Good afternoon.

You likely recall that in May I shared with you the fact that we continued to refine how Illinois schools and districts are held accountable for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) through amendments to the Illinois Accountability Workbook. We have been working with staff of the U.S. Department of Education on allowable changes to the Workbook, the state’s NCLB accountability mechanism. The process for securing these changes from the feds included ongoing dialogue and negotiation with USED staff.

As a reminder, here is what we were able to change for 2005:
- change in subgroup size from 40 to 45;
- use of Confidence Intervals (CI);
- use of grade span review regarding district improvement status;
- use of the special education “proxy;” and
- modified the definition of a full academic year.

The Agency was notified on July 31st that our workbook changes have been approved for 2006. We were not able to get all that we had asked for (notably, we had requested a significant increase in subgroup size which was not allowed), but a set of amendments were permitted for 2006 which will be helpful:

- **Backmapping** - This is a process that will allow us to utilize Grade 3 AYP to apply to Grade 2 feeder schools that end with Grade 2 (e.g., a K-2 primary building). Beginning with the 2006-07 school year, schools will no longer be using the Terra Nova or other measures to assess students as they have the last five years. The AYP decision for a K-2 school for 2006-07 and thereafter will be based on the third-grade assessment results of the receiving school in which the students eventually enroll, so that all K-2 schools will receive an annual AYP determination. Student AYP will in essence be “mapped” from the next higher grade to the lower grade in a school not otherwise held accountable (indeed, this same process could also come into play for Grade 9-10 centers at the high school level). For those lower-grade schools that feed into more than one school, the receiving school with the majority of the students will be used as the basis for the lower-grade school AYP status.

- **Continue with 2% proxy for scores of students with disabilities** - Illinois used the USED-allowed “2% proxy” in 2005. For schools not making AYP solely because the IEP subgroup fails to have 47.5% Meeting/Exceeding standards, a specific percentage (based on a prescribed formula) will be added to the percent Meeting/Exceeding in accordance with this federal flexibility. It is anticipated that the Illinois calculation will be 14% in 2006—as it was in 2005—to be counted for helping to reach proficiency for the students-with-disabilities subgroup.

- **Confidence Interval (CI)** - Illinois will use a 95% confidence interval for the “all” group, as well as for individual subgroups.

- **CI for Safe Harbor** - Illinois will use a 75% confidence interval for safe harbor.

Some clarifications to existing workbook language were also approved:

- **Clarify language regarding full academic year** - For 2005-06 and thereafter, students who are enrolled in the district on or before May 1, 2005, and who stay continuously enrolled through state testing in spring 2006, are considered to be enrolled for a full academic year. (Subsequent years would be...
similar in terms of a May 1 date for the calculation of AYP for the following school year.)

- **Clarify language regarding medical exemptions** - Students may be excluded from the enrollment count in a school and from taking a state assessment if, at the time of testing, they: a) have been admitted on an emergency basis to a hospital or residential facility (e.g., because of a motor vehicle or other type of accident, emergency surgery, psychiatric emergency) or on an emergency basis to a drug/alcohol/psychological treatment program; and b) are unable to be schooled.

- **Clarify language regarding homebound exemptions** - Students on homebound status at the time of testing who are too ill, (based upon a specific written statement from a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches) to be tested may be excluded from the enrollment count in a school and from taking a state assessment.

- **Participation** - State law requires that all public school students participate in the state tests appropriate for their grade; 95% participation is the standard. For those students who participate but for various reasons do not complete the test process (e.g., illness), they are counted as having participated.

All of these changes will be in effect for the AYP calculations now taking place. The full workbook is online at [www.isbe.net/nclb](http://www.isbe.net/nclb).

I would like to have gotten somewhat more with this year’s package of amendments, but I’ve already spoken in this space to the markedly more aggressive approach the feds have taken toward enforcement of the four corners of the NCLB Act.

Following this article, please see a note regarding the IWAS blast sent to Illinois districts late last week. We’ve included an update on PSAE scores there as well.

And supes—please make sure to get registered for ISBE Annual Superintendents’ Conference in early September. You will find a reminder elsewhere in this week’s *Message*.

Have a great week.

Randy Dunn

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### Upcoming Deadlines

- Special Education Private Facility Reimbursement Claim - **August 15, 2006**
- Special Education Personnel Reimbursement Claim - **August 15, 2006**
- Regular/Vocational/Special Education Transportation Reimbursement Claim - **August 15, 2006**
- Superintendents’ Conference Registration – **August 21, 2006**
- Rules Public Comment Deadline, Part 65 and Part 365 – **August 21, 2006**
- Affidavit of School Treasurer Bonds submitted by Regional Superintendents - **September 1, 2006**
- Rules Public Comment, Part 265– **September 5, 2006**
- Rules Public Comment Deadline, Special Education– **September 15, 2006**
- Burroughs Award Nominations – **October 13, 2006**

### Data Analysis - AYP

#### Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and School Improvement Status

Previously, district superintendents were notified of the process and the new conditions that will be used to calculate Adequate Yearly Progress for the 2005-06 school year. As you know, AYP is calculated once the E-report card data are approved by local superintendents and submitted to ISBE, and the enrollment on the last day of testing and the assessment data are available for the school. The AYP Status Reports are then posted on IWAS and superintendents are notified via IWAS that the reports are available.

Due to circumstances related to our Harcourt issues, it is very unlikely that AYP will be calculated and school improvement status known prior to the beginning of the school year for most schools.

To date, AYP status for Title I schools that have Grade 2 as the highest grade has been calculated and posted on IWAS.
Data for all tests Grades 3-8 is in the final stages of the cleanup process.

We still do not have PSAE data, and we recognize that this is very frustrating for high schools. Our best information at this point is that PSAE data will be ready at the end of next week.

Once all of the required data are available, calculating AYP and identifying school improvement status will be the top priority for ISBE.

In the meantime, there are steps that can be taken at the district level to ensure that programs are in place. Whether the Title I school made AYP in 2005 will determine how the district prepares for the upcoming school year. *Since it takes two consecutive years of making AYP to be removed from status*, all Title I schools currently in federal improvement status that did not make AYP in 2005 will remain in improvement status and must offer choice options (if available) plus the services associated with last year’s status, regardless of whether AYP is met in 2006. To clarify:

Title I schools that are currently in federal improvement status and did not make AYP in 2005 will remain in federal improvement status and must offer choice options (if available) plus the services associated with 2005 status, regardless of whether AYP is met in 2006. For example, a school in choice status will remain in that status at a minimum. If it does not make AYP in 2006, it must offer choice and Supplemental Education Services (SES). If it makes AYP it will remain in choice status because it takes two consecutive years of making AYP to be removed from status.

District officials with Title I schools that are currently in federal improvement status and made AYP in 2005 should wait for 2006 AYP results before sending letters to parents and implementing programs. If the school makes AYP in 2006 it will be removed from federal school improvement status. If the school does not make AYP in 2006, it will advance in status. At that point, the district should take all necessary actions to implement the new status.

Dr. Douglas Reeves will serve as the keynote speaker. Dr. Reeves is the chairman and founder of the Center for Performance Assessment. He has worked with schools in fifty states and five continents to improve student achievement and educational equity. The author of more than twenty books on leadership and education, Dr. Reeves has twice been selected for the Harvard University Distinguished Authors Series. His research interests include success in high-poverty and high-minority schools, holistic accountability, and the impact of leadership strategies on student achievement. His articles have appeared in many national and international journals, newspapers, and magazines and his work on standards and student achievement has influenced public policy throughout the U.S. and in many other countries.

To access conference registration materials, go to: [http://www.isbe.net/supts_conf/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/supts_conf/Default.htm). The registration deadline is August 21, 2006.

**Special Message from Governor’s Office**

**Flags at State of Illinois buildings to be lowered**

Governor Blagojevich has ordered flags at all State of Illinois buildings to be lowered to half staff this Wednesday, August 16, to honor Sgt. Bradley H. Beste, 22, of Naperville, Ill. who was supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. He died in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, on August 4, 2006 when an improvised explosive device detonated near their HMMWV while conducting combat operations. He was assigned to the 1st Calvary Regiment, 1st Armored Division, Friedberg, Germany.

This information is shared at the request of school districts and Regional Offices of Education. Lowering flags at school buildings is optional.

**Accountability**

**Gender Equity in Athletics Waiver Applications**

The Gender Equity in Athletics Waiver Applications is now available in IWAS. Applications must be completed online. ISBE is no longer accepting paper applications. I believe you will find the new system easy to use and it will provide greater assurance of your compliance with the Section 200.80 of the Illinois Sex Equity Rules (23 Illinois Administrative Code 200). Reporting of applicant school’s compliance with the law will be made directly to the applicant’s respective athletic
association immediately on final approval by ISBE. Approval for the applicant school will apply to the entire school year and allow female athletes who subsequently decide to participate on a male sports team to be eligible to do so without re-application by the school. Waiver applications must be completed for each subsequent year in which the school anticipates female athletes will participate on a male sports team.

If you have any questions regarding the application, please email Eric Thatcher at ethatche@isbe.net. If you have any technical questions or need assistance accessing your IWAS account, please call our HelpDesk at 217-558-3600.

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**English Language Learning**

**ISBE’s Division of English Language Learning to Sponsor Conference on Educating Refugee Children**

The Refugee Children School Impact Grant program is once again sponsoring a fall conference. Known for the past two years as “Challenges and Opportunities in Educating Refugee Children, “ the highly successful conference is expanding this year by incorporating topics previously covered in other related conferences on family counseling and health.

This year the 2006 Refugee and Immigrant Conference is called *Partners in Success for New Americans: Family – School – Health*. Presenters from all across the U.S. will hold workshops of interest to the many groups and individuals who assist refugee and immigrant children and their families on issues of families, school, health and challenges of cultural adjustment.

The conference will be held on Tuesday, September 19th and Wednesday, September 20, 2006 at the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza at 350 North Orleans Street, Chicago, IL. You can access the announcement for the conference at: [http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/pdfs/refugee2006.pdf](http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/pdfs/refugee2006.pdf).

For additional information about educating refugee children see [http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/refugee_services.htm](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/refugee_services.htm) or contact Sherry Johnson, Illinois State Board of Education, English Language Learning Division, 100 W. Randolph Street, Suite 14-300, Chicago, IL 60601-3268-3169; email sjohnson@isbe.net; phone 312-814-3639.

**English Language Learner Registration Reminders**

With the onset of the 2006-2007 school year it becomes important to revisit important information concerning English Language Learners. After enrolling a new student, it will be necessary to determine the students' language and the language spoken in the home.

The Illinois Administrative School Code mandates that all new students registering in a school district for the first time are to complete a Home Language Survey [http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/pdfs/228wf.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/pdfs/228wf.pdf). If the HLS indicates that a language other than English is spoken in the home, or by the student, then these students are to be administered an English language proficiency test [http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/access.htm](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/access.htm) (ELPT) to determine English proficiency. If parents refuse testing for English proficiency the school district still has a responsibility to test the student for English proficiency.

The Federal NCLB Act of 2001 and the Illinois Administrative School Code further mandate that identified students of limited English proficiency must also be assessed on an annual basis for English proficiency until they no longer test limited English proficient. In FY06 ACCESS for ELLs™ became the State approved annual English language proficiency test. Below is a list of critical links for school district personnel.

For information on the rights of children to receive a free public education see [http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/right_to_free_public_education.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/right_to_free_public_education.pdf). This document is available in English and Spanish.

For information from a previously published Superintendent's Bulletin (Issue 99A-02) on students’ rights see: [http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/imfaqs.html](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/imfaqs.html).

To view a PowerPoint presentation produced in partnership with MALDEF see: [http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/rights_immigrants.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/rights_immigrants.pdf).

To view supporting video streams on the rights of students and see FAQs/answers, see: [http://www.isbe.net/webcast/ell_02.htm#2](http://www.isbe.net/webcast/ell_02.htm#2).


For additional information on serving English Language Learners please call the Division of English Language Learning at 312-814-3850.
Recognition

Thomas Lay Burroughs Award Nominations

The State Board of Education invites you to nominate your local board president for the Thomas Lay Burroughs Award for the State's Outstanding School Board President.

This award was created in 1991 in memory of the late ISBE chairman and is presented each November at the IASB/IASA/IASBO conference in Chicago. This year, the conference will be held on November 17 through 19 and the award will be presented Sunday morning, November 19.

Nominations should be submitted as indicated below by the close of business on October 13, 2006.

You may fax your nomination to Jean Ladage at 217/785-3972 or send via email to: jladage@isbe.net. If you have questions, call Jean Ladage or Marsha Moffett at 217-557-6626.

For nomination information and format please go to: http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf

Student Assessment

IAA Portfolio Training

Portfolio training is available Aug. 29 through Sept. 15 at various locations around the state. This year the training is designed for teachers who are new to the IAA portfolio process and will be held from 8:30 to noon only. To view dates and locations and register online for a portfolio workshop, please go to: http://iregister.measuredprogress.org. For questions, e-mail Marilyn Leveque at mleveque@isbe.net.

