May 6, 2008

Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

I had the opportunity to meet with a number of suburban administrators this week while attending the spring dinner of the South Cooperative Organization for Public Education (SCOPE). While in the south suburbs, State Board Chairman Jesse Ruiz, General Counsel Darren Reisberg and I also met with several administrators in Homewood to discuss residency issues.

Residency issues have generated controversy in districts for many years. It’s a delicate balancing act between the rights of local taxpayers and a student’s right to attend school. I want to thank the superintendents who took their time to speak candidly with us about their experiences, with special thanks to Superintendent Dale Mitchell for his leadership in setting up the meeting.

The end of the school year is exciting. It means prom and graduation which, for many of our students, will be the best few weeks of their lives. While the end of school is cause for great celebration, it is also the time of year when many teens are driving later at night, often with multiple passengers, and it can quickly turn tragic in a matter of seconds if one of our students makes a bad decision.

I was at Illinois Valley High School in Chillicothe on Wednesday to observe a superb crash simulation that vividly conveyed a celebration turned tragedy. The student participants did a wonderful job and local emergency personnel pulled out all the stops to make the dramatization real. I was struck by the somber reaction of the students. Normally, when I’m around 200 teenagers, there is at least some quiet talking among friends, but these students were silent and transfixed.

Please take a few moments and remind your juniors and seniors to buckle up, don’t drink and drive, and to pay attention to the task at hand when they’re driving. Our state has seen the overall number of people killed in car crashes steadily decline over the past few years. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for teenagers. The number of teens aged 16 to 19 killed in car crashes has risen from 125 in 2004 to 155 last year.

While you may not have a crash simulation planned for your students, your including a few words during announcements or distributing a letter from the principal or superintendent to students can reinforce the message of driver safety, particularly during this time of year. I know many of you think this is a message that teens may hear over and over, but the statistics show that many need this reinforcement to affect their behavior on the road.

In closing, I want to take this opportunity to remind everyone that this is Teacher Appreciation Week and Tuesday is National Teacher Appreciation Day. Please take a few moments to extend a thank you to your teachers for all of their hard work with our students from me, the members of the Board and the staff of the Illinois State Board of Education.

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Have a great week and thank YOU for everything you do to help provide our students with the best education possible.

Chris

Upcoming Deadlines

- Prevention Initiative Birth to Age 3 Years RFP – May 6, 2008
- Deadline for commenting on proposed rules – Part 25; Part 180; Part 235; Part 305; and Part 401 – May 19, 2008
- Request for Proposals (RFP) for Advanced Placement Classes – May 22, 2008
- Regional Safe Schools Program (RSSP) FY 2009 application – May 23, 2008
- FY09 Reading Improvement Block Grant application – June 15, 2008
- FY09 Consolidated Application to Serve English Language Learners – June 30, 2008
- Deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2008 – August 8, 2008
- Annual Superintendents’ Conference – October 23 – 24, 2008
- FY09 School Budget Form – October 31, 2008

Curriculum & Instruction

**FY09 Reading Improvement Block Grant Applications**

The FY09 Reading Improvement Block Grant application became available for completion through the eGrants system on Thursday, April 17. All eligible school districts serving grades K-6 may apply. Projected allocations for FY09, which are contingent on legislative approval, can be found near the bottom of the Budget Detail page of the application. Districts also may check their projected allocations by going to www.isbe.net/curriculum/reading/html/grant.htm. Some districts will see changes in funds due to census poverty data.

Please remember that the allocations are not final since the legislature has not yet approved the state’s budget. The total dollars allocated to each district could change.

The due date for the Reading Improvement Block Grant application is **June 15**. The start date for use of grant funds is Tuesday, July 1, or the date a substantially approvable application has been received by ISBE, whichever is later. All FY09 funds must be spent by June 30, 2009.

Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships (IMSP) showcased at the State Capitol

Dozens of classroom teachers, scientists, mathematicians, engineers, and experts from higher education from throughout Illinois were in Springfield on Wednesday, April 29 for the Capitol Showcase for the Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships (IMSP) program.

The annual event at the Illinois State Capitol showcased the professional development efforts by research partnerships statewide that work to help teachers grow, and in turn, improve student achievement.

More information about the event, plus a listing of the 19 IMSP partnerships that presented is available online at http://www.isbe.net/news/2008/apr29.htm.

English Language Learning

**FY09 Consolidated Application to Serve ELLs: Immigrant Student Counts and Program Funding**

The final list of districts eligible for IEP funding in FY09 will be available the week of Monday, May 19 at http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/consolidated_application.htm.
Before finalizing the list of eligible districts, we are providing districts an opportunity to review their submitted IEP student count.

- Districts will have until Thursday, May 15th, 2008 to review their district’s IEP count at http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/consolidated_application.htm and report any discrepancies to Boon Lee in the Division of English Language Learning. No further action is required if the IEP count reported is accurate.

- Districts shown with a shaded cell next to the name indicates no IEP count has been received. It is important to submit an IEP student count for the current year even if the district is not planning to apply for IEP funding or if the district has experienced a decrease in the number of IEP students. The count is used to determine future IEP funding eligibility. States must annually submit the immigrant student count to the U.S. Department of Education. For this reason, we request your assistance in obtaining an accurate statewide 2007-08 immigrant student count. Districts should fax the count to Boon Lee at 312-814-8636 no later than Thursday, May 15.

Districts that have not yet submitted their IEP count can access a copy of the report form at:

- Cover Letter http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/IEPcoverletter07.pdf

Please contact Boon Lee, English Language Learning, at 312-814-3850 or by e-mail at blee@isbe.net to report any discrepancies or to request assistance with the Immigrant Education Program Report.

Data Analysis & Progress Reporting

2007-2008 Illinois Teacher Salary Study Released

The 2007-2008 Illinois Teacher Salary Study is now available for downloading from the ISBE Web site. You can access the report by clicking on this link: http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/teacher_salary_07-08.pdf. The report provides teacher salary and benefit information for each public school district. Any questions about the report may be directed to Dr. Richard Yong, Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division, at 217-782–3950.

Federal Grants & Programs

State Superintendent seeks individuals to serve on NCLB Committee of Practitioners

State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch is seeking individuals to serve on the Committee of Practitioners for NCLB (Part 1 General Provisions of NCLB 2001 Section 1903 State Administration). Individuals will serve a three (3) year term and will meet four (4) times per year September, November, February and June. This Committee acts in an advisory capacity concerning NCLB related issues. Representation is needed in the following areas, administrators, teachers (including career and technical educators), parents, local school boards, representatives of private school children and pupil services personnel.

Please contact Sharryon Dunbar, Federal Grants & Programs, at 217-524-4832 or sdb@isbe.net if you have any questions.

The next CCOP meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 19 at Eastland Suites Hotel & Conference Center in Bloomington.

If you are interested please submit a cover letter and resume by Friday, May 30 to:

Gina Hopper
Division Administrator
Federal Grants and Programs
Illinois State Board of Education
100 N. First St.
Springfield, IL 62777-0001

Reporting ELL (English Language Learner) Individual Student Data on SIS

Starting this school year (2007-2008), districts must provide their annual report of individual student information for Limited English Proficient (LEP) or English Language Learner (ELL) students via the ISBE Student Information System (SIS). There is no longer a
Bilingual Education Annual Student Report (ASR) that must be completed by districts. Staff responsible for overseeing LEP services for a district should coordinate with SIS technology staff for the district to ensure that required ELL data are reported on SIS before ELL students are exited from the district for the current school year. The template for reporting ELL data on SIS is available at: http://www.isbe.net/sis/html/excel_templates.htm

If you have technical questions related to reporting ELL data on SIS, please contact the ISBE Help Desk at 217-558-3600. Other questions about ELL data may be directed to Dr. Lilibeth Q. Gumia, Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division, at 217-782-3950.

School Business & Support Services

FY2009 School District/Joint Agreement Budget Forms now available

Now available at the School Business Services Division website are FY2009 School District/Joint Agreement Budget Forms (ISBE Form 50-36/50-39) with related information and instructions.

At the website: http://www.isbe.net/sfms/budget/2009/budget.htm

- The “Cover Letter” briefly explains new and existing laws in effect for fiscal year 2008-09.
- Mechanics of the Budget
- Instructions to help complete the adoption process.
- Links are listed to direct you to the Rules and Public Acts.

School districts should pay close attention to the deadline date for submitting the electronic FY2009 School District Budget Form in the Excel spreadsheet to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) by Friday, October 31. The School Code, Section 17-1 (105 ILCS 5/17-1), requires school districts to electronically submit the adopted annual budget to ISBE; and also requires school districts who adopt an unbalanced budget in the operating funds to complete a Deficit Reduction Plan to balance the budget within three years. The Joint Agreement Budget Form 50-39 is excluded from this state filing requirement and should be filed locally as determined by the provisions of the joint agreement.

New Rule (23) Illinois Administrative Code – Part 100: New requirements for accounting, budgeting, financial reporting and auditing are effective July 1, 2008 (FY2009). The Fiscal Year 2009 School District/Joint Agreement Budget form reflects these new rules. For further information on these revisions, please visit our website at: http://www.isbe.net/finance/htmls/rule_changes.htm

If you have any questions, please contact the School Business Services Division at 217-785-8779.

Funding & Disbursements

FY 2008 State and Federal grant amendments and project extension requests

Many State and Federal grant projects are approaching a June 30 end date for obligating FY 2008 grant funds. Please be advised that per Policy Statements #2 and #3 on page 3 of the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures, all State and Federal project end date extension requests and final budget amendments must be received by the agency no later than 30 calendar days prior to the end date of the project.

Final amendments for federal or state funded grants with a Project End Date of June 30, 2008, must be received by ISBE no later than May 31, 2008. For those grants with a Project End Date of August 31, 2008, the last day amendments will be accepted is August 1, 2008. Budget increases for state funded grant projects must be received by June 30, even if the project end date has been extended. For grant applications in the electronic Grants Management System (eGMS), the deadline is also referenced on the Program Overview page under “Amendment Due Date.”

School Safety and Educational Improvement Block Grant

As mentioned in the February 5 and February 11 State Superintendent Weekly Messages, average daily attendance (ADA) data from the prior school year is used to calculate two statutory payments on October 30 and April 30 each year. The FY2008 budget did not include a separate appropriation for 657 State-recognized nonpublic schools that chose to transmit 2006-07 school year attendance. Therefore, the $75 million FY2008 appropriation was divided among both public districts and nonpublic schools. A summary of the recalculation can be accessed at: http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/ADABlockGrantFY08.pdf

Nutrition

DoD Unused Funds

Schools participating in the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program are now able to use unused funds from other schools. Funds will be available until the state as a whole runs out of money. If you need help with ordering, please contact Pam Hamlett with the DoD at 215-737-3676.

Use up your commodities

With summer break fast approaching, please be sure to use up your commodity food inventory. All food has a shelf life and in an effort to prevent food being wasted or thrown out because of expiration, please use your commodities before summer break.

Educator Preparation & Recertification

Recruiting Chinese teachers

The Ministry of Education for Taiwan has invited school district representatives interested in recruiting Chinese teachers to travel to Taiwan to visit university language centers and K-12 schools throughout the country. The dates for this trip are July 7 – 14. The Minister of Education will provide the airfare and accommodations for administrators who are interested in recruiting a Chinese teacher from Taiwan to teach next year. The trip provides an opportunity to interact with Taiwanese educators and American educators from different areas of the country. Administrators interested should contact Dr. Hwei-wen Hsu’s office at 312-616-0805.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) – New “Spring Window” is open until June 30, 2008

National Board Candidates – The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has opened the spring window for new NBPTS candidates and will provide a $2,000 Candidate Subsidy for the NBPTS Candidate Fee for eligible Illinois teachers. Interested Illinois teachers must meet the NBPTS eligibility guidelines as well as the licensure requirements established by Illinois.

TAKE ONE Candidates – The Illinois State Board of Education will provide a $395 Candidate Subsidy for the NBPTS Take One! Candidate fee for eligible Illinois teachers.

For more information, visit the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) website, http://www.nbpts.org, about becoming either a National Board Candidate or a Take One! Candidate.

For more information about how to apply for the $2,000 Candidate Subsidy for Illinois National Board Candidates or the $395 Candidate Subsidy for Illinois Take One! Candidates, visit the National Board Resource Center at Illinois State University (NBRC) website (www.coe.ilstu.edu/ilnbpts). Teachers may print the application and instructions, locate contact information for NBCT Regional and Local Coordinators, and locate available candidate support in each Illinois region. Please contact Lynn Gaddis, NBCT, by e-mail at nbrc@IllinoisState.edu or call 309-454-4980 for any questions.

Attention NBCTs

Mentoring – According to the Illinois Teaching Excellence Program, Section 21-27 of the Illinois School Code, NBCTs must hold a master teaching certificate and be employed 50 percent of the school year to be eligible for the annual stipend and mentoring incentives.

NBCTs who have or will complete the Statement of Intent to Provide Mentoring/Professional Development form (77-25A), should submit their mentoring/professional development documentation immediately after completing the initial 30 hours of service and the remaining 30 hours should be submitted no later than Monday, June 30, 2008.
For more information on the Annual Stipend, Statement of Intent, and Mentoring/Professional Development opportunities, visit the Iroquois-Kankakee Regional Office of Education (I-KAN) website at www.ilnbpts.org or contact Vicki Hensley, Assistant Regional Superintendent, I-KAN Regional Office of Education, via e-mail at VHensley@i-kan.org or Michelle ZumMallen, I-KAN State Support Site Coordinator, at mzummallen@i-kan.org.

Master Certificates – NBCTs may also check the status of their Illinois Master Certificate(s) in the Educator Certification System (ECS). For more information on how to check the status or apply for and register your Illinois master certificate, please review the 2007-2008 Frequently Asked Questions document on ISBE’s National Board website, at http://www.isbe.net/profprep/nbpts.htm. You can also contact your Regional Office of Education or Angela McDermott, Educator Preparation & Recertification, by e-mail at amcdermo@isbe.net.

Rules & Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

One additional proposed rulemaking recently reviewed by the State Board of Education is currently available for public comment. This item has been posted on the agency’s web site at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions you may have to rules@isbe.net.

Part 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing)
Addition of new account codes for new revenue sources; technical corrections.
Deadline for Public Comment: June 16, 2008

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that two sets of amendments recently adopted by the State Board of Education are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s web site at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to the relevant Part number. If you print the affected Sections, please remember to include the table of content, which changes each time a Part is amended.

Part 151 (School Construction Program)
Acknowledgment of the requirement for “green” construction.
Affected Section: 151.30
Effective Date: April 22, 2008

Part 375 (Student Records)
Provisions related to students’ biometric information.
Affected Sections: 375.10, 375.30, 375.40, 375.70, and 375.110
Effective Date: April 17, 2008

Accountability

Changes to the Nonpublic School Application

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, the Nonpublic School Application for Recognition and Calendar will be moving from paper forms to a web-based application and calendar. The programmers are creating both items for IWAS. Neither item is presently available and will not be until late spring or early summer. Therefore, the normal submission deadlines will be extended this first year. Nonpublic school administrators will be notified once the application and calendar are available. If you have further questions or concerns, contact Henri Fonville, Accountability Division, at 217-782-2948 or by e-mail at hfonvill@isbe.net.

Grant Opportunities

Grant Announcement: Illinois Innovation Talent Pilot Project

ISBE and leaders across Illinois recognize the need for more students to become globally competitive and collaborative innovators. Students must be prepared to critically examine and solve complex problems as members of diverse, interdisciplinary teams utilizing leading-edge information technology tools and platforms. In order to meet these challenges, the Illinois State Board of Education has joined a unique team of business and industry associations, government agencies and educational institutions to work with high schools and business, government and community partners to explore how schools and their partners can produce the next generation of innovation talent in Illinois. For the purposes of this project, innovation is defined as the
development and application of new ideas to create solutions to complex real-world problems.

This new partnership is pleased to announce that it is requesting applications from Illinois high schools for a pilot project designed to promote innovation-centered education in Illinois that will support schools to assemble teams of students and teachers to develop a project that will solve a community problem. If interested in participating in the Innovation Talent Pilot Project, a letter of intent and a simple application should be submitted by Friday, May 16. The full details may be accessed at the following link: http://www.illinoisbiz.biz/dceo/.

**Professional Development**

**Free Web Seminar: Financing Energy Efficiency Upgrades for Schools**

Is your school looking to conserve energy but lacking the capital and technical expertise to tackle major energy-efficiency projects? This seminar will introduce you to “performance contracting,” a method of financing a broad range of operational improvements that result in increased energy efficiency and savings for your school. During the web seminar, experts from the U.S. Green Building Council and the Clinton Climate Initiative will explain how your school can take advantage of performance contracting to:

- Save money by reducing energy consumption school-wide
- Receive a professional energy audit to identify major sources of energy savings
- Access capital to finance energy efficiency upgrades with guaranteed savings
- Select contractors and financing partners most appropriate for your school’s projects.

Hosted by the U.S. Green Building Council, the Clinton Climate Initiative, and the Office of Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, the conference will be held from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 13.

School officials, facility managers, and teachers are encouraged to attend to learn about performance contracting opportunities for your school. To join the web seminar, you will need Internet access and a phone (or just a phone if you prefer to listen only) – no travel is necessary!

Please RSVP to Jon Zirkle, Office of Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, at 312-814-2094 or by e-mail at Jonathon.Zirkle@Illinois.gov by Tuesday, May 6 to receive instructions for joining the web seminar.

**Student Opportunities**

**Latino Art Beat art contest**

Latino Art Beat, a Chicago based not-for-profit arts organization that awards scholarships to high school students, is now accepting submissions for its 2008 contest. The general theme for the competition is “What Hispanic Heritage & Culture Means to Me.”

Students attending Chicago Public Schools 299, in grades 9 – 12, are eligible to participate in the multiple competition categories of drawing, painting, 3-D artwork, computer generated artwork, photograph and film and animation.

For students outside of Chicago, only juniors and senior may participate in the competition categories of drawing, painting, special photography category and/or film and animation.

Scholarships are only awarded to students who are juniors and seniors. Freshmen and sophomores qualify for recognition, award certificates and other prizes. The contest website is http://www.latinoartbeat.com/home.htm.

For more competition information, including instructions, contest rules and application forms, contact the Latino Art Beat at 773-291-6901 or by e-mail at latinoartbeat@hotmail.com.

**2008-2009 Student Advisory Council now accepting applications – deadline extended**

The application deadline for the Illinois State Board of Education’s Student Advisory Council (SAC) for the 2008-2009 school year has been extended to Friday, May 30, 2008.

The students who comprise the Student Advisory Council are very diverse, as they come from different geographic locations, ethnic backgrounds, and types of schools. However, they possess similar qualities, which include a strong work ethic, ability to think “outside-the-box,” the
willingness to set aside time from their busy schedules for SAC work and the skill of working well in groups. Members are invited to attend Board meetings and sessions of the General Assembly. As SAC members, students also may review and critique ISBE’s existing or proposed programs, policies and regulations, as well as inform Illinois students of SAC activities.

Eligibility to apply for the 2008-2009 SAC is limited to public high school students who will be either a sophomore, junior or senior during the 2008-2009 school year. Given the need to hear from students on some of the more complicated issues faced by our state, special consideration will be given to applicants from low-performing schools or districts.

An application is now available online at: http://www.isbe.net/SAC/sac_application.pdf. It must be returned to the State Board of Education by 5 p.m., Friday, May 30.

The mailing address is:
Illinois State Board of Education
Student Advisory Council
S-202
100 N. First St.
Springfield, IL 62777

Activities of the Student Advisory Council in 2008-2009 are contingent upon final State budget allocation. For more information, contact Andrea S. Wingo at 217-782-6434 or by e-mail at awingo@isbe.net.

A full list of the 2008 award winners can be found on the IEPA’s website at http://www.epa.state.il.us/.

**Operation Teen Safe Driving Program Winners Announced**

Congratulations to the final round of winning schools that participated in the statewide safety initiative designed to educate teens about safe driving to save lives through the Operation Teen Safe Driving program. This announcement comes as Illinois records a significant decline in teen fatalities in automobile crashes so far this year. From January 1st through April 15th, 22 teens (ages 16-19) lost their lives on Illinois roadways. During the same time period last year, there were 57 deaths.

In total, 104 high schools statewide were selected to participate in the innovative program, Operation Teen Safe Driving, which is modeled after Ford’s nationally recognized Driving Skills for Life teen safety program. Announced in November 2007, the program empowers high school students to educate their peers about driving in hopes of decreasing the number of fatalities and crashes involving teenagers in Illinois.

More information about the announcement and winners is available online at http://www.dot.il.gov/press/050108%20GOV%20IDOT%20Teen%20Safe%20Driving%20Finalists%20_2_.pdf

**Employment Opportunities**

**ISBE External Vacancy List**

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

**Miscellaneous**

**Students honored at Governor’s Green Youth Awards for Excellence ceremony**

Students and schools across Illinois were recently recognized for their hard work and commitment to exhibit environmental leadership and stewardship at the Governor’s Green Youth Awards for Excellence. The awards, administered by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), acknowledged outstanding environmental protection and conservation projects by Illinois’ young people.

The winners of the Governor’s Green Youth Awards were students who worked on environmental projects either individually or as part of a group, and K-12 schools recognized for their achievements in waste reduction, energy efficiency, and sustainability.

**In the News**

**Weekly news clips**

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at: http://www.isbe.net/news/2008/newsclips/080502.htm.