Good afternoon.

Over the past year, the issue of high quality teacher mentoring and induction has come to the forefront of attention among Illinois educators and policymakers; the issue has also been identified as one of several objectives in the State Board of Education’s Strategic Plan.

Indeed, in my Weekly Message opener on January 23, I had talked at some length about the tremendous work being done in this area by the Induction for the 21st Century Educator professional development series and the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative out of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Widely recognized as one of the most effective tools for increasing retention and improving the skills of beginning teachers, high quality induction is a key strategy for improving overall teacher quality. And that issue is not lessening in its impact or intensity anytime soon—beyond its being a cornerstone of NCLB, one just needs to read the lead editorial in today’s Chicago Tribune: “Why Good Teachers Matter.”

In an effort to make the induction process in Illinois more meaningful and effective, I’m pleased to announce that the FY 07 ISBE budget includes $2 million to support a one-year Beginning Teacher Induction pilot program. This initiative will support and fund the development, implementation and evaluation of several high quality induction pilots across the State during the 2006-07 school year. All Illinois public schools, school districts and consortia of school districts will qualify for these grants which will be made on a competitive basis. Partnerships with other key stakeholders (e.g., ROEs, teacher unions, higher education institutions, non-profit educational service providers and the like) are encouraged.

I want to thank both the Illinois Education Association and the Illinois Federation of Teachers for their assistance in structuring the FY 07 pilot program with us.

The final Request for Proposals is going to the State Board of Education at its June 22 meeting in Glen Ellyn. Once approved, we will move forward to distribute the RFP statewide. For more information, please contact Linda Jamali, ljamali@isbe.net.

With this work now underway—along with the new program on principal induction and mentoring in this year’s IL-SAELP (Illinois State Action for Education Leadership Project) bill, SB 860—plus the focus on superintendent mentoring and induction in the Governor’s Helping Kids Learn proposal—Illinois is taking great strides to respond to the national call for improving educator mentoring and induction.

Have a great week.

Randy Dunn
Upcoming Deadlines

- Proposed Public School Calendar – June 15, 2006
- Reading Improvement Block Grant Performance Report – June 15, 2006
- Aramco Teachers to Saudi Arabia application – June 15, 2006
- Midwest Clean Diesel Initiative Grant applications – June 16, 2006
- Rules Public Comment – June 19, 2006
- National High School Journalism Teacher Awards applications – July 1, 2006
- Waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in November – August 11, 2006
- Public Comment on Special Education Rulemaking – September 15, 2006

Legal

School Treasurer Bonds

All treasurers of school districts are to be properly bonded. Section 8-2 of the School Code states:
Before entering upon his duties, each school treasurer shall execute a bond ... conditioned upon the faithful discharge of his or her duties. The penalty of the bond shall be 25 percent of the amount of all bonds, notes, mortgages, moneys and effects of which he is to have the custody, whether individuals act as sureties or whether the surety given is by a surety company authorized to do business in this State and shall be increased or decreased from time to time, as the increase or decrease of the amount of notes, bonds, mortgages, moneys and effects may require and whenever in the judgment of the regional superintendent of schools or whenever in the judgment of the township trustees or the school board of the district by which the school treasurer was appointed or elected, the penalty of the bond should be increased or decreased; provided that the penalty of the bond shall not be increased to more than 25 percent of the amount of all bonds, notes, mortgages, moneys and effects of which the treasurer has custody at any time…

No part of the State or other school fund shall be paid to any school treasurer or other persons authorized to receive it unless such treasurer has filed his or her bond or if reelected, has renewed his or her bond and filed it as required by law. (105 ILCS 5/8-2)

The Illinois State Board of Education continues to interpret this to mean that a school district treasurer must be bonded for 25 percent of the amount he has in custody at any given time, not the total amount over the course of a year. The 25 percent will always remain 25 percent as the statute requires. There is no other percent that may be used. It is the dollar amount of the penalty that potentially could be increased or decreased.

The first part of the statute provides that before the treasurer enters upon his duties, he must be bonded for 25 percent of the amount over which he is expected to have custody at the time he assumes custody. Because he has not yet entered upon his duties, this refers to the amount for which he initially will be bonded when he does.

The statute also provides that it is the penalty that may be increased or decreased, not the 25%. After a treasurer is initially bonded, the board may exercise its judgment as to when the penalty of the bond should be increased or decreased. A judgment should be made based on the total amount the treasurer is holding at any given time. If the amount has increased, the bond should be increased. Section 8-2 is plain that the penalty is an amount of money, not a percentage. While the amount may be increased or decreased, the percentage may not be. The amount should change based on the amount the treasurer has in custody. The prohibition of going above 25 percent applies to the board increasing the penalty above 25 percent of what the treasurer holds. There is no prohibition of the penalty amount being more than 25 percent above what the treasurer actually holds if the amount the treasurer holds is reduced. This is one reason a board might exercise its judgment to decrease the penalty amount.

For example, if during the course of a year a district issues bonds, thus increasing the amount that the treasurer will have in his custody, the district should concurrently consider increasing the amount for which the treasurer is bonded. To do otherwise may leave the district open to risk of liability for the difference between the amount for which the treasurer was originally bonded and the amount for which the treasurer should now be bonded. If the district pays off bonds during the year, the amount for which the treasurer is bonded may be decreased because the bonded indebtedness in the treasurer’s custody will likewise be reduced.
The bond shall be payable to the township trustees of schools over the district or payable to the school board of the district, whichever is applicable. The bond shall be filed with the Regional Superintendent of Schools. School districts should not file a copy of their bonds with ISBE. Regional Superintendents of Schools shall file an affidavit with ISBE, by September 1 of each year, showing which treasurers of school districts in their region are properly bonded. Copies of the actual school treasurer bond do not have to be filed with ISBE.

Additional Reminders on the School Treasurer Bond affidavit will be published in the Weekly Message in August.

Please contact Michelle Heninger at 217-785-8779 or e-mail her at mheninge@isbe.net with any follow-up questions.

**Average Daily Attendance Calculation for Attendance Centers with Different Calendars**

Recently, there have been some questions pertaining to school attendance centers that may have a different calendar than the official district calendar and how Average Daily Attendance (ADA) should be reported and calculated for General State Aid purposes. In establishing a school calendar, school boards must approve only one official district calendar, unless they have an approved full year plan under Section 10-19.1 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/10-19.1]. The calendar for the school term and any changes must be transmitted to and approved by the regional superintendent of schools before the calendar or changes may take effect. If a school district has or wants to establish a full year plan, for one or more of its buildings, or for the entire school district, it must first submit its plan, including its calendar, and receive approval from the Illinois State Board of Education. Therefore, school districts must either have a single calendar for the regular school term, a year-round calendar for all of its attendance centers, or a year-round calendar for some of its attendance centers and a single regular school term calendar for the rest of its attendance centers.

Average Daily Attendance is determined in only one of three ways [105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(F)]. If a school district does not hold year-round classes, then days of attendance in August must be added to the month of May [105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(F)(a)]. If all of a school district’s buildings hold year-round classes, the days of attendance in July and August must be added to the month of May [105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(F)(b)]. For school districts that have a mix of year-round buildings and non-year round buildings, the year-round buildings must add the days of attendance in July and August to the month of September, and the days of attendance in June to the month of May; and the non-year round buildings must add the days of attendance in August to the month of September, and the days of attendance in June to the month of May [105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(F)(c)]. To calculate the correct ADA, the school district must take the average daily attendance for the year-round building(s) and multiply it by the days in session in the official school calendar for each month; then add this to the monthly attendance of all the district attendance centers that follow the official school calendar. Any variance from the official school calendar would require that ADA be calculated in this same manner, and the school district should contact ISBE’s Accountability Department to address the calendar variance issues. Failure to meet the necessary calendar requirements, obtain full year plan approval, and calculate average daily attendance as required, will result in the recalculation of inaccurate Average Daily Attendance and could affect General State Aid via an audit adjustment.

Example for districts with year-round and non-year round attendance centers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Conversion Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Attendance for All Buildings using “Official” School Calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converted Attendance from below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total District wide Adjusted Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted District wide Average Daily Attendance (a/b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Days of attendance for a Building not using the Official Calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Days In Session for this Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Daily Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times Official Calendar Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If for some reason your school district is operating under more than one calendar, but does not have an approved full year plan, please contact the Illinois State Board of Education’s Accountability Division. Any school district seeking to submit a full year plan should also contact the Accountability Division for information on how to request approval. Please contact Donna Luallen, Accountability Division Administrator at 217-782-2948.

If you have additional questions about the calculation for Average Daily Attendance, please contact Jim Mathes imathes@isbe.net, Division of Funding and Disbursements at 217-782-5256.
Message from Governor’s Office

Flags at State of Illinois buildings to fly at half staff June 13 and June 15

Governor Blagojevich has ordered flags at all State of Illinois buildings to be flown at half staff on Tuesday, June 13, to honor Marine Cpl. Ryan J. Cummings of Streamwood, Illinois. Cpl. Cummings died June 3, 2006 from wounds received while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar, Iraq. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, California.

The Governor has ordered flags to be flown at half staff on Thursday, June 15, 2006, to honor Marine Sgt. Edward G. Davis III, 31, of Antioch, Illinois. Sgt. Davis died April 28, 2006 while conducting combat operations against enemy forces in Al Anbar, Iraq. He was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, California. Sgt. Davis was laid to rest in California in May. Thursday’s memorial service in Wadsworth, Illinois, will be led by his father, Edward Davis, II.

Student Support

Services available for military families

The Illinois Chapter of the National Military Family Association in Illinois and the Illinois National Guard are concerned with the well-being of children of deployed military personnel who face pressures and may require special attention by school staff.

To help schools identify family members of persons serving in any branch of the military, they have suggested that schools incorporate the following questions into their registration materials:

- Does this child have any immediate family members (parents, siblings or a guardian), currently serving in any branch of the military?
  - Army
  - Navy
  - Air Force
  - Marines
  - Coast Guard
- Is this Service Member currently deployed or recently returned from a deployment overseas?

Schools identifying children who could benefit from services are encouraged to contact Russ Hopkins at lesmediate@aol.com or Maj. Joe Schweickert, State Family Program Director, Illinois National Guard at joseph.schweickert@us.army.mil.

Nutrition

Bookmark National School Lunch Week site, Vote for School Lunch theme

The School Nutrition Association invites food service professionals to visit their newly updated Vote for School Lunch, National School Lunch website at http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/nslw2006/index.asp.

National School Lunch Week is celebrated October 9-13, 2006. Learn how the voting works in this celebration, menus and a fact sheet on National School Lunch Week. Bookmark the website and visit it this summer for other useful information such as logos, a toolkit with great ideas and fun resources to promote the event.

For Teacher, By Teacher American Heart Association and the National Football League Middle School Activity Plan Contest

Calling all Middle School Teachers. Try a chance to win $250.00 by entering the American Heart Association and the National Football League’s Middle School Activity Plan Contest. Studies show that physical activity in schools helps students perform better and become healthier and stronger.

To enter, teachers must submit Activity Plans for middle school classes, grades 6 through 8 that follow national, State and district curriculum guidelines when applicable. For application information visit: http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3039422

The goal of the contest is to help kids understand how to integrate physical activity into all parts of their lives in physical education classes, language arts, social studies and science and math classes.

The AHA suggests entries be creative, original and fun! Ideas can range from:

- taking heart rates pre- and post-exercise for science class;
- calculating distances walked for math classes;
- conducting plays that require physical activity for language arts or social studies classes; to
• developing physical activity games that incorporate learning (such as anatomy tag for science classes).

The breakout by category of the 30 prizewinners follows:
• ten winners for physical education activity plans
• five winners for language art classes
• five winners for social studies classes
• five winners for math classes
• five winners for science classes

School food service mini-grant opportunity

A mini-grant of up to $1,000 is available to school food service authorities to use in delivering or participating in training directly related to development, implementation or evaluation of local wellness policy initiatives. Applications must be postmarked by July 14, 2007. For details, visit [http://www.kidseatwell.org/whatsnew.html](http://www.kidseatwell.org/whatsnew.html) or go directly to: [http://www.kidseatwell.org/SFS mini grant.doc](http://www.kidseatwell.org/SFS mini grant.doc).

Data Analysis

**Pre Kindergarten Program and Student Record Forms**

Districts with Prekindergarten At-Risk program need to submit the Program Record form (ISBE 86-36) and Student Record form (ISBE 86-45) by June 30. The Prek Student Record needs to be submitted on IWAS. The instructions can be downloaded from our website: [http://www.isbe.net/research/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/research/Default.htm). The Program record form was mailed to district superintendents on April 6, 2006. This form can also be downloaded from the above site. Since ISBE has to send the report to the governor and legislators, it is imperative that the data are submitted on time. If you have questions, call Kalpana Desai at 217-782-3950 or email her at kkdesai@isbe.net.

