 2-3.11b of the School Code, ISBE must annually (by January 14) file a latch key report with the General Assembly and Governor. As you may know, SB 2829, resulting from ISBE’s and the Governor’s Office’s Less Red Tape initiative, would remove from the School Code the requirement for ISBE to file this latch key report. The bill has passed both houses and is waiting for the Governor’s signature (if the Governor signs the bill, there is no need for your district to respond to the survey). At this point, your district may have already returned the survey to ISBE; if that is the case, we very much appreciate your effort and prompt response. To the extent your district has not yet done so, though, we suggest you suspend your collection effort pending the expected enactment of SB 2829. If SB 2829 is not enacted, we will extend the deadline and accept responses next school year.

NCLB

**AYP appeals procedures**

A school district may request an appeal of a school’s or the district’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status level or recognition level by sending a written request to the State Board of Education for consideration by the Appeals Advisory Committee.
The district must submit its appeal within 30 days after receipt of notification from the State Board of the school’s or district’s status level, recognition level, or corrective action. The appeal may not be based upon alleged inaccuracies in data in any State assessment other than the most recent State assessment, or any other cause known to the district during the prior year’s period for appeals.

The full text of the Rules related to AYP Appeals is available in Part 1, Subchapter a, Section 1.95 Appeals Procedure at: http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/oneark.pdf.

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**Nutrition**

**Record retention requirements for Child Nutrition Program procurement transactions**

All school food authorities (SFAs) are required to retain program-related records for a period of three years from the day the SFAs final allowable payment under the contract has been recorded. This is true regardless of whether the final payment is recorded prior to the expiration of the contract or subsequent to the expiration date.

However, when a procurement contract allows for renewals, the three-year retention period begins when the final contract renewal period has expired and/or the final payment is recorded, whichever occurs last. The three-year retention period does not begin with the initial contract execution.

Actions such as bid protests, litigation, and audits may result in an extension of this three-year record retention period. In all such cases, the records must be retained until 1) the completion of the action and resolution of all issues arising from it or 2) the expiration of the regular three-year period, whichever occurs later.

Examples of records to be kept include:

- written rationale for the method of procurement;
- copy of the Invitation for Bid or Request for Proposal;
- selection of contract type (fixed price or cost reimbursable);
- bidding and negotiation history;
- basis for contractor selection;
- approval from the State agency to support a lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained;
- basis for award cost or price;
- terms and conditions of the contract;
- any changes to the contract and negotiation history;
- billing and payment records;
- history of any contractor claims; and
- history of any contractor breaches.

If you have questions regarding record retention requirements, please contact the Nutrition Programs Division at 800-545-7892.

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**Local Wellness Policy**

Concerned that the deadline for having a Local Wellness Policy in place in your schools is quickly approaching? Training is being offered throughout the state by the Illinois NET Program in cooperation with the Regional Superintendents (IARSS). Earn 2 CPDU credits while having questions answered about how to create an exemplary wellness policy. Be an advocate and encourage schools in your region to sign up for a Regional Local Wellness Policy workshop. To access the link for training dates, locations and contacts, visit IL NET online at http://www.kidseatwell.org/ and click on the “What’s New Section.” If you have any questions about the workshops, please call IL NET at 800-466-7998.

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**CPDU Credits through online course**

The Illinois NET (Nutrition Education and Training) Program is proud to introduce Illinois NET Online, a web-based training service that will expand access to nutrition education training for school staff. The first course, *Nutrition Education That Works: An Integrated Approach for PreK-5 Educators*, will help schools meet new nutrition education goals by integrating nutrition education into core curricula. You can access this free course at http://www.kidseatwell.org/onlinetraining.html.

The first fifty-five Prek-5 grade teachers employed in Illinois elementary schools to successfully complete the course will receive a $100 reimbursement that can be used to purchase nutrition education curriculum and classroom materials.

The Illinois NET (Nutrition Education and Training) Program is a nonprofit program administered by the Illinois State Board of Education to support children’s health and achievement. Funding for this project has been provided, in part, from a USDA Team Nutrition Training grant. For more information about the program or its services, please call 800-466-7998.
Professional Development

Online Master of Education in Global Studies
To help teachers engage with global issues affecting all our lives, the College of Education at the University of Illinois has developed a new Master of Education (Ed M) in Global Studies [http://gse.ed.uiuc.edu/program.html](http://gse.ed.uiuc.edu/program.html). The goal of this new degree program is to assist PK-16 instructors in incorporating global perspectives into existing curricula and pedagogies. The program in Global Studies in Education (GSE) is offered online, and offers a range of opportunities for teachers to apply course ideas in their own classrooms. Learn more about the online degree program online at: [http://gse.ed.uiuc.edu/program.html](http://gse.ed.uiuc.edu/program.html)

Check out the globalization and education resource online at: [http://globalizationandeducation.ed.uiuc.edu/](http://globalizationandeducation.ed.uiuc.edu/)
Contact: Pablo DePaz (pdepaz2@uiuc.edu)
University of Illinois - Urbana/Champaign
College of Education, Educational Policy Studies, Ph.D. Candidate

Government Affairs

Spring Session Update
The following bills have passed both Chambers and will be sent to the Governor. This is an update of legislation since last week's Weekly Message. A bill will not become law until signed by the Governor and given a Public Act number. As bills are passed and signed or vetoed, the information will be updated on the Governmental Relations page on the website. To access that page, please go to: [http://www.isbe.net/gov_relations/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/gov_relations/default.htm)
The web page will also provide instructions for how to view these bills or any other online on the General Assembly webpage. For any additional information, you can contact Nicole Wills or Josh Jacobs in ISBE’s Governmental Relations Division at 217-782-6510.

Legislation that Passed both Chambers:
- SB 2898 (Self-administration of allergy medicine) - Requires public and nonpublic schools to permit students to self-administer allergy medication the same as pupils who can self-administer asthma medicine.
- SB 2477 - Amends the Public Building Commission Act by changing the definition of "Municipal Corporation". This legislation is specific for Peoria and would allow the Peoria School District to request the Peoria Public Building Commission build schools for Peoria.

School Construction
The House has introduced an amendment to HB 3904, which would essentially provide for $500,000,000 for school construction. The amendment passed out of the House Executive committee on a partisan roll call and is now on 2nd Reading in the House. Like the Senate bill that would have increased the bond authorization $1 billion, this legislation will require 3/5 majority (or 71 votes) to pass. HB 5782 has also been filed, which would provide for $148 million needed to fulfill the FY 02 school construction list. This bill is in the House Rules committee.

Adjournment
The Senate adjourned last Tuesday until April 25th. The House will be in this week on Tuesday and Wednesday. The House Education committee will be meeting on Wednesday (4/19) at 8:30 a.m. There are a number of resolutions and a few bills assigned to the committee, including SB 2795 & SB 2796, which are ISBE legislative initiatives. SB 2795 provides for more options for voluntary consolidation/reorganization and SB 2796 is the due process legislation that aligns Illinois statutes with the reauthorization of IDEA 2004. For a complete list of bills and resolutions to be heard in Wednesday's committee, you can go to the Governmental Relations webpage at the link listed above.

ISBE employment opportunities

External Vacancy List
An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at: [http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm)

In the News

Weekly news clips
Highlights from last week’s education news clips are posted at: [http://www.isbe.net/news/2006/newsclips/060414.htm](http://www.isbe.net/news/2006/newsclips/060414.htm)