Weekly Message from State Superintendent Randy Dunn

Good afternoon. I hope everyone enjoyed a restful and safe Labor Day weekend.

Today’s opener is going to be a mix of smaller, unrelated items that I sometimes like to share when I can’t get myself organized enough to write a longer piece for the Weekly Message . . .

Dr. Chris Koch – I want to take the opportunity along with the rest of the state to publicly congratulate Chris on being named as Interim Superintendent starting December 1. Many of you have known Chris for many years and he will do a great job in providing steady leadership for the Agency, a type of leadership that will remain focused on the needs of the field and its practitioners to the fullest extent possible. Chris and I will be working closely over the coming months to support a smooth transition. Some of you on occasion have kindly commented that I have tried to be visible and approachable—you will find Chris to be cut out of the same cloth.

Locator – Local district superintendents and others who received copies will recall the debut of our Programs and Services Locator that we first published this time last year. Basically, the Locator is a catalogue of every ISBE program and service that we can collectively identify, listed with a contact person, email, and phone number. The idea behind this document is to better know who in the Agency to contact directly if you have a specific question or issue. The Locator will be available at the Superintendents’ Conference and posted to our website later this week.

Construction Funding – Questions have come in regarding comments the Governor made last Friday in Carterville about school construction. Please be aware there is no change in the school construction list. Rather, the Governor is seeking to establish a separate emergency-type fund to assist schools—such as Carterville High School—that have critical and immediate needs to be addressed. With regard to the future, we are working with the Capital Development Board to look at a short needs assessment survey for urgent and emergency needs that would likely be an addendum to the Health/Life Safety survey. CDB survey teams would also likely have some involvement in reviewing potential projects under this emergency funding. We are in the process of finalizing details in response to the Governor’s call for immediate assistance to schools in similar straits.

Standards and Assessment Peer Review – Some of you will recall that the US Department of Education had recently notified ISBE that they intended to withhold ten percent of Illinois’ FY06 Title I, Part A state administrative funds to urge our timely compliance with NCLB regulations in the area of standards and assessment. I am pleased to report that we were permitted to have additional information reviewed by the feds, and Illinois will now not be subject to that withholding. (I guess it’s a mixed bag for those of you in local school districts—the withheld funds would have reverted to local educational agencies in Illinois otherwise . . .) We will be submitting a timeline to USED to come into full compliance on standards and assessment, and will still be subject to penalty if we don’t make the progress as set forth in that timeline, but this is great news for ISBE. Many folks here worked very hard to provide the additional materials necessary.

Superintendents’ Conference – I look forward to seeing many of you later this week in Springfield. We have a great agenda put together. I’m still soliciting speech ideas for Friday . . .

Have a great week.

Randy Dunn
Upcoming Deadlines

Rules Public Comment – Donated Food – September 7, 2006
Student Data Correction – September 8, 2006
Rules Public Comment, Special Education – September 15, 2006
Burroughs Award Nominations – October 13, 2006
Zero Waste Schools Grant – November 1, 2006
NCLB Monitoring Instrument – November 15, 2006
NCLB Title I Comparability – November 17, 2006

External Assurance

NCLB deadlines

NCLB Monitoring Instrument - Deadlines for submitting your NCLB Monitoring Instrument will be November 15. The online instrument is found on the IWAS system. This year’s submission will include being able to load previous year’s data and updating any portions that have changed. If you have questions please contact Paul Williams at 217-782-7970 or email pwilliam@isbe.net

NCLB Title I Comparability – The deadline for submitting your Title I comparability documentation will be November 17. The documentation will now be an annual submission requirement. The document is online and can be submitted through the IWAS system. This year, document preparers will be able to submit their completed work to the superintendent via IWAS and not have to send it to them through Email. For assistance contact Paul Williams at 217-782-7970 or email pwilliam@isbe.net

Funding and Disbursement

FY 07 General State Aid, Hold Harmless update

General State Aid is a multi-variable formula dependent on timely submission of data from a variety of sources. An important component of this formula is the Equalized Assessed Valuations which originate from your local county clerk’s office. All county clerks are required to submit this data to the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR). IDOR performs an extensive audit of this information, certifies it and passes it on to ISBE for use in calculating General State Aid (GSA) and Hold Harmless (HH). Historically, IDOR certifies all 102 Illinois county files and electronically delivers it to ISBE by July 1 of each year.

IDOR has not provided ISBE with final certified Equalized Assessed Valuation data from a couple of

Student Assessment

Data correction deadline this Friday

Friday, September 8 at midnight will be the deadline for the clean up of grades 3-8 student testing data. After the deadline has passed, ISBE will send the scores and data to Harcourt for the production of reports which should be in schools and districts by mid-to late October.