Curriculum and Instruction

**Reading Improvement Block Grant Performance Report**

The Reading Improvement Block Grant performance report for FY06 is due June 15, 2006, for districts not using ISAT as their assessment tool for the grant. Districts using the State assessment should submit their performance reports within 30 days after receiving ISAT scores. If you used ISAT as well as other assessments, please submit your report in its entirety after you receive your ISAT scores. Do not submit partial reports! The report form is online at: [http://www.isbe.net/ils/ela/reading/pdf/F43-31_reading_grant_report.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/ils/ela/reading/pdf/F43-31_reading_grant_report.pdf).

You may type on the form, but it must be printed out and submitted with assessment data to Laurie Lee at ISBE, Curriculum & Instruction Division (C-215), 100 N. First Street, Springfield, IL 62777-0001. The assessment data should be gathered with the approved assessment tool indicated on the FY06 application. Applications for FY07 funds should be completed immediately through the e-Grants Management System, accessed through IWAS, if your district has not yet applied for the FY07 Reading Improvement Block Grant. Questions regarding the Reading Improvement Block Grant should be directed to Laurie Lee at 217-557-7323 or lelee@isbe.net.

**NCLB**

**Policy Guidance - Improvement Status for Reconfigured Schools and Districts**

**Schools**

When two or more schools combine to form a new school, the new school may petition the State Superintendent to assume the lowest school improvement status level – at each of the State and Federal levels – of the combining schools. For example, if School A is a Title I-funded school which must offer public school choice to its students (Year 1 of NCLB sanctions) combines with School B, another Title I-funded school which must offer public school choice and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) to its students (Year 2 of NCLB sanctions), the new School AB must offer public school choice to its students.

However, per direction from the United States Department of Education, if any of the combining schools are in either the planning or implementing stage of Restructuring under NCLB, the new school will be considered to have implemented Restructuring and must continue to offer both public school choice and SES to its students until it makes Adequate Yearly Progress for 2 consecutive years.

The petition to the State Superintendent should include, on District letterhead:
• Information about each new school:
  • Facility Name/ Address/Phone/Fax/Email
  • Administrator(s) Name(s)
  • Effective Opening Date
  • Grade levels Served at each school
  • State Representative District
  • State Senate District
  • Congressional District

Information about the previous schools:
• Applicable RCDTS codes
• Facility Names  
• Effective Closing Dates  
• RCDTS/Facility Name of the School(s) students will be attending (by grade level)

**Districts**

When two or more districts are involved in a school district reorganization that results in the formation of one or more new districts, the new district(s) will assume the lowest improvement status level – at each of the State and Federal levels – of the districts involved in the reorganization. For example, if District D is in the third year of improvement status and it combines with District E which is in the fifth year of improvement status, the new District DE will assume the third year of improvement status.

**AYP appeals process**

School districts may appeal their district or school status to the Illinois State Board of Education. A letter from the district superintendent to the State Superintendent of Education for consideration by the Appeals Advisory Committee, listing the issue and rationale for the appeal, begins the process. The details are available online at: [http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf).

**Professional Development**

**Illinois Park and Recreation Association sponsors playground safety training course**

Sponsored by the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), this course is the most comprehensive training program offered on playground hazard identification and risk management methods. Advanced reading and ten hours of training will prepare you to take the Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) Exam, which will take place on the last day.

- The National Playground Safety Institute (NPSI) promotes children’s rights to play and the importance of play in a child’s development.
- NPSI provides the most current comprehensive training program on public playground safety, including the development and distribution of playground training and safety products.
- NPSI provides input to help develop a responsible public policy which guarantees the safety of our children. At the same time, NPSI advocates sound fiscal responsibility to provide resources for the ongoing maintenance and support of the policy.

Resource materials developed especially for this course are included in the registration fee and will be mailed to all pre-registered participants.

Conference information and a registration form are available online at [http://ilipra.org/Forms/Reg-0605120226.pdf](http://ilipra.org/Forms/Reg-0605120226.pdf) or by contacting Dina Kartch, IPRA Education and Conference Director at either [dina@ILipra.org](mailto:dina@ILipra.org) or 630-376-1911, extension 200.

**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).

**Weekly News clips**

Highlights from last week’s education news clips are posted at: [http://www.isbe.net/news/2006/newsclips/060609.htm](http://www.isbe.net/news/2006/newsclips/060609.htm)