Good afternoon:

This week I wanted to provide you with a summary of some key issues our State Board of Education is working on, particularly our efforts to prepare students for success after school and the implementation of new special education rules.

At last week’s meeting, Elliot Regenstein of Holland + Knight and Mike Cohen from Achieve, Inc. made a presentation to the board regarding the importance of alignment in several key areas, including standards, standards implementation (including course requirements), assessments, and accountability. Their presentation was the first of a series through the Illinois College and Work Readiness Partnership, a collaboration among the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, ISBE and the Office of the Governor. Research shows that where standards are implemented there is commensurate gain in academic achievement, and they discussed the importance of having the right standards and then ensuring that they are implemented properly. It has always been understood that standards would be periodically reviewed, and while there is interest in pursuing further study and standards comparison, there is a valid concern about ensuring that any changes evolve appropriately from the expectations we already have in place.

This conversation precedes a study yet to be released by the National Center for Education Statistics comparing state standards. The study will locate the point on the NAEP scale where the proportion scoring above that point is equal to the proportion meeting the state proficiency standard on the state assessment. The state proficiency standard is used for reporting annual progress to the U.S. Department of Education.

In addition, our board approved additional modifications to the proposed special education regulations. With an understanding of the issues JCAR wished to see resolved, and through diligent negotiations with the affected parties, ISBE has been able to identify modifications in selected portions of the rules that will resolve those parties’ concerns to the greatest possible extent. A summary of the changes can be found on our website at the following link:

http://www.isbe.net/board/meetings/may07/part226.pdf

The State Board of Education adopted these revisions at its meeting on May 17, 2007, and will be seeking their review by JCAR at its meeting on June 12. We appreciate the work the IFT, IEA, IASA, IAASE and State Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities provided to clarify these regulations.

Finally, the Student Advisory Council presented to the State Board and provided recommendations for enhancing communication with the field. As several senior advisory students are graduating, there are vacancies on the Council for next year. School personnel who wish to recommend a student for this experience should contact Andrea Wingo at 217-782-2223.
I wish you all a productive week!

Chris

Unless there is urgent news next week, there will be no May 28 edition of the Weekly Message due to the Memorial Day holiday.

**Upcoming Deadlines**

- Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) Professional Development RFP – May 31, 2007
- McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program '08 RFP – May 31, 2007
- ‘Teacher Service Record’ salary submission – June 15, 2007
- Student applications for 2007-2008 Student Advisory Council – June 15, 2007
- FY08 Reading Improvement Block Grant applications – June 15, 2007
- Student Health Data (Dental) – June 30, 2007
- Waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2007 – August 10, 2007

**Curriculum & Instruction**

**FY08 Reading Improvement Block Grant Applications**

The FY08 Reading Improvement Block Grant application is now available for completion through the Electronic Grant Management System. All school districts serving grades K-6 may apply. Projected allocations for FY08, which are contingent upon 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 [http://www.isbe.net/ils/ela/reading/pdf/RIBG_alloc_08.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/ils/ela/reading/pdf/RIBG_alloc_08.pdf).

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

The due date of the Reading Improvement Block Grant application is **June 15, 2007**. The start date for use of grant funds is July 1, 2007, or the date a substantially approvable application has been received by ISBE, whichever is later. All FY08 funds must be spent by June 30, 2008.

**Nutrition**

**Nutrition Training Available During Summer Months**

Food Service and Nutrition Staff have plenty of professional development opportunities in Illinois this summer covering a variety of nutrition, food safety, and wellness topics. Visit the following websites for dates, locations and registration information.

- Illinois State Board of Education, Nutrition Programs Website [http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/default.htm).

  *Developing a School Food Safety Program* in conjunction with the National Food Service Management Institute. (Seven locations in June, 2007)

  *Basic Training: A Guide to School-Based Child Nutrition Programs (August through October)*


**Nominations accepted for ‘Golden Carrot Awards’**
The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine is seeking nominations for its fourth annual ‘Golden Carrot Awards’ for outstanding food service professionals in both public and private schools.

The award recognizes food service professionals who offer a range of healthy options, especially a variety of vegetarian foods and nondairy beverage choices. The deadline for nominations is **Monday, June 11, 2007**.