For help, please call 217-558-3600 or 217-782-4823.

ISBE thanks all who have worked to cleaning up the student data. We know how much time it takes and we appreciate the focus, energy and diligence of all those involved.

NBPTS Training

Illinois National Board Professional Preparation and Support System

Informational meetings detailing the new Illinois NBPTS support structure continue as follows:

- Wednesday, September 6, 2006 - Champaign Ford ROE #9 - Media Center at Champaign Ford ROE #9, 200 S. Fredrick, Rantoul - 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. - Refreshments provided
- Tuesday, September 12, 2006 - DeKalb ROE #16 - Kishwaukee College - 21193 Malta Rd, Malta - 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

R.S.V.P. to mmathis@i-kan.org or vhensley@i-kan.org what meeting you plan to attend. Topics covered will include:

- Transition Plan for the new National Board Professional Preparation and Support System
- Illinois Teaching Excellence Program Payments Application Process
- National Board Candidate Subsidy Fee Support

Please email questions you would like addressed at the informational meetings to vhensley@i-kan.org.

External Assurance

NCLB deadlines

NCLB Monitoring Instrument - Deadlines for submitting your NCLB Monitoring Instrument will be November 15. The online instrument is found on the IWAS system. This year’s submission will include being able to load previous year’s data and updating any portions that have changed. If you have questions please contact Paul Williams at 217-782-7970 or email pwilliam@isbe.net

NCLB Title I Comparability – The deadline for submitting your Title I comparability documentation will be November 17. The documentation will now be an annual submission requirement. The document is online and can be submitted through the IWAS system. This year, document preparers will be able to submit their completed work to the superintendent via IWAS and not have to send it to them through Email. For assistance contact Paul Williams at 217-782-7970 or email pwilliam@isbe.net

Funding and Disbursement

FY 07 General State Aid, Hold Harmless update

General State Aid is a multi-variable formula dependent on timely submission of data from a variety of sources. An important component of this formula is the Equalized Assessed Valuations which originate from your local county clerk’s office. All county clerks are required to submit this data to the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR). IDOR performs an extensive audit of this information, certifies it and passes it on to ISBE for use in calculating General State Aid (GSA) and Hold Harmless (HH). Historically, IDOR certifies all 102 Illinois county files and electronically delivers it to ISBE by July 1 of each year.

IDOR has not provided ISBE with final certified Equalized Assessed Valuation data from a couple of
counties. Consequently, ISBE will not be able to fully pay HH amounts nor load final GSA payments until IDOR provides the certified data. ISBE will have to resort to estimated data for Cook County to distribute the first few installments of GSA as well as a prorated share of HH. HH has been prorated and vouchered at 80 percent with the balance paid when final figures are determined. Please direct questions to Jim Mathes jmathes@isbe.net, Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

Grants

Parental Participation Pilot grants available

Illinois State Board of Education has released the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the FY 2007 Parental Participation Pilot Project. This RFP is available at http://www.isbe.net/grants/pdf/rfp_parental.pdf.

The Parental Participation Pilot Project grant will provide funding to academically struggling school districts to help defray the costs of designing and implementing enhanced parental participation activities that focus on assisting parents in helping their children reach their academic potential. Activities may include, but need not be limited to, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, family nights, volunteer opportunities, and family outreach materials.

It is the intention of the agency to fund four projects in FY 2007, i.e., one within each of the following geographic areas: the City of Chicago; the portion of Cook County outside the city of Chicago; the area made up of DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties; and the remainder of the state.

School districts, public university laboratory schools approved by the State Board of Education and charter schools are eligible to apply for this grant if their performance is within the range of the 20 lowest-performing districts for their respective geographic areas, based on the State assessments administered in 2005. For the list of eligible applicants, please refer to Appendix A of the FY 2007 RFP http://www.isbe.net/grants/pdf/rfp_parental.pdf.

Illinois Violence Prevention Authority grant notice

The Illinois Violence Prevention Authority (IVPA) is pleased to announce the release of the new FY 07 Early Childhood Anti-Bias Grant Program. The Request for Proposal (RFP) and additional information will be available on the IVPA website www.ivpa.org on September 1, 2006. Grant awards will be up to $5,000. Grantees will receive anti-bias curriculum training, technical assistance and materials, created in conjunction with Sesame Workshop (the producers of Sesame Street) courtesy of the Anti-Defamation League (over $3,000 value). Grantees will then implement the curriculum in their program. Eligible applicants are Illinois publicly funded early childhood programs. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to apply for grant funds is required and must be submitted by September 15, 2006 (the form is included in the RFP). The full proposal is due by November 6, 2006.

Illinois Zero Waste Schools Grant Program Request for Application (RFA)

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) is soliciting applications from Illinois public and nonpublic schools for grants to implement or expand recycling and waste reduction programs and strive to achieve zero waste status. Even though absolute zero waste may not be attainable, the ultimate goal of this program is to assist schools in their efforts to maximize reducing, reusing, recycling and composting waste; and eventually eliminate unnecessary waste.

Successful applicants may use grant funds to purchase necessary items to implement a zero waste project such as collection and storage containers, shredders, reusable plates and silverware, dishwasher, composting containers, etc. Illinois public school districts must submit only one application for the total number of schools participating in the zero waste project. The maximum grant request may not exceed $10,000 per school. For example, a district applying for five schools may submit one application and request up to $50,000.

Two levels of funding are available. To be eligible for Level I funding, each participating school must agree to collect white paper and one additional item generated at the school, implement at least three source reduction activities, instruct all involved parties about the benefits of the project, and commit to conducting a waste audit of remaining waste after the zero waste project is implemented. To calculate the eligible funding amount for Level I funding please use the following formulas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Students Enrolled in School</th>
<th>Allowable Grant Amount /School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 350 students</td>
<td>$7 / student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 350 students</td>
<td>$5 / student + $700 / school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To be eligible for Level II funding, the participating school must meet requirements for Level I and agree to collect and recycle at least two additional items, implement two more source reduction activities and/or compost all of the school generated organic waste, and conduct pre and post waste audits. The additional funding will be decided by: types and volume of items being reduced, reused, recycled or composted; percentage of additional waste diverted per student; and additional equipment the applicant will require to implement the proposed project. To qualify for the maximum funding, the applicant must commit to reach attainable zero waste status.


DCEO will schedule workshops to answer questions about the grant application process, as well as collection, market, equipment purchase and education-related topics. Local workshops will be scheduled when at least five applicants express an interest in attending. For further information or to schedule a workshop in your area please contact Bina Fleck at bina.fleck@illinois.gov or 217-524-1838, TDD 800-785-6055. All applicants are strongly encouraged to attend a workshop prior to submitting an application. Inquiries, other than general information inquiries, must be submitted as written questions to be posted online at: http://www.illinoisbiz.biz/dceo/Bureaus/Energy_Recycling/Education/ISTEP_program.htm and http://www.illinoisbiz.biz/dceo/Bureaus/Energy_Recycling/Recycling/.

All eligible applications received before 5 p.m., November 1, 2006, will be independently evaluated based on project merit, how well the criteria listed in the RFA is addressed, and how well the grant money will be utilized to divert the maximum amount of waste from landfills or reduce waste generation through implementation of source reduction activities. These criteria have been established to identify the applications demonstrating the most cost effective way to successfully implement the zero waste projects.

**Student Opportunities**

**Hearst Scholarships available**

The deadline for juniors and seniors in private and public high schools to apply for the 45th Annual United States Senate Youth Program sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation is October 4, 2006. Student applications must be received in this office by the close of business that day. The two student winners of the competition representing Illinois will spend an all-expenses-paid week-long educational experience in Washington, D.C., this spring. Each will also receive a $5,000 college scholarship. Please encourage your outstanding juniors and seniors of this unique opportunity. For immediate details, please visit www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/hearst.htm or call Dr. Richard Walker at 217-524-4832.

**Nutrition**

**National Food Safety Education Month**

Did you know that September is National Food Safety Education Month®, created by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation's International Food Safety Council to heighten awareness of the importance of food safety education throughout the restaurant and foodservice industry? Visit http://www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/september.html for more information.

**School Food Safety Program Training resource available online**

The recent release of the Developing a School Food Safety Program training resource provides school districts with a solid foundation for the development of school food safety programs incorporating principles of Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points (HACCP). This National Food Service Management Institutes (NFSMI) resource provides training tools, program and record keeping worksheets, a PowerPoint presentation, a 22-page template, and HACCP Based Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These materials were developed by NFSMI with cooperation from USDA. To view and download the Developing a School Food Safety Program training resource, visit http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/school_fs_program.htm.

**Professional Development**

**Illinois Agricultural Education Trip to National FFA Convention**

Illinois agricultural education’s second annual one-day bus trip to the National FFA Convention is scheduled for Wednesday, October 25, 2006. Anyone with an interest in learning more about agricultural education, including Illinois teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, parents, board members and FFA Alumni members, are
invited to see firsthand the impact FFA can have on students and school programs.

This year’s convention will be held in Indianapolis. The bus trip features pick-up locations in all areas of the state, with points of departure determined by early registrations. Participants will have the opportunity to be part of the world’s largest youth convention, and witness agricultural education in action. In addition to the opening session, participants will see the National FFA Career Show and get a window into Illinois’ agricultural education with information shared during the ride.

Meals, registration and travel are complimentary. You can access the flyer and registration form online at http://www.isbe.net/career/pdf/FFA_convention.pdf. For additional information or to sign up, contact Mary Lawrence at 217-762-8283 or mlawrence@agricultureeducation.org.

Language Arts, Science, Math, and Technology Renewal Credits

With prior local approval, educators have an opportunity to earn CPUD renewal credits by taking advantage of excellent online modules and video on demand programs offered by the United Star Distance Learning Consortium (USDLC). The Illinois State Board of Education and Western Illinois University are members of USDLC, a nonprofit multi-state consortium.

- Literacy to Learn: Reading, Writing, and Thinking Across the Curriculum
- No Child Left Behind
- Keynote Addresses: From the Experts
- Best Practices in School Library Media Programs
- Books, Books, Books
- STAR-Online: Integrating Technology Into Your Classroom
- ESL
- Online Course Development
- Science and the Living World
- Science Multimedia Digital Library
- eSpindle: Spelling/Awesome Words
- eField Trips

Comprehensive descriptions for the above courses are online at http://www.usdlc.org/pathways/index.jsp.

Of special interest to Language Arts and Science teachers (K-12) is a course entitled Literacy to Learn: Reading, Writing and Thinking Across the Curriculum. Four online module strands encompassing elementary, middle and secondary literacy, digital literacy, and scientific literacy suggest many practical strategies for use in your classroom.

In addition to the Literacy to Learn courses, other USDLC professional development topics for K-12 educators include No Child Left Behind: Achieving Academic Excellence in Reading, Achieving Academic Excellence in Math, Students At-Risk, Paraprofessionals, and Data-Driven Decision Making for Administrators. Keynote Addresses bring nationally recognized education experts such as Willard Daggett, Chris Dede, Heidi Hayes Jacobs, and others to your desktop to discuss 21st century learning skills.

Best Practices in School Library Programs presents examples of effective media programs for library media coordinators, their administrators and teaching staff. Books, Books, Books highlights Caldecott and Newbery award winners as well as thematic groups or genres in poetry, nonfiction, picture books, biography, fiction, fantasy, and folklore.

STAR-Online’s Integrating Technology Into Your Classroom, developed by Western Illinois University and aligned with ISTE Technology Standards, allows educators to participate in quality online training modules, access resources and an online portfolio, and network and collaborate with participants nationwide.

Teachers working with English learners will be interested in ESL, and teachers wanting to become online instructors will find Online Course Development most beneficial.

Science and the Living World (K-4) explores the essential question of how to use processes of scientific literacy to learn and teach about the living world.

eSpindle (K-12) is an online approach for the development of spelling and vocabulary skills which begins with students starting a quiz drawn from a database of over 100,000 words, organized into grade-levels.

Bonus – Free To All USDLC Subscribers:
1) Science Multimedia Digital Library (K-12) is an online library of classroom-ready multimedia resources from programs such as NOVA, ZOOM, and A SCIENCE ODYSSEY.
2) e-Field Trips allow students and teachers to take electronic field trips focusing on science, music, and literature. Some of the e-Field Trip programs offer live webcasts which allow students to email questions to presenters.

USDLC’s professional development programs offer something for everyone in the education arena. Read more about USDLC’s online professional development
Early Childhood

Illinois Early Learning Standards for Kindergarten to be unveiled

Celebrate Kindergarten Day on September 12, 2006 with the unveiling of the newly developed Illinois Early Learning Standards for Kindergarten. This will be the first opportunity for Kindergarten teachers to access the new standards specifically designed for Kindergarten! The Illinois State Board of Education and Kindergarten teachers throughout the state have collaboratively created the Illinois Early Learning Standards for Kindergarten. The Kindergarten Standards align with the Illinois Learning Standards and put Kindergarten on the map in curriculum alignment and school improvement planning.

ISBE and the Regional Offices of Education will provide training sessions at locations throughout the state. The Kindergarten Standards Training Schedule is online at: http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/pdf/training_schedule.pdf

If you have questions, please contact the Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835.

Legal

Registration and Enrollment guidance document available online

ISBE’s Legal Department has posted Guidance for Registration and Enrollment: Residency, Homeless Pupils, Immigrant Pupils and School Fee Waivers at: http://www.isbe.net/accountability/pdf/registration_enroll_guid.pdf

Employment Opportunities

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

The Department of Juvenile Justice for the State of Illinois is conducting a search to fill the Superintendent position for the Department’s School District #428. 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.

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. IDOC will accept applications 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/060901.htm