Good afternoon.

The testing season for 2007 is now over and I want to thank all of you for your hard work in preparing students to meet the Illinois Learning Standards.

The delay in providing results was unacceptable and I am determined to avoid a similar occurrence. We’ve been working closely with the federal government, and like our administrators, teachers, parents and students, they are watching our timelines closely for this year’s test results.

We have always felt that accurate data provides the best information for schools to use in making improvements, that’s why we are one of the few states that allows for data corrections after scores are posted. This year, however, while we will continue to have a lengthy data correction period, we cannot continue to provide extensions for corrections. We must adhere to very tight timelines so AYP can be determined before school starts this fall.

You can begin making student demographic data corrections now, via the IWAS Assessment Correction files for 2007. We have a calendar in this week’s message with all the dates for the 2007 data corrections.

For grades 3-8, scores will be posted on June 11 and finalized on June 29. For grade 11, scores will be posted on July 20 and will be finalized on August 3. Corrections cannot be made after scores have been finalized.

I realize that many staff are not in the building during the summer and by rule, districts must have 30 days to clean-up their data. However, there are multiple opportunities for corrections during the process that add up to much more than 30 days, that is why I am urging you to start your portion of data corrections now.

This year, for the first time, we have a preliminary file to assist us in early data clean-up and the matching of students to districts. Unfortunately, we’re finding a high number of students who cannot be matched because of inaccurate district information on their Assessment Correction file in IWAS. This week Student Assessment and SIS staff will be contacting superintendents from districts having large numbers of unmatched students. We have to do this now before scores are posted to save districts clean-up time.

We know how busy May is for everyone and our goal isn’t to add more to your work but to have the most accurate information as possible for AYP calculations in a timely manner. There will be no time for data correction after the windows close.

For more information, call 217-558-3600 or 217-782-4823 – we want to support your work and are ready to help.
Again, thank you for all your work.

Chris Koch

Upcoming Deadlines

- **Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) Professional Development RFP** – May 31, 2007
- **‘Teacher Service Record’ salary submission** – June 15, 2007
- **Student applications for 2007-2008 Student Advisory Council** – June 15, 2007
- **Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report** – June 30, 2007
- **Waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2007** – August 10, 2007

Student Assessments

**Assessment correction process for 2007**

**GRADES 3-8**
The clean up process has been in place since April. Your district should be checking now on IWAS to ensure that the student data are accurate as of the time of testing.

**Scores will be posted on June 11.** You will see reading, math and science scores posted on IWAS for ISAT, IMAGE and IAA. Writing will be posted for ISAT on June 11. IAA writing will be posted in July.

**FINAL DAY FOR CLEAN UP -** Districts have until June 29, 2007 to clean up their data and to request rescores. Rescore information will be posted on www.isbe.net/assessment. We recognize that this is not a convenient time for districts but in order to provide AYP before school begins, the state must adhere to this timeline.

Please do not wait until the last day to load to IWAS – this slows down the process and you may not have time to correct any errors.

**AYP:** For those schools who have submitted their eReport Card data, preliminary AYP calculations for grades 3-8 will be calculated in June. Final AYP will be posted by August 1, 2007. Notification will be provided to the superintendent via IWAS. Reading and math are the only two content areas that count towards AYP and the target for AYP is 55% for 2007.

**GRADE 11**
The clean up process begins May 14, 2007. Scores will be posted on IWAS no later than July 20, 2007.

**FINAL DAY FOR CLEAN UP -** Districts have until August 3, 2007 to clean up their grade 11 data and request rescores. Rescore information will be posted on www.isbe.net/assessment. We recognize that this is not a convenient time for districts but in order to provide AYP before school begins, the state must adhere to this timeline.

Please do not wait until the last day to load to IWAS – this slows down the process and you may not have time to correct any errors.

**AYP:** Preliminary calculations for grade 11 will be calculated from July 20 – August 3, with final AYP being posted no later than August 10. Notification will be provided to the superintendent via IWAS. Reading and math are the only two content areas that count towards AYP and the target for AYP is 55% for 2007.

