The Illinois State Board of Education has released online the 2007 State Report Cards. I want to take this opportunity to remind you that if your district has not released your local information yet, you need to do so.

I again want to congratulate the 184 schools and 36 districts that have been removed from improvement status by making Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years. This is quite an accomplishment and I know it took a lot of hard work and commitment from staff, students and the community. In addition, there were 113 schools and 102 districts in improvement status that will not advance to further sanctions because they have showed sufficient gains over the past two testing cycles. Congratulations and keep up the good work.

I want to take this opportunity to let you know that beginning with the 2007-08 school year, the Illinois State Board of Education will no longer be administering IMAGE as part of our state assessments to test limited English proficient (LEP) students. Instead, we will be administering the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) with accommodations until we can develop a new assessment acceptable to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). This is being done in order for our Illinois Assessment System to meet the requirements of the federal Peer Review. I also wanted to let you know that staff are working with an external consultant to draft an RFSP for the development of an assessment for the LEP population and as part of this effort, we will explore using native language assessments as an accommodation.

Districts should continue to use the system established by Questar for LEP assessment registration and ordering purposes. We expect Questar to provide this information to the ISAT and PSAE contractors. We will also be providing more information about ISAT and PSAE testing accommodations at a later date.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires all states to have an approved assessment system. IMAGE was approved for use prior to NCLB; however, during the initial Peer Review of our Assessment System three years ago, the USDE noted problems with IMAGE’s alignment with the Illinois Learning Standards and comparability to ISAT and the PSAE. We tried to address those concerns over the past two years; however, our response was not acceptable to USDE. Therefore after consulting with experts and others in the field, it has been decided that the appropriate course of action at this time is to administer the ISAT and PSAE tests with accommodations. By making this change the USDE has indicated that we will address 90% of their concerns with the entire Illinois Assessment System.

I should note that Illinois is not alone in finding high-quality assessments for LEP students. This is a national issue for school districts with growing populations of LEP students. In fact, in 2006 the USDE created the LEP Partnership to improve assessments for this student group. The LEP Partnership continues to work on developing high-quality assessments for this group of students. It
will hold its next meeting starting on Sunday in Washington, D.C., and ISBE has a team of representatives who will be attending.

Finally, I must remind everyone that since no Budget Implementation Bill has been approved by the General Assembly, more than 700 districts/lab schools/safe schools will receive less funding beginning with the first General State Aid payment in November. On Monday, I held press conferences in Springfield, Belleville and Peoria trying to draw public attention to this critical issue for our schools. I would again urge you to contact your legislators and let them know how important this funding is to your district.

If you would like to see an estimate of what your district will receive under the new calculation, then you may access those estimates at http://www.isbe.net/funding/html/gsa.htm.

Chris

Upcoming Deadlines

- **Special education summer school claims** – November 1, 2007
- **Health/Life Safety Processing System Training** – ROE training at ISBE – November 1, 2007
- **Health/Life Safety Processing System Training** – ROE training at Kane ROE – November 5, 2007
- **Health/Life Safety Processing System Training** – ROE training at Boone/Winnebago ROE – November 6, 2007
- **Health/Life Safety Processing System Training** – ROE training at Iroquois/Kankakee ROE – November 9, 2007
- **Unfilled Positions Survey (87-07)** – November 15, 2007
- **Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet - Section 17-1.5** – November 15, 2007
- **2007-2008 Health & Immunization Data Collection** – November 15, 2007
- **Health/Life Safety Processing System Training** – School District/Architects training at Kane ROE – November 27, 2007
- **Health/Life Safety Processing System Training** – School District/Architects training at Kane ROE – November 28, 2007
- **NCLB FY08 Title I Comparability analysis** – November 30, 2007
- **NCLB FY08 Monitoring Instrument** – November 30, 2007
- **Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report (87-01)** – December 31, 2007
- **Waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Spring 2008** – January 11, 2008
The Illinois State Board of Education has developed a new web-based Health/Life Safety (H/L S) Processing System. Via ISBE’s web portal, known as IWAS, the new H/L S Processing System allows users external to ISBE to create and submit ten year survey and amendment data, annual inspection reports, and annual ROE reports for school district buildings maintained in a facility inventory listing.

There are several key benefits that the H/L S Processing System offers:

- Freedom to access the information 24 hours-a-day with the ability to create documents, approvals and updates by the Architect, School District, Regional Superintendent and ISBE.
- Improved communication due to comment fields, and 24/7 online inquiry of information.
- Improved coordination between Architects, School Districts, Regional Superintendents and ISBE because documents are easily searched and found, and questions are easily answered by 24/7 inquiry.
- Enhanced monitoring of document status via detailed electronic tracking of ten year survey and amendment data, annual inspection reports and annual Regional Superintendent reports.
- Time savings provided by various features, including but not limited to:
  - rapid inquiry of information through one stop centralized resource home page, ‘find a document’ tab, various tabs and links
  - easy data entry with pre-populated building and school district fields
  - rapid creation of documents due to copying functions, drop down lists and automatically calculated fields
  - automated creation of the Certificate Need, the Application for Approval
  - cumulative running totals of approved funding and amendment numbers
  - immediate real time approvals and updates to documents
  - Google map location of each school building in the facility inventory

The implementation for this new system is slated for January 2008. We hope that you will join us for one of the upcoming scheduled training times to learn how to use this new automated system for the submission of ten year surveys and amendments. Bringing your own laptop computer to trainings is optional, however, one training does

Regional Offices of Education training dates and related information can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/construction/health_safety/pdfs/HLS_roe_training.pdf. Training dates are available through Friday, November 9.

School District/Architects Dates training dates and related information can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/construction/health_safety/pdfs/HLS_sch_dist_arch_training.pdf. Training dates are available through Wednesday, December 12.

If you have any questions, please contact Mary Baksys, School Business & Support Services, at 217-785-8779 or by e-mail at mbaksys@isbe.net.

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**Legal**

**Driver Education Enrollment Guidance**

Comprehensive changes concerning the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program will go into effect on January 1, 2008 as Public Act 95-0310 will be enacted. One of the provisions of the new law extends the instruction permit phase from three months to nine months. This change has prompted questions as to how the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) defines “enrolled” in the context of the Illinois vehicle code, which requires that student be “enrolled in an approved driver education course,” in addition to other requirements in the statute specific to a student’s age and/or what approved driver education course they are enrolling in, in order be eligible for a driver’s permit [625 ILCS 5/6-103]. The Illinois Secretary of State (ISOS) is honoring all instruction permits which are issued prior to January 1, 2008 under the current three month permit phase. For students that will take Driver Education after January 1, some school districts are taking the position that once the student has registered for Driver Education, they are enrolled, even if they are not beginning instruction until after January 1. ISBE has taken the position that for purposes of Driver’s Education, enrolled and registered are synonymous.
Rules & Waivers

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that three more rulemakings recently adopted by the State Board of Education are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s web site at 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 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing)
New rules to take the place of Part 110 (Program Accounting Manual) beginning with Fiscal Year 2009.
Affected Sections: All
Effective Date: October 19, 2007

Part 110 (Program Accounting Manual)
Amendment stating the end of this Part’s effectiveness after Fiscal Year 2008.
Affected Section: 110.10
Effective Date: October 19, 2007

Part 125 (Student Activity Funds and Convenience Accounts)
Amendment stating the end of this Part’s effectiveness after Fiscal Year 2008.
Affected Section: 125.5
Effective Date: October 19, 2007

Fiscal & Procurement

2008 Illinois Textbook Loan Program

There have been some changes in the Illinois Textbook Loan Program (ITLP) for Fiscal 2008. The ITLP appropriation for 2008 has increased from $29,126,500 to $42,826,500 after having been funded at the same level for the last five years. This year, the program has also changed to a two year cycle (grades K-6 and 7-12) from a three year cycle (grades K-4, 5-8, and 9-12) so textbooks will be rotated more often. The 2008 loan program will be for grades K through 6 with an allotment of approximately $35 per student.

Ordering for the 2008 ITLP will begin December 15 and end March 15. School allotments and other pertinent information regarding the program will be mailed to school administrators on December 1.

Schools will utilize the ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) system to request instructional materials. If you need assistance with IWAS, call the IWAS help desk at 217-558-3600.

Additional information is available on the Illinois Textbook Loan Program website at http://www.isbe.net/htmls/textbook.htm. If you have any questions, please contact Frank Hanselman or the ITLP staff at 217-782-0734.

Funding & Disbursements

Special education summer claims due November 1

Special Education Summer School and Special Education Summer Individual Orphanage claims are statutorily required to be received at the Illinois State Board of Education on or before November 1, 2007. Claims are for eligible students educated in 2007 summer programs and must be filed electronically. No claims will be accepted or honored after the statutory date.

Special Education Summer School State Aid claims authorized under Section 18-4.3 are required to be filed electronically via the Illinois State Board of Education’s Web Application Security System (IWAS) and will only be available to transmit student data until midnight November 1, 2007.

Eligibility requirements for pupils claimed for summer school are:

- the pupil must be enrolled in one or more courses offered for at least 60 clock hours in the summer session;
- the pupil must be eligible pursuant to the requirements for continued summer school services per his or her Individualized Education Plan (IEP);
- there shall not be a tuition charge to families to insure a "free, appropriate public education."

Questions regarding completion of the Special Education Summer School claim should be directed to Jodi Whitlow, Division of Funding and Disbursement Services, at 217-782-5256 or by e-mail at jwhitlow@isbe.net.
Special Education Summer Individual Orphanage claims authorized under Section 14-7.03 must be transmitted electronically using iePoint>2007 or NetCheck via Harrisburg Project. Technical issues regarding iePoint>2007 or NetCheck should be directed to Harrisburg Project support staff at 1-800-635-5274.

Special Education Summer Individual Orphanage claims may only be transmitted until midnight November 1, 2007. Questions regarding completion of this claim should be directed to Jodi Whitlow, Division of Funding and Disbursement Services, at 217-782-5256 or by e-mail at jwhitlow@isbe.net.

Please direct technical questions regarding IWAS to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Call Center at 217-558-3600 Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Proposed Medicaid Rule Impacts School Transportation**

The Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is proposing a rule change that eliminates an important aspect of school-based claiming as it relates to transportation services.

**Transportation Services:**

The proposed rule would not affect Federal reimbursement for direct medical service expenditures included in the State Medicaid plan and provided in schools, nor would it affect transportation of school-aged children from school or home to a non-school-based direct medical service provider that bills under the Medicaid program, or from the non-school-based provider to school or home. However, the proposed rule would eliminate reimbursement for costs of transportation from home to school and back for school-age children with an IEP or IFSP or any activity unrelated to the covered direct medical service. The Secretary for CMS determined that transportation from home to school and back does not meet the definition of an optional medical transportation service nor is it necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the State plan. One of the essential functions of schools is to ensure that students receive all required services necessary to obtain a free appropriate public education. School-age children, including children with an IEP or IFSP, are transported from home to school primarily to receive an education, not to receive direct medical services.

Questions regarding the impact of the proposed rule can be directed to the Illinois Bureau of Maternal and Child Health Promotion at 312-793-4792 or 217-557-5438.

The proposed rule is accessible via the Federal Register here. Interested parties and the public can submit their comments on the proposed new Medicaid rule through November 6. Electronic submissions can be sent via www.cms.hhs.gov/eRulemaking or by regular mail to the following address:

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
Department of Health and Human Services
Attention: CMS-2287-P
Mail Stop S3-14-22
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

**Federal Grants & Programs**

**Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Program**

The Illinois Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) Program is pleased to announce the new Safe and Drug-Free website http://www.safeschoolsil.net/index.asp.

The SDFSCA website affords Illinois’ school districts to gain all the information needed in one centralized website to ensure that all program components are appropriately addressed.

If you have any questions, please contact Albert J. Holmes, Federal Grants & Programs, at 312-814-3618 or aholmes@isbe.net.

**Nutrition**

**Statewide Survey Reveals Priority Areas for Supporting Local Wellness Policy Initiatives in Illinois Schools**

The Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program in collaboration with Action for Healthy Kids-Illinois have completed a statewide survey of Local Wellness Policy needs. The 716 responses received through the survey includes the opinions of school food service staff, classroom nutrition educators and local wellness policy leaders in 544 Illinois school districts. The top ten training and resource needs include:
1. parent/community awareness of local wellness policy
2. training school staff on local wellness policy
3. effective ways to promote healthful food choices to students in the cafeteria
4. list of healthful foods for school parties/events
5. teaching strategies that increase healthy food choices
6. funding a local wellness policy
7. nutrition education curriculum recommendations
8. parent and community education programs
9. coordinated school health program
10. nutrition integrated into health education

Research shows a student’s academic performance may be impacted by poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and lack of self esteem. Thereby, the Illinois State Board of Education establishes a state goal that all public school districts must have a locally-developed wellness policy that addresses the following:

- Nutrition guidelines for all foods sold on the school campus during the school day
- Nutrition education
- Physical activity

The Local Wellness Policy should be consistent with the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in these areas and shall not be less restrictive than any federal or state rules that govern these areas. The policy shall be drafted with community participation. School districts that participate in the Federal Child Nutrition Programs were required, based on federal law, to implement a Local Wellness Policy at the beginning of the 2006–2007 school year. All remaining public school districts not participating in the Federal Child Nutrition Programs shall have a Local Wellness Policy in effect no later than the first day of school during the 2008–2009 school year.

After implementation of the Local Wellness Policy, each school district should create a plan to measure the implementation of such policy. The Local Wellness Policy may be modified, when necessary, to reflect the current research in the areas of health, nutrition, physical activity, and wellness for students in addition to changes that occur within the school environment.

Guidance materials are available. The Illinois State Board of Education has partnered with Illinois Nutrition Education and Training (NET) to provide model policies, an action plan to follow for implementing an effective Local Wellness Policy, and more. All of the resources are available at:

http://www.kidseatwell.org/LocalWellnessPolicy.html

Additional resources may be found on the following websites:

- ISBE:
  http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/wellness_policy.htm
- Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program:
  http://www.kidseatwell.org/LocalWellnessPolicy.html
- Model Wellness Policy:
  http://www.kidseatwell.org/flyers/School%20District%20Model%20Local%20Wellness%20Policy%202006.doc

Quick Facts: Illinois Local Wellness Policy Needs Assessment Survey [Click here]

Illinois Local Wellness Policy Needs Assessment Survey 2007 - [Coming Soon]

Emergency Management Satellite Seminar/Webcast, November 16

The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) invites foodservice assistants, managers, directors, and school administrators to view the important Emergency Management in Foodservice Operations satellite seminar from 2 – 3 p.m. Friday, November 16.

The seminar has been approved for two continuing professional education units (CPEs). Registration is required to access the satellite coordinates and/or receive the webcast. To register, go to NFSMI’s website at http://www.nfsmi.org/Education/Satellite/emergencymanagement/satinfo.html.

State Goal on Wellness Policy Adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education

Based on the requirements of Public Act 094-0199, the following state goal was adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education at its October 2007 Board Meeting:
• United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Healthy/wellnesspolicy.html
• Center for Disease Control and Prevention: http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/healthtopics/wellness.htm
• Make a Difference at Your School! http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/keystrategies/index.htm
• School Nutrition Association: http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Index.aspx?id=1075
• National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity: http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/WellnessPolicies.htm
• Action for Healthy Kids: http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/

External Assurance

NCLB F08 Title I Comparability analysis

The deadline for submitting the annual NCLB Title I Comparability analysis is rapidly approaching. The submittal deadline is November 30, 2007. The form can be submitted electronically and is available through the IWAS system. Instructions on completing and filing your comparability analysis are available on our web page and in the IWAS system. Those districts not submitting by the deadline will be subject to having their Title I funds frozen and if necessary, all funds expended will be recovered. Direct your questions to Paul Williams, External Assurance at 217-782-7970 or e-mail at pwilliam@isbe.net.

NCLB FY08 Monitoring Instrument

In FY08 districts will also be required to complete a self-monitoring review for NCLB programs through the IWAS system. There will be links to the federal guidelines, rules and regulations that govern the grants. All districts receiving NCLB funding are required to submit their Monitoring Instrument annually.

A crosswalk between the NCLB required policies/procedures and those provided by the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) on a subscription basis is provided online at: http://www.isbe.net/ea/htm/NCLB_monitoring_instrument.htm.


The previous year’s data will load for those of you who have completed this last year. You can then update only those portions that have changed. The submission deadline is November 30, 2007. Direct your questions to Paul Williams, External Assurance at 217-782-7970 or e-mail at pwilliam@isbe.net.

Illinois Department of Public Health

Guidance for schools on Staph infections

The Illinois Department of Public Health has released guidance for schools on outbreaks and sporadic cases of Community-Associated Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (CA-MRSA).

The guidance is available on ISBE’s web site in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format at: http://www.isbe.net/pdf/mrsa_infection.pdf.

IDPH has additional resources available online:

• MRSA Educational Materials (posters), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_c_a_posters.html

Teacher Resources
School District Library Grant Program

Grant packets for the School District Library Grant Program (commonly referred to as School Per Capita) were mailed to Superintendents in late September. School librarians/grant writers should contact their superintendent for the packet. The FY08 grant application consists of three components each with unique deadlines:

- (1) online (deadline: November 16, 2007, 4:30 p.m., CST;)
- (2) attendance centers (paper component deadline: postmarked on or before November 16, 2007); and
- (3) signature page (paper component deadline: postmarked on or before December 14, 2007).

Grant information and the online component are accessible at: [http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/what_we_do/schoolpercapgrant.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/what_we_do/schoolpercapgrant.html)

Questions should be directed to Ron Winner at rwinner@ilsos.net or Susan Goodman at sgoodman@ilsos.net with the Illinois State Library.

Try-it! Illinois database trial

The eighth annual Try-It! Illinois database trial, sponsored by Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White and the State Library runs through November 30.

Try-It! Illinois offers the 5,000+ ILLINET member libraries, their staffs and their communities-library users, customers, clients, faculty, students, and boards--a wonderful opportunity to survey and evaluate a wide variety of electronic resources. Thanks to an agreement between the State Library and the participating electronic resource vendors, there is no charge for accessing these databases during the trial period.

Libraries are encouraged to share Try-It! Illinois with their library users, providing them with the opportunity to use and recommend electronic resources for possible purchase at the local level. Try-It! Illinois users are also invited to suggest electronic resources for consideration in E-RICH, the Illinois State Library’s electronic resource service that works with vendors to negotiate best prices for Illinois libraries.

Try-It! Illinois is available at: [http://www.eliillinois.org/tryit/](http://www.eliillinois.org/tryit/)

If you have questions, contact Gwen Harrison with the Illinois State Library at gharrison@ilsos.net or 217-785-7334.

Professional Development

Meeting The Challenge XVIII

Meeting The Challenge XVIII, a fine arts conference for all educators, has been planned for Tuesday, November 13, 2007 at Sauk Valley Community College, outside Dixon.

The theme of this fine arts conference arranged by the Whiteside Regional Office of Education and Sauk Valley Community College is Integrating the Fine Arts into the Core Curriculum. Three workshop sessions will be available to each participant in the areas of drama, visual arts, music, and dance. Many of the sessions are hands-on and will provide curriculum which participants should be able to duplicate in their classrooms.

The full day of activities will be awarded 5 CPDUs. Full conference information, including registration form, may be accessed on the Whiteside Regional Office of Education website of [www.whitesideroe.org](http://www.whitesideroe.org). For further questions or to request a flyer, please contact 815-625-1495.

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](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm).

In the News

Weekly news clips