Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

The 2008 report cards have been produced and are now available for you to review. District superintendents may access and download the report cards via the secure eReport Card site in the IWAS system. If you have questions about accessing that system, please contact the agency’s helpdesk at 217-558-3600.

You may release your school report card information to the public at anytime. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will not release the report cards to the public until October 31, 2008, so that you may have a chance to review the information with staff, parents and your local boards of education. We will make the information available to the media around October 1, 2008, but it will be embargoed for publication until October 31.

Next week the State Board of Education will be meeting in Bloomington. The night before the meetings begin the Board will be launching the budget process for FY 2010. The Board’s Finance and Audit Committee will host the first in a series of budget hearings, on Tuesday, September 16, 2008, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Normal Community High School’s cafeteria, 3900 East Raab Road. This hearing will be the first of seven the Board will be hosting between now and December 3, 2008. The others are:

- **Tuesday, October 7, 2008**—4 to 6 p.m.—**Chicago**—Chicago Urban League, 4510 South Michigan Avenue
- **Tuesday, October 14, 2008**—6 to 8 p.m.—**Macomb**—Hancock/McDonough Regional Office of Education, 130 S. LaFayette, Suite 200
- **Wednesday, October 22, 2008**—4 to 6 p.m.—**Springfield**—Plaza G, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 3000 S. Dirksen Parkway
- **Monday, October 27, 2008**—4 to 6 p.m.—**Belleville**—St. Clair County Regional Office of Education, 1000 South Illinois Street
- **Thursday, November 6, 2008**—6 to 8 p.m.—**Charleston**—Eastern Illinois University, Effingham Room, MLK, Jr. University Union
- **Wednesday, December 3, 2008**—6 to 8 p.m.—**Wheaton**—Learning Center, Briar Glen Elementary, 1800 Briarcliffe Boulevard

These hearings provide members of the public a chance to provide their input into the budget-making process and allow the Board a chance to hear what is important to the various constituencies. Priorities vary greatly across the state, and the Board is particularly interested in hearing ideas about how these regional needs can be better addressed. It is anticipated that ISBE’s proposed budget will be submitted to the Governor and General Assembly early in 2009.

I would recommend that you plan on attending one of these hearings to provide your input as the Board begins to craft its budget. The Board does not automatically include programs and organizations in the proposed budget that are receiving funding in the current fiscal year, so your voice needs to be heard in this process.
I also want to remind you to mark your calendars for the Annual Superintendents’ Conference to be held October 23 and 24 in Springfield. You can find more information about this year’s conference and download the conference’s “Date Saver” at http://www.isbe.net/supts_conf/Default.htm. You may also register for the event online at http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/.

I think you’ll find this year’s conference topics and sessions extremely relevant as many of your colleagues helped us with the planning. I know you’ll enjoy listening to our keynote speaker, Kati Haycock. Kati currently serves as the president of the Education Trust and is one of America’s leading child advocates, serving previously as executive vice-president of the Children’s Defense Fund.

I’ll be hosting a reception as activities conclude on October 23 and look forward to spending some time with you.

Wishing you a great week.

Chris

Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

- **PSAE Grade 12 Retake Initial Registration** – September 19
- **ISAT AYP Appeals** – September 26
- **Differentiated Accountability Proposal comments** – September 30
- **Head Start reimbursement deadline to submit revised claims** – September 30
- **Annual Superintendents’ Conference online registration** – October 1
- **LEA Determinations district improvement plans** – October 1
- **PSAE AYP Appeals** – October 6
- **Annual Financial Reports** – October 15
- **Teacher Salary Study Form on IWAS** – October 15
- **Fall Housing Enrollment Counts from SIS** – October 15
- **Thomas Lay Burroughs award nominations** – October 17
- **Deadline for Public Comment on Proposed New Part 75 (Incentive Grants for Agricultural Science Teacher Education)** – October 20
- **New Part 75 (Incentive Grants for Agricultural Science Teacher Education)** – October 20
- **Annual Superintendents’ Conference** – October 23 – 24
- **FY09 School Budget Form** – October 31
- **School District Budgets** – October 31
- **School District Library Grant Applications** – November 26

Rulemaking

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

One set of proposed rules recently reviewed by the State Board of Education is now available for public comment. This item has been posted on the agency’s web site at: www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions you may have to rules@isbe.net.

**Proposed New Part 75 (Incentive Grants for Agricultural Science Teacher Education)**

A new set of rules that will implement a grant program established under Section 2-3.80a of the School Code.

**Deadline for Public Comment: October 20, 2008**

Legal

**2008 Annual Notice of FERPA and PPRA**
Please find below the link to the annual notice to state educational agencies of their responsibilities under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA). Also included are links to the letter and enclosures addressed to local superintendents.

We hope that you will find this information helpful in protecting parents’ and students’ privacy rights under FERPA and PPRA.


Abused & Neglected Child Reporting Act

HB 4252 became P.A.95-0908 on Tuesday, August 26, and is effective immediately. P.A. 95-0908 amends the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act and impacts the kind of information school district superintendents can share with other school district superintendents regarding current and former employees seeking employment with another school district.

If an employee of a school district has made a report or caused a report to be made to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) involving the conduct of a current or former employee of the school district and a request is made by another school district for the provision of information concerning the job performance or qualifications of the current or former employee because he or she is an applicant for employment, the superintendent of the school district to which the request is being made must disclose to the requesting school district the fact that an employee of the school district has made a report involving the conduct of the applicant or caused a report to be made to DCFS.

Only the fact that an employee of the school district has made a report involving the conduct of the applicant or caused a report to be made to DCFS may be disclosed and only in cases where the school employee and the general superintendent have not been informed by DCFS that the allegations were unfounded.

Further, employees who have been the subject of a DCFS indicated report must be informed by their superintendent that the above information will be shared with potential future employers upon request. School personnel who disclose this information are protected from liability, except in cases of willful or wanton misconduct.

No Child Left Behind

Differentiated Accountability Flexibility

Illinois has been approved to participate in the U.S. Department of Education’s Differentiated Accountability pilot. Illinois is one of six states that received additional flexibility under the NCLB Act.

ISBE is phasing in portions of the Differentiated Accountability proposal in the 2008-09 school year. The proposal is posted at:


Two of the pieces that will be implemented this year include:

1) Optional reversal of the order of Public School Choice (PSC) and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) for schools newly identified for improvement:

   Schools that are entering their second consecutive year of not making AYP will be able to implement SES during the first year of School Improvement instead of PSC. Reversing the order of sanctions may provide a more effective intervention strategy for the first year of improvement by offering eligible students SES while planning for choice implementation in year two.

   For instructions on how to apply for the pilot, go to: http://www.isbe.net/nclb/htmls/differentiated_flexibility_reverse.htm.

2) Waiver of some of the PSC notification requirements under NCLB:

   In some instances, where there is limited space (or no space) available for students eligible to participate in public school choice, a district may
choose to target notification letters to a segment of the eligible student population. For details on the required information needed to apply for the waiver, please see: http://www.isbe.net/nclb/htmls/differentiated_flexibility_waiver.htm).

ISBE will be collecting comments on the proposal until Tuesday, September 30. Please contact Melina Wright, NCLB Liaison, at 217-782-0354 or by e-mail at mewright@isbe.net with comments on the proposal, questions or for additional information. She will forward your inquiry to the appropriate staff person.

**AYP Appeals Process**

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law and the State Accountability statute and rules allow schools and districts to appeal their 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.

ISAT data was re-released on Tuesday, August 26, via IWAS. Appeals related to ISAT will be due Friday, September 26.

Final PSAE data was released on Friday, September 5, via IWAS. Appeals related to PSAE will be due Monday, October 6.


Please direct any questions or concerns to Melina Wright, NCLB Liaison, at 217-782-7362; fax: 217-782-5333; or e-mail at: mewright@isbe.net.

**Assessment**

**PSAE and Receipt of a Regular High School Diploma**

The updated 2008-09 PSAE Guidance document is now posted on www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm. It addresses issues surrounding the PSAE as a condition of the receipt of a regular high school diploma. Please note that the initial registration for the PSAE Grade 12 retake in October is due on Friday, September 19. Students participating in the PSAE retake must register using an ACT voucher for Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing), and schools must enter enrollment counts for these students for Day 2 orders on Pearson’s TestSites Online Website.

### Data Analysis & Progress Reporting

**2008-2009 Teacher Salary Study Form Available on IWAS**

The 2008-2009 Teacher Salary Study data form is now available on IWAS. The deadline for districts and other local agencies that hire teachers to complete and submit the form is Wednesday, October 15.

If you do not have a contract at this time because you are still in negotiations, click on the "No Contract" button and log off. You will be asked to submit your data again in January 2009. Please be sure to provide a copy of your salary schedule/policy and negotiated agreement, unless you have already done so in a prior year and they are still in effect. Send copies to: Illinois State Board of Education, Data Analysis and Progress Reporting, 100 North First Street, S-284, Springfield, Illinois 62777.

Questions about completing the Teacher Salary Study data form may be addressed to Dr. Richard Yong in the Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at 217-782-3950 or ryong@isbe.net.

**2008-2009 Fall Housing Data Collection Change**

New this year, Fall Housing enrollment counts will be based on data reported for individual students in the ISBE Student Information System (SIS). School-level counts will no longer be collected on the Fall Housing Report System in IWAS. Instead, ISBE will use SIS Enrollment and Exit dates to determine the counts. Therefore, it is essential for districts to enroll and exit students in a timely manner. Official 2008-2009 Fall Housing enrollment counts will be taken from SIS on Wednesday, October 15, at 4 p.m. CST. The counts will reflect students enrolled as of Tuesday, September 30.

Please see the ISBE Website for information about enrolling and exiting students in SIS at: http://www.isbe.net/sis/default.htm. Questions may be directed to the ISBE Help Desk at 217-558-3600.
English Language Learning

2008 National Refugee and Immigrant Conference

The 2008 National Refugee and Immigrant Conference: Issues and Innovations will be held in Chicago on Thursday, September 25, and Friday, September 26, at the Holiday Inn Chicago-Mart Plaza.

The conference is intended for bilingual, English as a Second Language (ESL) and general education teachers and administrators in districts with refugee and immigrant students. It offers participants the opportunity to identify issues, emphasize best practices, and highlight innovations among educators and other groups assisting refugee and immigrant children and their families.

Special keynote presenters include Alex Kotlowitz, author of Never a City so Real; and Heide Spruck Wrigley, senior researcher with LiteracyWork International.

The conference registration packet is online at: http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/refugee.html. Specific workshops will be posted to this site. For further information, contact Lynn Osheff at losheff@thecenterweb.org or 224-366-8632.

School Business Services

School Budgets & AFRs Due

All school district budgets must be submitted to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) by Friday, October 31. All district budgets are to be adopted within or before the first quarter of each fiscal year and joint agreement budgets are to be adopted before Monday, September 1, annually.

All budgets are required to be entered and adopted on the applicable form provided by ISBE at the following link: http://www.isbe.net/sfms/budget/2009/budget.htm. The School District Budget Form 50-36 is submitted electronically to ISBE within 30 days of adoption and no later than Friday, October 31.

The filing deadline for the Annual Financial Report (AFR) is October 15th of each year. Statue requires that the AFR and attachments are to be filed on or before October 15 annually with the appropriate Regional Superintendent. In extenuating circumstances, the Regional Superintendent may grant up to 60 days extension per Section 3-7 of the School Code. If an extension has not been granted, the AFR must be electronically submitted to ISBE on or before November 15th. In addition, a hard copy of the cover page through page 8 must be mailed to ISBE with the appropriate signatures affixed by November 15th. The AFR and related material for school districts/joint agreements may be obtained from the following website: http://www.isbe.net/sfms/af/afr.htm

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact School Business Services at 217-785-8779.

Grants & Programs

School District Library Grant Application

The FY2009 School District Library Grant Program (commonly referred to as the School Library Per Capita Grant) application is now available. The grant application consists of three components:

1. The grant application online ("Survey Monkey") component to be completed and submitted electronically;
2. A paper component, PART IV: DISTRICT ATTENDANCE CENTERS: ELIGIBILITY, to be completed and returned via mail; and,
3. A paper component, PART VII: SIGNATURE PAGE, to be completed and returned via mail.

With the exception of Part IV (District Attendance Centers: Eligibility), all grant application requirements/deadlines and grant components are accessible at: http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/what_we_do/schoolpercapgrant.html. Note if you type this URL in manually “what_we_do” must be entered with underlines as shown – NOT spaces.

Part IV (District Attendance Centers: Eligibility) has been mailed to your superintendent. Please ask him or her to forward this component to you or to the appropriate library/grant personnel responsible for completing the grant application components for your district. The three components all have the same submission deadline: Wednesday, November 26.

The purpose of this grant is to enhance the district's school library program. The grant is noncompetitive and established in legislation. Attendance centers must meet specific eligibility requirements, detailed in the Fact
Sheet, to be considered eligible for funding. Funding is based on a maximum of $0.75 per student. For FY2008, the per student amount was .7233. The minimum grant amount per school district is $100.

Please direct questions to the Illinois State Library, Library Development Group, 800-665-5576 ext.1 or to Ron Winner at rwinner@ilsos.net.

**IIRC 2008 E-Plans**

Illinois Interactive Report Card (IIRC) E-plans for 2008, including the 2009 Technology Integration Plan (TIP) template, are being updated and will be available on **Tuesday, September 16**. The District Improvement Plans, School Improvement Plans and Tech Plans now share common web language, editing features and programming elements and all will be launched for 2008 on **September 16**. Please be advised that School Improvement Plans (SIP), District Improvement Plans (DIP) and District Title I Plans submitted in prior templates will be available only in PDF format as of **September 16**. Anything that you wish to edit or paste and use in 2008 SIP/DIP and Title I Plan templates should be saved in .doc form (i.e. MS Word®) at the local level for later use.

**NOTE:** District Title I Plans were due **February 1, 2008**. Most districts have completed the required submission of the District Title I Plans. However, Delinquent District Title I Plans will have funds frozen as of **Wednesday, October 1**. The old template was available for submitting District Title I Plans through **Tuesday, September 9**, ISBE staff will review plans submitted prior to the **September 9th** deadline and will make recommendations to Division Administrator of Grants and Programs for those districts that have not submitted a District Title I Plan by the extended deadline. This does not relate to submission of District Improvement, School Improvement or Technology Improvement Plans.

**IATD Fall Director’s Conference**

The Illinois Association of Title I Directors (IATD) will hold its Annual Fall Director’s Conference on **Monday, September 22, and Tuesday, September 23**, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield.

This conference focuses on the nuts and bolts of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) grants and programs - from the basics of the law to the nuances of successful programming. Keynote speakers include Kim Bearden from the Ron Clark Academy and Guy Doud, former Teacher of the Year.

Breakout sessions will provide an opportunity for participants to learn the most recent rules, regulations and opportunities of the various programs and components of NCLB. This conference is recommended for superintendents, Title I directors, NCLB grant managers, building administrators, and other district staff that work with the various requirements of the law. The program schedule and registration information can be found at the IATD website at: [www.iatd.net](http://www.iatd.net).

**Curriculum & Instruction**

**E-mail Archiving Showcase**

The Area III and IV Learning Technology Centers are hosting two E-mail Archiving Showcases on **Tuesday, September 23**, and **Wednesday, September 24**.

A variety of vendors will talk about their products and answer individual questions from participants.

**Sept. 23:** Area IV Learning Technology Center, 200 S. Fredrick Street, Rantoul. To register e-mail: frontdesk@ltc.k12.il.us. For questions call 217-893-1431.

**Sept. 24:** Capital Area Career Center, 2201 Toronto Road, Springfield. To register e-mail: [www.trackitpd.org](http://www.trackitpd.org). For questions call 309-680-5800.

Showcase times are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is no cost to participants, but registration is required as space is limited. Lunch will be provided.

**2009 Technology Integration Plan Delay**

The Illinois Interactive Report Card (IIRC) E-plans for 2008, including the 2009 Technology Integration Plan (TIP) template, are being updated and will be available on **Tuesday, September 16**. While the date originally announced was **September 2**, a delay was necessary in order to complete refinements to the IIRC site including web language, dashboard modifications and password updates. We apologize for the delay.