**For information or questions,** call 217-558-3600 or e-mail: help@isbe.net.

Assessment Corrections - Calendar of Events – 2007 Testing

**Scores Posted** – First Day to Request, Upload and View Reports with Assessment Scores File via IWAS/SIS

- PSAE & IMAGE - Grade 11 – No later than 7/20/07
**Final Day** – To send revisions to Assessment Correction file data via IWAS/SIS

- ISAT, IMAGE & IAA - Grades 3-8 - 6/29/2007
- PSAE & IMAGE - Grade 11 - 8/03/2007

**Reports to Districts/Schools**

- Grades 3-8 Data Disks and printed district/school summary reports delivered to Districts - 8/31/2007
- Grades 3-8 Printed Individual Student Reports - 9/17/2007
- Grade 11 Printed Individual Student Report and other reports - 9/17/2007

**Funding & Disbursements**

**FY 2008 Employer Contributions to TRS – Federal Grants**

Please be advised that for Fiscal Year 2008 (July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008) the employer’s share of teachers’ retirement will be 13.11% for personnel employed with federal grant funds. As you are aware, this rate has been subject to change, and will change from the 9.78% which was in place for Fiscal Year 2007. Further information can be obtained from the TRS website at http://trs.illinois.gov/subsections/employers/employerservices.htm. The percentage is now determined annually according to the funding amount set by the state legislature.

If you have specific questions regarding TRS contributions, you may direct your inquiries to the TRS Employer Services Division at 888-877-0890.

**Nutrition**

**Summer Food Service Program**

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is designed to provide nutritious meals during summer months to children from areas where at least 50 percent are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals during the school year through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Does your area meet this criterion? If so, consider becoming a sponsor to help bridge the gap for children in your community. All sponsors will be required to submit the program application and monthly Claims for Reimbursement via the Internet.

If the responsibilities of sponsorship in the SFSP are not possible, you can still participate in the program by operating as a site under a different sponsor, serving as a vendor, or volunteering your time.

More information about the program is available online at: http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/summer.htm.

**Training Workshop**

One remaining training workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, May 22 in Springfield for organizations interested in sponsoring the SFSP during the summer of 2007. To register for the workshop, visit our website at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition.

The training session is designed to provide a complete overview of the SFSP including the Illinois State Board of Education’s (ISBE’s) Internet-based program application and claim system. All sponsors are required to attend the training.

For additional information, contact Amy Bianco at 800/545-7892 or email cnp@isbe.net.

**Expect School Year 2007–08 Household Eligibility Application Online in May**

The 2007–2008 Household Eligibility Application for free and reduced-price meals will be available on our website (www.isbe.net/nutrition) no later than May 18, 2007. All forms used in prior years to create copies for distribution should be discarded and the new application form must be used. We realize schools like to prepare materials before this time for the upcoming school year; however, program regulations require schools to distribute free and reduced-price Household Eligibility Applications at the beginning of the school year (July/August).

If you have any questions, please contact Nutrition Programs at 800-545-7892; 217-782-2491, or via email at cnp@isbe.net.

**Teaching and Learning**

**New Principal Mentoring Program reminder**

The New Principal Mentoring Program will begin July 1, 2007, pending funding by the General Assembly. In order to establish the number of new principals who will need mentoring, each district superintendent must report to the State Superintendent of Education no later than May 30, 2007, the number of first-year principals who are expected to be working in the district in the coming
school year and who are required to participate in the mentoring program.
No later than **June 30, 2007**, each district superintendent must update this information with the names, administrative certificate numbers, and assigned schools of the individuals chosen.

As soon as possible, each district superintendent should report the **number** of new principals who will need mentoring. This information may be sent by letter to the attention of Dennis Williams at the Illinois State Board of Education, Certification Division, 100 N. First Street, S-306, Springfield, Ill., 62777-0001, or by e-mail to dwilliam@isbe.net.

Further information will be provided to you soon in a memo.

To determine the number of new principals that must meet this requirement, use the following criteria. Any individual who is hired as a principal in the State of Illinois on or after July 1, 2007, must participate in this program for the duration of his or her first year as a principal. This requirement does not apply to any individual who has previously served as an assistant principal in Illinois and who was acting under an administrative certificate for five or more years. The requirement also does not apply to any individual who is hired on or after July 1, 2007, as a principal by the school district in which the individual last served as an assistant principal; however, such an individual may choose to participate in this program or can be required to participate by the school district.