More information and nomination materials can be found online at: [www.HealthySchoolLunches.org](http://www.HealthySchoolLunches.org). For additional questions, contact Edith Sodolo at 202-686-2210, ext. 339 or via e-mail at esodolo@pcrm.org.

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**Rules**

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

Two sets of proposed rules recently reviewed by the State Board of Education are currently available for public comment. These items have been posted on the agency’s web site at [www.isbe.net/rules](http://www.isbe.net/rules); choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments”. Please submit any comments or suggestions you may have to rules@isbe.net.

**Part 35 (Mentoring Program for New Principals)**

A new set of rules establishing the structure of the program, the roles of approved providers, and the eligibility of and requirements for mentors.

**Part 401 (Special Education Facilities Under Section 14-7.02 of the School Code)**

Amendments establishing requirements for facilities that will serve as “testing sites” for the state assessments; various other accountability-related revisions.

**Deadline for Public Comment:** **June 25, 2007**

**Notice of Effectiveness of Rulemaking**

Please be advised that two rulemakings recently adopted by the State Board are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s web site at [www.isbe.net/rules](http://www.isbe.net/rules); choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to the relevant Part number. If you print the affected Sections, please be sure to include the table of contents, which changes each time a Part is revised.

**Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision)**

More specific provisions regarding the rights of undocumented students and homeless students to be served in the public schools.

**Affected Section:** 1.240 only.
**Effective Date:** April 25, 2007

**Part 35 (Mentoring Program for New Principals)**

Emergency rules for the program; identical to the proposed rules discussed above.

**Affected Sections:** All
**Effective Date:** April 25, 2007, for a maximum of 150 days.

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**Student Assessment**

**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](http://www.isbe.net/assessment).

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](http://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

Professional Development

Golden Apple announces free summer seminars for Illinois teachers

- ‘Unearth the Legacy: Excavating the artifacts, culture and history of the Native Peoples of the Mississippi Valley’ – June 24-29, Pere Marquette State Park Lodge, Grafton, Ill.

- ‘Exercise the Artistic, Imagine the Creative: Incorporating the arts into your classroom practice’ – July 22-27, Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica, Ill.

- ‘Hot Topics/Cold Science: What do polar bears, penguins and the International Polar Year have to do with Illinois?’ – July 22-27, Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica, Ill.

- ‘Teachers Telling Tales: Capturing the essence of the teaching experience with Digital Storytelling’- July 30-August 3, University of Chicago Lab School, Chicago.

Each seminar is limited to 20 teachers. Deadline for applications is Tuesday, May 29. All seminars, lodging and meals are free, except at the University of Chicago non-residential seminar where meals will not be provided.

For more information and to apply for the seminars, go to www.goldenapple.org.

National School-Based Mentoring Conference – June 13-14

The National School-Based Mentoring Conference, 3rd Edition, will be June 13-14 at the InterContinental Hotel at the Plaza in Kansas City, Mo.

The conference offers opportunities to gain skills to develop and sustain high-quality, school-based mentoring programs. Keynote presenters include former astronaut Dr. Sally Ride; author Kevin Carroll; international mentoring authority, Dr. Susan Weinberger; and leading mentoring researcher Dr. Michael Karcher.

The National School-Based Mentoring Conference is the only national conference for school-based mentoring professionals, educators, community supporters, researchers and fundraisers.

For more information, contact Melissa Gingell at 877-842-7082 or via e-mail at gingell@youthfriends.org.

More information can also be found online at www.mentormap.org.

Northwestern University's Safe Campus Conference – July 9-11, 2007

School officials are invited to attend Northwestern University’s Safe Campus Executive Leadership

The conference is designed for law enforcement professionals and school officials interested in exploring the best strategies for responding to critical incidents. The conference’s keynote speaker is Virginia State Police Superintendent, Colonel W. Steven Flaherty.

More information and registration materials can be found online at: [http://nucps.northwestern.edu](http://nucps.northwestern.edu) or by calling 800-323-4011.

### Student Opportunities

**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 2007-2008 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](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](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm).

### In the News

**Weekly news clips**