Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

We’re about midway through the summer and I know everyone is busy preparing for the coming school year. As you know, the No Child Left Behind Act causes us to focus so much of what we do on student achievement and whether or not our students are meeting state standards. While our main focus is and always should be on students, the professional development of the men and women who are in the classroom day in and day out should never be forgotten.

ISBE recently approved the addition of 15 new projects under the Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships (IMSP) program. This program is designed to increase our classroom achievement for students in math and science by enhancing the knowledge and professional skills of their teachers. We hope to fund an additional 15 partnerships by early September.

All of the partnerships will include the development and implementation of innovative graduate degree programs that will concentrate on building content expertise and leadership talents essential for Illinois’ highly qualified teachers. They will be organized by endorsements and specializations for elementary and secondary math and science.

The IMSP program will enable classroom teachers from high-need districts and from regions of the state with fewer opportunities to build their expertise through the collaboration of university experts, resources and facilities in innovative ways. The participating universities include Aurora, Bradley, DePaul, Illinois Institute of Technology, Illinois State, Loyola, Northern Illinois, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

ISBE’s providing the grants to these public and private universities to build meaningful partnerships with school districts aimed at improving the quality of instruction and learning in our K-12 classrooms. It’s an investment in our teachers and in our students.

This investment goes further and will have greater benefit than just improving the quality of teaching. I believe that through higher quality teachers, we can improve not just the achievement levels of our students but also increase their overall knowledge and their ability to become productive citizens. My colleague, Jack Lavin, Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, sees our students as the innovation talent pool for the state.

This investment fits with ISBE’s goal of preparing students for success after graduation and is an investment in Illinois’ future. The IMSP focus on developing strong math and science skills complements the ever-growing needs of technological careers, which are driving a greater portion of our economy today than ever before. Programs like IMSP will help our state compete in the future, nationally and internationally, by ensuring that our students are better prepared for the careers they will have once they leave our schools.
I hope that you would encourage anyone interested in finding out more about the IMSP program to contact our Division of Curriculum and Instruction at 217-557-7323.

Thanks and have a great week.

Chris

Upcoming Deadlines

- **Applications for Migrant Education Program funding** – July 31, 2007
- **Waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2007** – August 10, 2007
- **Applications for Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnership grant program** – August 21, 2007

Student Assessment

**AYP Appeals process**

ISBE is in the process of posting final 2007 AYP results for schools and districts on IWAS. These reports are the basis for making the designation of schools or districts as being in need of improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under federal law.

The No Child Left Behind law and the State Accountability statute and rules allow schools and districts to appeal their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status if the district has questions regarding the accuracy of the determination. ISBE has developed materials regarding how a school or district appeals its designation. Each appeal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by ISBE staff and by the Appeals Advisory Committee.

Once a school or district status report has been posted on IWAS, an appeal must be filed within 30 days or by September 1, whichever is later (for 2007, though, the September 1 date is actually September 4 because of the weekend and holiday).

More information – including a revised procedural guidance, a sample timeline and new forms to begin the appeal process – is available online at [www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf).

Please direct any questions or concerns to **Melina Wright**, NCLB Liaison, at 217-782-7362; fax: 217-782-3533; or email at: mewright@isbe.net.

Curriculum & Instruction

**FY08 Learn and Serve America continuing applications now available**

The FY08 Illinois K-12 school-based Learn and Serve America applications are now available on the Illinois State Board of Education’s website at [www.isbe.net/curriculum/service_learning](http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/service_learning). FY07 Learn and Serve America grantees are eligible to apply for a continuation grant for FY08 activities.

For more information on this grant, please contact **Ted Gibbs**, Office of the Illinois Lieutenant Governor, at 312-814-6673; fax: 312-814-4862; or by e-mail at Ted.Gibbs@Illinois.gov. Assistance is also available from **Michael Mangan** at 224-366-8534; fax: 847-649-0551; or by e-mail at mmangan@thecenterweb.org.

This document and other information on service-learning can be accessed at [www.isbe.net/curriculum/service_learning](http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/service_learning).

Governmental Relations

**Spring session update**

The General Assembly has passed numerous education related pieces of legislation over the course of the 2007 Spring legislative session.

A list of this legislation can be found on the State Board website at: [www.isbe.net/gov_relations/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/gov_relations/default.htm). Click on the link “2007 Passed Legislation – Preliminary Report” to access the document.

This document will be updated as the General Assembly continues meeting and acting on legislation. None of
these bills will become law until the Governor has signed the bill and it has been issued a Public Act Number.

At this time, only one education-related bill has been signed into law, SB 423 (Public Act 95-0004). Effective immediately, this legislation allows the respective school boards of Berwyn North School District 98, Berwyn South School District 100, Cicero School District 99, and J.S. Morton High School District 201 to withdraw from the jurisdiction and authority of the trustees of schools of Cicero Township and the township treasurer, provided that the school board elects or appoints its own school treasurer.

Please contact Nicole Wills, Governmental Relations Division, at 217-782-6510 or nwills@isbe.net with any questions about signed or pending legislation.

**Nutrition**

**New Sponsors and New Staff are encouraged to register for ‘Basic Training Workshops’**

Food service employees, business managers and school administrators who work with the School-Based Child Nutrition Programs, are encouraged to register for one of the seven School-Based Child Nutrition Programs Administrative Workshops. The workshops will be held in August, September and October.

Pre-registration is required. Register for the free one-day workshop by visiting the Nutrition Division’s website at www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/workshops.htm. Scroll to NSLP Workshops and select ‘Basic Training – A Guide to School-Based Child Nutrition Programs’ for more information.

**Useful Nutrition websites**

Below are a few useful nutrition websites.

- Nutrition Programs – [www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition)
- School Nutrition Association – [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org)


**Rules & Waivers**

**Notice of Completed Rulemaking**

Please be advised that four rulemakings recently adopted by the State Board of Education are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s website 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)**

These amendments eliminate duplicate provisions that were included to accommodate the policies that were stated in P.A. 94-666 but conflicted with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. The U.S. Department of Education formally disapproved those policies and they have now been deleted from the affected portions of the rules.

**Affected Sections:** 1.30, 1.60, and 1.80

**Effective Date:** June 26, 2007

**Part 226 (Special Education)**

This is the comprehensive set of revisions that responds to the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA and has been in progress since early 2006.

**Affected Sections:** All except 226.320, 226.675, 226.770, and 226.800-840

**Effective Date:** June 26, 2007

**Part 475 (Contested Cases and Other Formal Hearings)**

This amendment deleted the reference to a hearing for individuals denied certification because they are found not to be of good character.

**Affected Section:** 475.20

**Effective Date:** June 26, 2007

**Part 485 (Appeal Proceedings Before the State Teacher Certification Board)**

This is a new set of rules covering appeals heard by the STCB when a regional superintendent or the State Superintendent has suspended an individual’s certificates pursuant to Section 21-23 of the School Code.

**Affected Sections:** All
Effective Date: June 26, 2007

School Business & Support Services

Deadline for filing the final amended School District Budget with ISBE (school districts only)

The final date for submitting the amended School District Budget Form 50-36, (fiscal year ending June 30, 2007) is July 30, 2007.

In compliance with Section 17-1 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/17-1), as amended by Public Act 94-0234, final amended school districts’ budget for Fiscal Year 2006-07 must be filed with ISBE within 30 days of local board action. This is in addition to: (1) filing a certified copy with the county clerk(s) and (2) posting the budget on the district’s internet website, if created.

If you have not already done so, please visit the “Attachment Manager” link: https://sec1.isbe.net/attachmgr/default.aspx, to complete all required information, and attach your amended budget file. Under the “Receiver Information” drop down box be sure to select “School Finance Report Group” and select the submission button.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Christine Kolaz, School Business and Support Services Division, at 217-785-8779 or via e-mail at: ekolaz@isbe.net.

Teacher Resources

NASA Explorer Schools

Applications are now available for educators interested in joining NASA Explorer Schools during the 2008-2009 school year. Schools from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands may apply for the NES 2008-2009 school year.

The program offers unique opportunities designed to engage and educate the future scientists who may someday advance U.S. scientific interests through space exploration.

Teams composed of full-time teachers and a school administrator develop and implement a three-year action plan to address local challenges in science, technology, and mathematics education for grades 4-9. Schools that are selected are eligible to receive funding during the three-year partnership to purchase technology tools. The project also provides educators and students with content-specific activities that can be used within the curricula to excite students about science, technology, engineering and math.

Applications are due Jan. 31, 2008. For more information, visit http://explorerschools.nasa.gov/portal/site/nes/menutem.3a9dc5f6e0302a448258f708c41a5ea0/.

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