**NASBE HIV/AIDS Policy Brief**

The National Association of State Boards of Education’s (NASBE) Center for Safe and Healthy Schools is pleased to announce the release of a Policy Update entitled, *The Continuing Epidemic of HIV/AIDS: Good News, Bad News, and the Role of Schools*. The update highlights the trends in the data, both positive and negative, concerning HIV infection and prevalence of AIDS as well as the positive role of education in reducing HIV infections amongst children. The Update also presents issues for consideration and resources for school officials and education policymakers.

This document can be downloaded from the NASBE web site: [www.nasbe.org/healthy_schools/](http://www.nasbe.org/healthy_schools/). Please feel free to contact NASBE for further information.

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**Federal Grants & Programs**

**FY 2007 Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools**

The U.S. Department of Education is making approximately $24,000,000 available to Local Education Associations (LEAs) to strengthen and improve emergency response and crisis plans, at the district and school-building level.

- Grantees are required to address all four phases of crisis planning:
  - Prevention / Mitigation
  - Preparedness
  - Response
  - Recovery

In addition, as they review and revise school crisis plans, LEAs are required to form partnerships and collaborate with:

- Community organizations
- Local law enforcement agencies
- Heads of local governments
- Offices of public safety, health, and mental health

Plans must be coordinated with state or local homeland security plans and support implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Grant funds may be used for the following activities:

- Training school safety teams and students
- Conducting building and facilities audits
- Communicating emergency response policies to parents and guardians
- Implementing an Incident Command System (ICS)
- Purchasing school safety equipment (to a limited extent)
- Conducting drills and tabletop simulation exercises
- Preparing and distributing copies of crisis plans


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**Professional Development**
2nd Annual High School Challenge Conference set for June 14 & 15, 2007

The Coalition for Illinois High Schools is sponsoring the 2nd Annual High School Challenge Conference: Rigor + Relevance + Relationships = Results on June 14 & 15, 2007, at the Doubletree Hotel in Bloomington.

The conference is designed for all those involved with and interested in the work of Illinois’ high schools including superintendents, principals, teacher leaders, school board members, curriculum directors, special education and ELL directors, as well as business leaders and university personnel.

The purpose of the conference is to create a statewide awareness of the changing global economy and the need to prepare Illinois students.

Registrations must be received by the Illinois Principals Association no later than Thursday, June 7. Walk-in and phone registrations will be not be accepted.

More information and registration materials can be found online at: http://www.isbe.net/high_school/default.htm.

For questions, call the IPA at 217-391-0848.

School & Teacher Resources

Samsung’s Hope for Education 2007 program

Samsung Electronics America is now accepting entries for the 2007 Hope for Education program. The program is an educational and philanthropic program designed to minimize the technology gap that exists in today’s educational system. The deadline to apply is July 22, 2007.

Through a partnership with Microsoft Corporation, Hope for Education will provide more than $2 million in technology and software to K-12 schools in the U.S. that enter the essay competition describing how technology can help improve students’ education.

Students, educators, administrators and staff can enter by submitting a 100-word essay online for the opportunity to win the grand prize of $200,000 or one of 30 prizes of $60,000 in Samsung technology and Microsoft software. The essay entry should answer the question: “What is the single most significant benefit that technology can provide in the classroom?”

For more information, including a complete list of rules, and to enter the contest, visit the program’s web site at: www.hopeforeducation.com.

Nominations now being accepted for 2007 Freida J. Riley Teacher Award

The Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation is now accepting nominations for the 2007 Freida J. Riley Teacher Award.

The annual award honors an American teacher who works with a physical disability, teaches in an especially challenging educational environment or has performed a heroic act by making an exceptional, personal or physical sacrifice on behalf of students.

Nomination forms, rules and guidelines are available online at: www.columbusfdn.org. All nomination materials must be received by the Foundation no later than Monday, June 4. For questions or more information, contact Judi Shellenberger, Executive Director, at 315-258-0090 or via e-mail at: judithmscolumbus@cs.com.

State Student Advisory Council seeks members

ISBE is currently seeking applications for the Student Advisory Council to the Illinois State Board of Education for the 2007-08 school year. Applications are due Friday, June 15.

The SAC is made up of students representing all regions of the state. Members are invited to attend Board meetings, sessions of the General Assembly, and applicable education-related conferences.

Eligibility to apply for the 2007-08 SAC is limited to public school students. 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 form, due June 15, and more information are available online at: http://www.isbe.net/SAC/default.htm.

For more information, contact Andrea Wingo at 217-782-2223 or awingo@isbe.net.
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.

In the News

**Weekly news clips**

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at: