Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Members of the General Assembly finally passed a Budget Implementation Bill (BIMP) that will allow for the full General State Aid (GSA) payment to be made to Illinois schools as provided in the budget passed earlier this year. Unfortunately, the General Assembly passed the BIMP after the deadline, so the first GSA payments for November will not reflect the increased Foundation Level calculations.

The Senate has forwarded this 450-page document to the Governor’s office for review. I need to note that the BIMP is a very technical document that contains spending guidelines for many areas of state government and important programs other than education.

We have decided that rather than making multiple recalculations with new data, because both houses of the General Assembly have passed the BIMP, we will continue to pay the first GSA payment in November based upon the Gross FY 2007 levels. Once the BIMP is signed, we will recalculate payments with the new data, which will be based on the increased Foundation Level. School districts that would expect to see an increase under the new Foundation Level will get all of the money due to them in FY 2008, spread out over the remaining payments.

We have received several e-mails about the proposed changes to the administrative rules addressing library media services. I want to take this opportunity to explain the process that Illinois has in place to ensure that you have a part in shaping the final outcome of this rulemaking.

Changes to rules may be proposed for a number of reasons. For example, additional guidance may be needed before new legislation is implemented, and the agency is required to state that guidance in rules. Additionally, rules may be amended to address ambiguity in the current regulations, to add more specificity as programs have evolved over time, or to update provisions to better reflect the way in which programs and services are currently provided. Ambiguity in the current library media services rules lead to the need for greater specificity and this was the reason for introducing the proposed amendments to these rules.

Once the State Board has reviewed proposed regulations, they are published in the Illinois Register and made available for public comment for a minimum of 45 days. During this time, members of the public may provide written comment about the rulemaking. Once the public comment period ends, ISBE staff carefully reviews and analyzes all written comments. As you might imagine, the more specific the comment, the easier it is for staff to make modifications that will respond effectively to the underlying concerns and can be recommended for adoption by the State Board of Education.

Some of you have already identified barriers that you would encounter in an effort to comply with this rule as currently written. I urge you to make use of the opportunity to propose alternatives that you believe would be feasible for you
and your colleagues to implement and suggest how ISBE can be assured that they would provide suitable levels of service to students in particular circumstances. I assure you in turn that your suggestions will be given very serious consideration.

I appreciate the time you take to comment on proposed rules and I value your perspectives and insights. The bottom line is that your comments are important to us and the more specific you can make them, the better. We need to hear how any proposed rule impacts your work and your students. Thank you for taking the time to thoughtfully consider and comment on proposed rules.

Have a great week.

Chris

Upcoming Deadlines

- **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

Curriculum & Instruction

**Technology Integration Plan**

The new Technology Integration Plan is now available online as an e-Plan, part of the IIRC network of plans.

Illinois has used School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and District Improvement Plans (DIPs) for several years now on the e-Plan system available through the Interactive Illinois Report Card (IIRC) based at Northern Illinois
University (NIU). Use of the e-Plan was optional in the first year for SIPs.

You have seen the various iterations of the e-Plans, resulting in the system we use today. Having the e-Plans in place has improved local and state use of data and provided better opportunities for planning. Illinois is now rolling out a companion plan, the Technology Integration Plan (TIP).

For the TIP, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is again working with Dr. Harvey Smith and his staff at NIU. The TIP has the same appearance, roadmap, and landing page as the DIP and SIP plans. Staff previewed it with the Learning Technology Center (LTC) directors in August, presented it at the Superintendent’s Conference in early September, and have field-tested it at three sites with local districts and their LTC directors in October. Minor changes have been made as recommended by those who participated in the field test process. It is now ready for statewide use.

School districts that have a Technology Integration Plan due in March 2008 have prepared a draft technology plan at one of several workshops across the state this fall. As of November 1st, they will be able to insert that information into TIP’s online e-Plan via the IIRC and continue their planning process.

The TIP is easy to use. The data analysis elements look familiar, incorporating the school report card information. The conclusions drawn from the data will populate a “meta analysis” section, easing the analysis of all information. The Technology Inventory will prove a useful tool for budget purposes, and rolls up into a brief district report with ample tables and graphs for presentation use.

ISBE will continue to work on integrating the TIP with the SIP and DIP, and will have further iterations as this integration moves forward. Staff is also still working on the Peer Review process and the ISBE monitoring process for TIP, but none of those improvements will interfere with districts completing their 2008 TIP plan online. Just like when commercial products are unrolled, this is TIP 1.0; further iterations will become available when necessary.

The current e-Plan contains elements regarding Title III, English Language Learning in terms of AMAOs. Staff will be working on Teacher Equity Plans and will incorporate other elements in the near future such as AYP information for career/technical education students and special education services information.

To get to the TIP, go to the IIRC homepage (http://iirc.niu.edu/), select the "district" radio button option in the lower left corner of the home page before inputting district name in the text box. Then click on the district name to open the district profile page. In the banner of the district profile page, click on the link "Log into e-Plans." Passwords will be sent to each superintendent in the immediate future.

For further information, feel free to contact your Learning Technology Center director or Faith Bishop or Gail Lieberman, Curriculum & Instruction Division, at 217-557-7323 or by e-mail at fbishop@isbe.net or glieberman@isbe.net. Staff will work with you to problem-solve as appropriate and then work with the IIRC staff on broad issues.

Illinois Arts Education Week Poster Contest

The third week of March is traditionally designated Illinois Arts Education Week in cooperation with the Illinois Alliance for Art Education (IAAE), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and the Governor’s Office. This year it will be March 10-16, 2008. ISBE produces the poster to promote the week and to reinforce the importance of the arts in the growth and development of students. Each year an Illinois student's artwork is featured on a poster. The deadline for entries is November 15, 2007.

Additional information about the Arts Education Week Poster Contest and the official entry form is available online at http://www.isbe.net/curriculum.

School Business & Support Services

New Web-Based Health/Life Safety (H/L S) Processing System

The Illinois State Board of Education has developed a new web-based Health/Life Safety (H/L S) Processing System. 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. The implementation for this new system is slated for January 2008.
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](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](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.

## Legal

### Less Red Tape

Just a reminder to send your ideas to [lessredtape@isbe.net](mailto:lessredtape@isbe.net) about ways in which agency rules, processes and procedures can be streamlined and made more effective. Since the email account debuted in October 2004, the agency has received 491 suggestions. Some of those suggestions led to changes in the School Code enacted through PA 94-875, effective July 1, 2006; others have caused staff to re-evaluate and improve the way in which our web-based systems and reporting procedures are conducted. Become a part of our improvement efforts by helping generate ideas and setting direction. Please encourage your district’s employees to do the same.

### 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 a 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 drivers 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.

## 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

This survey was made possible by a State Agency Local Wellness Policy Training grant from the USDA. The Illinois NET Program plans to share the information from the statewide survey with agencies and organizations throughout the state and nation that can help address the needs of Illinois schools. For more information about the survey:

**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](http://www.nfsmi.org/Education/Satellite/emergencymanagement/satinfo.html).

**Reprocessed Commodity Taste Tests Approaching**

Be sure to mark your calendars and come hungry for the 2009 school year taste tests. The Illinois School Nutrition Association (ILSNA) is sponsoring the events planned for **November 28** in Oak Brook at the Drury Lane Conference Center and **January 9, 2008** in Springfield at the Prairie Capitol Convention Center. More information can be obtained on the ILSNA’s website at [http://www.ilsna.net](http://www.ilsna.net) in the near future.

Taste tests are a great place to try different reprocessed commodities that will be offered for the 2009 school year. There is no cost and you do not have to divert commodities to a processor to attend. ISBE will give a brief presentation before the taste tests begin to explain the commodity diversion process. Please plan on attending one of these information filled taste tests.

---

**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](http://www.isbe.net/ea/htm/NCLB_monitoring_instrument.htm). 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](http://www.isbe.net/ea/htm/NCLB_monitoring_instrument.htm). 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](http://www.isbe.net/ea/htm/NCLB_monitoring_instrument.htm) 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](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](http://www.isbe.net/pdf/mrsa_infection.pdf).

IDPH has additional resources available online:

- Community-Associated MRSA Information for the Public, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and
**Teacher Resources**

**ICEE Mini-Grants**

The Illinois Council on Economic Education has two mini-grant programs available for schools/teachers to enhance curriculum. 3M Innovative Economic Educator grants are designed to enable K-12 teachers to develop innovative ways to teach their students economic and financial literacy concepts within the classroom.

Global Economics & Finance (GEF) mini-grants are available to teachers/schools for adding a global perspective to the teaching of economics in the classroom. Whether an elementary class wanting to learn about the economy of another country or a high school class learning about international trade, these mini-grants can help with the purchase of professional development, curriculum materials or other related activities.


**Virtual Economics 3.0 – a Tool for ALL Teachers**

Want a tool for easily finding lessons and activities to integrate economics or personal finance concepts into your classroom curriculum? Virtual Economics 3.0 lets you search by key word/concept, by subject area, or by state economic standard. The CD includes over 1,200 printable lessons; which have been correlated to state content standards.

The Illinois Council on Economic Education (ICEE) is offering professional development workshops featuring the new Virtual Economics 3.0 CD-ROM. The workshop content can be specifically tailored to fit the needs of your department, grade level, school or district. **All participants receive a free copy of this $99.99 CD-ROM.** These workshops are available free of charge through support from State Farm through the National Council on Economic Education.

**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/

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

Professional Development

School Board Member Day

House Resolution 162 proclaims November 15th of this year and every year thereafter as School Board Member Day. According to the Illinois Association of School Boards, there are nearly 6,000 men and women voluntarily serving as members of local boards of education. Please feel free to take this opportunity to recognize those members of your community serving in this capacity.

Meeting The Challenge XVIII

Meeting The Challenge XVIII, a fine arts conference for all educators, has been planned for Tuesday, November 13 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. 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.

In the News

Weekly news clips