For additional information regarding changes to the Tech Plan, see the related article under Grants & Programs announcements in this *Weekly Message*. 
**Nutrition**

**Avoiding Food Allergen Cross-Contamination**

Food preparation, cooking, storage and service are opportune times for cross-contamination to occur. Cross-contamination can occur when a food that does not contain any allergens becomes contaminated with an allergen. It is especially important to avoid cross-contamination of the eight most common allergens (milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, wheat, soy, peanuts and other nuts) in school food service areas. Some examples of cross-contamination include:

- Using a cutting board on which allergens have previously been cut without cleaning it.
- Baking items on a cookie sheet that has not been thoroughly washed after baking items with food allergen(s).
- Using spoons on a salad bar for both allergenic foods and safe foods.

Some examples of how to avoid cross-contamination practices include:

- Working with food allergens, such as peanut butter, on specific days only, in specifically designated areas.
- Washing knives, cutting boards and spoons with hot water in between working with different foods.
- Cleaning areas after working with nuts and seeds, which can leave oils on plates, tables and countertops.
- Avoiding transfers of measuring and serving scoops in food bins from bin to bin.
- Storing sealed food allergens away from other ingredients.

**Symptoms of a Food Allergic Reaction**

The National Food Safety Education Month’s theme, *Take Action to Prevent an Allergic Reaction*, reminds us of the symptoms of a reaction and to act immediately when these are presented. Symptoms include:

- Itching in and around the mouth, face or scalp;
- Tightening in the throat;
- Wheezing or shortness of breath;
- Swelling of the face, eyes or feet;
- Hives; and
- Abdominal cramps, vomiting, or diarrhea, and even loss of consciousness or death if not treated promptly.


**Food Safety A to Z Reference Guide**

The Food and Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition with the National Science Teachers Association, has developed a comprehensive reference guide on food safety.

To access this useful reference and read about “acidification to zoonoses” go to: [http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/a2z-toc.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/a2z-toc.html).

**USDA Proposes Rule for HACCP Food Safety Plans**

On August 5, the Federal Register of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service proposed a rule regarding the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) requirement at schools. The proposed rule would formally establish requirements for schools to follow based on the USDA’s guidance document: *Guidance for School Food Authorities: Developing a School Food Safety Program Based on the Process Approach to HACCP Principles*.

The proposed rule allows for a 45-day comment period. Comments must be received on or before Friday, September 19, to be assured of consideration. Address your comments to the USDA using one of the following procedures:

- **Fax**—Submit comments to the attention of Robert Eadie at 703-305-2879.
- **Mail**—Address written comments to Robert Eadie; Chief; Policy and Program Development Branch; Child Nutrition Division; Food and Nutrition Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 640; Alexandria, Virginia 22302-1594.
Funding & Disbursements

New School Attendance Law

HB 4309 (P.A. 95-0811) allows districts to claim attendance due to an unforeseen school closure prior to instruction. This law amends Section 18-12 of the School Code and was signed into law on August 13, 2008, with an effective date of July 1, 2008.

The new law allows a district that has multiple recognized school buildings to claim a full day of attendance when one or more school buildings must be closed due to a condition beyond the district’s control prior to providing any instruction. The district may claim student attendance for such building(s) for a maximum of two school days. This is based on the average of the three prior school days of student attendance immediately preceding the closure of the school building(s).

The new law does not permit a district to count attendance if all schools are closed, which is considered an Emergency Day(s). The new law will not impact the official public school calendar; however, the reason for closing one or more buildings must be certified in writing within a month of the closing by the local school District Superintendent to the Regional Superintendent of Schools and forwarded to the State Superintendent of Education for approval. Districts are advised to use the following form to document and provide rationale for the school closures in their district: http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/50-65_interrupted_day.pdf.

Attendance questions as they pertain to the General State Aid claim can be directed to Jim Mathes via e-mail at jmathes@isbe.net. Public school calendar questions can be directed to your Regional Superintendent of Schools or Marj Beck at the Illinois State Board of Education via e-mail at mbeck@isbe.net. Jim and Marj can also be reached via phone at 217-782-5256.

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