While most schools are out for the summer, there rarely is a slow time in education and last week was no exception. The Illinois State Board of Education met in Springfield and had a lively discussion on school reform with a presentation by a group advancing the Burnham Plan. The plan has many implications for education and was unveiled late during the legislative session on May 21st.

Board members also approved several million dollars in grants that many of you have a strong interest in, including grants for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Learning Technology Center grants, Enhancing Education through Technology and Statewide Technical Assistance Center grants. In addition, Board members reviewed longitudinal data system development in Illinois against targets established by the national Data Quality Campaign. Several recommendations were reviewed for advancing Illinois’ capacity to better use data to drive policy and school improvement.

Last week we received some very good news with regard to Special Education in Illinois. After more than two years in development, the Agency’s amendments to its special education rules, Part 226, cleared their final hurdle. The Joint Committee on Administrative Rules lifted a January 2007 filing prohibition in its entirety, and thus Agency staff will file the amendments with the Secretary of State (and the amendments will take effect) within the next several days. The sections of the Part 226 amendments about which JCAR focused their review involved class size, workload and researched based interventions. JCAR’s lifting of the prohibition (and the Agency’s filing of the amendments) best ensures Illinois will continue to receive special education funding without condition. For a more complete review of the rules, please go to our web site at: http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/default.htm.

ISBE will be hosting two sessions on the new regulations at the Special Education Directors’ Conference in early August and will follow up this fall with regional training sessions. Additional materials are being developed for dissemination and use by administrators, teachers and parents. This has been a long process involving many of you and I thank you all for your patience and input.

As it stands now, there will be no State Board meeting in July. We will keep an eye on events at the Capitol and provide you with information that impacts you as it becomes available to us.

I hope you have a great week.

Chris
Upcoming Deadlines

- **Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report** – June 30, 2007
- **Student Health Data (Dental)** – June 30, 2007
- **Waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2007** – August 10, 2007

Special Message from the Governor’s Office

**Lowered flags to honor fallen Illinois soldier**

Governor Blagojevich has ordered flags at all State of Illinois buildings to fly at half staff on **Wednesday, June 27, 2007**, to honor **Army Pvt. First Class Jacob Tracy of Palestine, Ill.**

**Pvt. Tracy**, 20, died June 18 in Balad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle on June 17 in Baghdad, Iraq. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

This information is shared with Illinois schools at the request of the Regional Offices of Education and local school districts. Flying flags at school buildings at half staff is entirely at the discretion of the local administration.

Certification

**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 June 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. If this information becomes available after June 30, it should be reported as soon as possible, but certainly before the beginning of the 2007-08 school year.

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.

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 for the 2007-2008 school year, 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.


**Administrator Certificate Renewal & Employment**

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) would like to share some very important information regarding Administrator Certificate Renewal. We understand the dilemma concerning contract renewal for administrators whose Statements of Assurance (SOA) are still pending action by ISBE.
ISBE remains short of staff. We recently were fortunate to hire two individuals to assist in processing administrator certificate renewals for the month of June. We are confident this will help shorten the turn-around time for renewals. Unfortunately, it is doubtful that all SOAs will have final approval by July 1, 2007.

We ask that when renewing administrator contracts you take into account whether the administrator submitted his or her SOA to ISBE before June 30. If the SOA is pending approval, we would appreciate your consideration of the administrator’s good faith effort to meet renewal requirements.

When the agency is in receipt of final 2007-08 Teacher Service Record data this fall, we will create a list of administrators reported as employed on an expired certificate. This will allow you to direct appropriate action toward individuals employed on non-renewed certificates.

Please share this information with those individuals employed on Type 75 certificates in your district.

We hope this helps clarify the agency position on the link between administrator renewal and employment.

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**Curriculum & Instruction**

**Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships grant program**

The Division of Curriculum and Instruction at ISBE is proud to announce a special opportunity from the **Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships** (IMSP) projects, as a part of NCLB, Title II, Part B. ISBE is beginning the school recruitment phase for the new cycle of the IMSP for 2007-2008.

This grant program will provide opportunities to receive Masters’ degrees that include endorsements in specific mathematics and science fields for up to 750 teachers in schools that meet the eligibility requirements. Districts and buildings (local education agencies-LEAs) will compete for participation in multiple partnerships which will afford special focus toward creating and sustaining quality mathematics and science programs at the local level. Completed applications will be due by August 21, 2007.

Find out more in the School Recruitment Phase Questions and Answers at: [http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/math_science/rfp.htm](http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/math_science/rfp.htm).

Contact **msp-rfp@isbe.net** with additional questions after your review of these materials.

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**Funding & Disbursements**

**Reminder: 2006-07 General State Aid Claims Due**

Please be advised that per Section 18-12, the 2006-07 General State Aid Claim must be received by each respective Regional Office of Education by June 21 for districts with an official school calendar end date before June 15, or within 2 weeks following the official school calendar end date for districts with a school year end date of June 15 or later. The regional superintendent shall certify and file with the State Superintendent of Education district state aid claims by July 1 for districts with an official school calendar end date of June 15 or later. Failure to file by these deadlines constitutes a forfeiture of the right to receive payment by the State until such claim is filed and vouchered for payment.

A final school calendar must be approved before the General State Aid claim can be transmitted. If you need technical assistance with completing the final school calendar, you may contact your Regional Office of Education or **Marj Beck**, Illinois State Board of Education, at **mbeck@isbe.net**. Questions related to completing the General State Aid Claim can be directed to **Jim Mathes**, Illinois State Board of Education, at **jmathes@isbe.net**. Marj and Jim can be reached in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

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**Nutrition**

**Enhance Your Local Wellness Policy By Joining Team Nutrition**

More than 1,100 Illinois schools have joined USDA’s Team Nutrition initiative since its inception in 1995. Team Nutrition’s (TN) goal is to improve children’s lifelong eating and physical activity habits through nutrition education based on the principles of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid.

Why join? Joining Team Nutrition can be one of your Local Wellness Policy projects. Team Nutrition schools receive a free resource kit of promotional materials to help implement TN in your schools, and it’s free.
Joining is easy! Just complete the one-page enrollment form, obtain the necessary signatures, and fax to 703-305-2549 or mail to:

**Enrollment Form**

Team Nutrition  
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 632  
Alexandria, VA 22102

Please provide a copy to the Illinois State Board of Education, Nutrition Programs. It can be faxed to 217-524-6124 or send via mail to:

**Nutrition Programs**  
Illinois State Board of Education  
100 North First Street, W-270  
Springfield, IL 62777-0001

**Orientation to Child Nutrition Management Seminars Offered**

**July 23 Deadline For Wisconsin Training**

Targeting new and aspiring Child Nutrition Program directors, the National Food Service Management Institute’s (FNSMI) five-day seminars provide participants with the Child Nutrition Programs history and overview, roles and responsibilities of a director, and reviews and the relationship between local policies and State/Federal regulations. The cost is $150 for the five-day seminar.

One summer training remains: August 6-10, 2007 at Monomo Grove High School in Monona, WI, near Madison.

Visit the fact sheet and registration forms links at:

- Download Fact Sheet (PDF)
- Download Registration Form (Interactive PDF)

Contact the NFSMI at 800-321-3054 or via website at [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org) for more information; or contact Melba Hollingsworth, Education and Training Specialist at mholling@olemiss.edu.

**School Business & Support Services**

**Introduction to the Incident Command System for Schools course now available online**

A web-based course on the Incident Command System for schools - *Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS), I-100, for Schools* – is now available online. This National Incident Management System (NIMS)-compliant course can be accessed through the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) Independent Study website at: [http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100SC.asp](http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100SC.asp).

The Emergency Management Institute developed the Introduction to ICS for Schools (IS-100.SC for Schools) course in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education. The course is designed primarily for kindergarten through high school personnel.

The overall course goal is to promote school safety by:

1. Familiarizing you with how ICS principles can be applied in school-based incidents.
2. Preparing you to interface with community response personnel.

At the completion of the course you should be familiar with ICS:

- applications in school-based incidents.
- organizational principles and elements.
- positions and responsibilities
- facilities and functions.
- planning.

CEUs: 0.2  
Course Length: 2.5 hours

**Lightning Safety Awareness Week in the state of Illinois is June 24-30, 2007**

There are an estimated 25 million cloud-to-ground lightning flashes each year in the United States, nearly 650,000 of which occur in Illinois. Lightning can be fascinating to watch, but it is also extremely dangerous – it is the under-rated killer. Few people fully understand the dangers of lightning. Many people don’t act promptly to protect their lives, property, and the lives of others. The first step in solving this potentially life threatening problem is education.

Use the information in the guide provided on the IEMA website [www.state.il.us/iema](http://www.state.il.us/iema) to educate yourself and others about the dangers of lightning!

**Special Education**

**IDEA Determination**
We received our determination letter on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) from the US Department of Education. Illinois was placed in the “needs assistance” category along with the vast majority of other states. Only nine – mostly smaller states – were placed in the “meets requirements” category for Part B determinations.

Each state is required to have in place a State Performance Plan that evaluates the state’s efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of IDEA Part B, which describes how the state will improve its implementation of these programs. Additionally, each state must submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) detailing its progress in meeting the targets it established in its SPP.

To make state determinations, the U.S. Department of Education took into consideration the state’s compliance indicators in their APR; whether the state provided valid and reliable FY 05 data that reflected the measurements for the indicator; and whether the state had other IDEA compliance issues that had been identified by the Department’s monitoring. Given the problems we had in obtaining recent assessment results, we were unable to include this in our APR. This factor makes our state determination from USDOE on IDEA implementation all the more impressive.

In addition, Illinois received special commendation from USDOE for three determining factors where we made substantial improvements. Specifically, USDOE singled out our performance on resolving compliance investigation within 60 days – 95.7%. We were also singled out for a nearly 20-percentage point improvement in processing due process decisions and a more than 22-percent increase in correcting identified non-compliance issues within 12 months.

Also, due to recent developments with Part 226 Special Education rules, two new conference sessions have been added. Following the regularly scheduled sessions which will end at noon on Thursday, August 2, participants will be given time for lunch on their own and will then have the option of attending the two sessions listed below:

1:15 – 2:15  Session on Major Changes to Part 226 (Response to Scientific, Research-Based Interventions, Class Size, Case Load and Age 22)
2:15 – 2:30  Break
2:30 – 3:30  Session on Collective Bargaining Issues Pertaining to Part 226

Following JCAR’s action on June 13 to lift the filing prohibition on all portions of Part 226 except Sections 226.130 and 226.730, and 226.731, Superintendent Koch convened a meeting with a number of interested parties to explore the issues that still remained with regard to those Sections. As a result of this discussion, technical revisions were made to these Sections and submitted to JCAR for review. Subsequently, on June 19, JCAR lifted the filing probation on remaining Sections of Part 226. We anticipate the Part 226 regulations will be finalized no later than July 1, 2007.

The registration deadline for the conference is Friday, July 13, 2007. The conference is limited to 1,000 registrants. Registration forms can be accessed under the “What’s New” section on the Special Education homepage at www.isbe.net or by selecting the following links:


For additional information or for special accommodations, contact Mary Long, Illinois State Board of Education, at 217-782-5589, or via e-mail at malong@isbe.net.

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**Update: Special Education Directors’ Conference 2007 – Focus on Best Practice**

The Illinois State Board of Education will sponsor the Special Education Directors’ Conference 2007 – Focus on Best Practice on July 31 and Aug. 1-2 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield. Strands for the conference have just been announced as follows:

- Transition
- Literacy
- Research-based Interventions
- Disproportionality

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**Professional Development**

**Superintendents’ Conference Registration is now open**
The Illinois State Board of Education is pleased to announce the Thirtieth Annual Superintendents’ Conference to be held Thursday and Friday, Sept. 6 and 7, 2007, at the Hilton Springfield Hotel.

Registration for the annual conference is now open. The registration brochure is posted online at: http://www.isbe.net/sufts_conf/sufts_conference_reg.pdf

Dr. Ronald F. Ferguson will serve as the keynote speaker. Dr. Ferguson, a lecturer in public policy, is an economist and senior research associate at the Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy and has taught at Harvard since 1983. Much of his research since the mid-1990s has focused on racial achievement gaps, appearing in publications of the National Research Council, the Brookings Institution, and the U.S. Department of Education, in addition to various books and scholarly journals. His teachings and publications cover a variety of issues related to education and economic development.

For conference questions, contact Leigh Ann Smith at 217-782-6434 or via e-mail at lsmith@isbe.net.

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**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.

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**In the News**

**Weekly news clips**