Parent Involvement

NFL players want to recruit dads to your school and PTA

Get dads more involved at your school and PTA through the All Pro Dad program! All Pro Dad, an initiative of NFL players headed up by Indianapolis Colts’ Head Coach Tony Dungy, encourages men to become better fathers. Log on to www.AllProDad.com for more information.

One of All Pro Dad’s initiatives is a monthly breakfast before school hours where fathers and their children meet with other dads and kids. They hear great speakers on a wide range of family topics, spend fun time together and are equipped with resources to strengthen their relationship. Additional options include a dads and kids movie night, board game night etc. The best part of all, the resources are provided at no charge.

Log onto http://www.allprodad.com/dadsday.asp for more information and get men plugged in to your school and PTA. You may also reach the All Pro Dad director, Bryan Davis, by e-mail at: Bryan@AllProDad.com for more specific questions.

Employment Opportunities

Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice Position Announcement – Superintendent for School District #428

In November, 2005, Governor Blagojevich signed legislation creating a new Department of Juvenile Justice for the State of Illinois. The Department is now conducting a search to fill the Superintendent position for the Department’s School District #428. This is the first time that School District #428 has focused solely on education for youth and as a result, the new Superintendent will have substantial ability and responsibility to shape and improve educational programming for youth.

This position will serve as the chief Administrative Officer for School District #428 and will report to the Department of Juvenile Justice Director. In consultation with the District #428 School Board, the Superintendent will develop, administer and evaluate the statewide educational programs for the Department’s juvenile facilities including academic, technical and vocational programs in addition to serving as an education liaison to other state and federal educational agencies.

Responsibilities

• Improve educational outcomes for juveniles in custody
• Review and evaluate all educational programming for the eight (8) Department of Juvenile Justice facilities and establish agency-wide priorities for the development of new programs, improvements to existing programs, or implementation of other changes to improve educational outcomes.
• Provide overall direction for the special education services within the district to meet the need of residents in both juvenile and adult facilities.
• Establish standards for educational services and monitor individual program’s compliance with State and Federal guidelines governing educational
services for juveniles under custody of the Department.

- Develop and implement policies and procedures for the organization of District programs statewide, including general revenue funded services, programs funded by educational grants and programs operated through a contractual relationship with community college districts and private colleges and universities.
- Supervise a staff of which includes Special Education Director and Education Facility Administrators.
- Monitor and coordinate the development of the School District budget for all programs under the jurisdiction of the School District to ensure compliance with funding requirements of all sources of funds.
- Prepare reports to the Director and the School Board regarding the School District’s planning, staffing and related activities, meeting frequently with each Facility Superintendent to ensure proper coordination of educational and program services.
- Establish and direct the Administrative Policies and Procedures for the management of the District operations, assessing the professional in-service training needs for School District employees and monitoring the implementation of training program.

Qualifications

- Master’s Degree with graduate credits as specified by the State Teacher Certificate Board;
- Valid Type 75 General Administrative Certificate with Superintendent Endorsement;
- Four years education administrative experience;
- Thorough knowledge of elementary, secondary and vocational education programs;
- Thorough knowledge of curriculum testing and materials necessary to develop progressive educational programs needed to stimulate interest and to accomplish agency educational goals;
- Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of public and business administration and public relations;
- Thorough knowledge of Department programs and services in area of responsibility;
- Extensive knowledge of support and operational capabilities within the agency Master’s Degree with graduate credits as specified by the State Teacher Certificate Board;
- Demonstrated ability to manage and lead in a rapidly changing environment;
- Excellent planning and organizational skills;
- Excellent written and verbal skills; and
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively within a team-work oriented management environment.

The successful candidate will be a highly energetic individual with a passion for educating at risk youth, who also understands the importance of working in collaboration with department staff and external stakeholders to attain the goal of providing exceptional educational services to youth under the custody of the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter addressing the listed responsibilities and qualifications, a resume, and names and contact information for 3 professional references to: Rachel Ferguson, Personnel Department; Illinois Department of Corrections; 1301 Concordia Court; P.O. Box 19277; Springfield, Ill. 62794-9277. Applications will be accepted until September 15, 2006.

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

Highlights from last week’s education news clips are posted at: http://www.isbe.net/news/2006/newsclips/060811.htm