December 9, 2008

Message from State Superintendent
Christopher A. Koch

This week’s message will not include a column from the State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch. The column will return next week.

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Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

- Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant submission – December 15
- PSAE Redesign Survey – December 15
- Illinois American Diploma Project – Learning Standards Review applications – December 19
- Part 260 (Reading Improvement Block Grant): Public comment ends – December 22
- Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Worksheet submission – December 31
- Waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly during Spring 2009 session – January 9
- Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 25 (Certification): Public comment ends – January 20
- Looking for Your Lincoln Hero submissions – March 1
- History Teacher of the Year Award first round nominations – March 2

School Business Services

Final Reminder to Submit AFRs

This notice is to remind those districts that have not submitted their Annual Financial Report (AFR) to ISBE to do so by Monday, December 15. This includes all districts that requested an extension of time. Statutorily no further extensions can be allowed.

Districts that submit AFRs after December 15 may be placed on the upcoming Watch List of the FY09 School District Financial Profile.
For more details and instructions concerning the AFR, go to [http://www.isbe.net/sfms/af/afr.htm](http://www.isbe.net/sfms/af/afr.htm).

For questions about this AFR submission deadline notice, contact Debbie Hemberger in School Business Services at 217-785-8779 or dhemberg@isbe.net.

**Annual Statement of Affairs**

Section 10-17 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-17) requires school districts to publish the Annual Statement of Affairs (ASA) ISBE Form 50-37.

The Fiscal Year 2008 ASA and instructions for publication and submission are available at the ISBE website. You may obtain the form at [www.isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net) – select Division Links - under “Fiscal Support Services,” select School Business Services - Forms - Annual Statement of Affairs. The direct address is [http://www.isbe.net/sfms/af/afr/asp.htm](http://www.isbe.net/sfms/af/afr/asp.htm).

The ASA form is to be completed and published in the local newspaper of the residing district no later than December 1, annually, and submitted to ISBE no later than December 15, annually. ISBE is required to publish the reports on its website no later than January 15, annually.

**New Rule for Contracts Exceeding $25,000**

In January 2008, the School Code [105 ILCS 5/10-17] was amended to add requirements concerning contracts exceeding $25,000, beginning with FY2008, in conjunction with submission of the ASA.

The new provisions include the following requirements:

1. A school board must list on the district’s Internet website all contracts over $25,000.

2. In conjunction with the submission of the ASA to ISBE by December 15, the district shall submit an annual report on all contracts over $25,000. The Excel spreadsheet labeled “Contracts Exceeding $25,000” will be utilized by all school districts (excluding Joint Agreements) and is included in the ASA (ISBE Form 50-37).


For additional questions regarding the new rule, contact the School Business Services Division at 217-785-8779 or finance1@isbe.net.

**Rules & Waivers**

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

Two sets of proposed rules recently reviewed by the State Board of Education are currently available for public comment. These items have 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.

**Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision)**

- Updates to the rule for the Student Information System (Section 1.75);
- Clarification of requirements for deans of students; and
- Flexibility in assignment of middle-grade teachers when schools move to a departmentalized structure.

**Part 25 (Certification)**

Provision for a one-year deferral in the schedule of accreditation reviews for institutions of higher education with approved preparation programs for educators. (Identical to the emergency amendment discussed below.)

**Deadline for Public Comment:** January 20, 2009

**Notice of Effectiveness of Rules**

Please also be advised that two rulemakings recently adopted by the State Board are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s web site at [www.isbe.net/rules](http://www.isbe.net/rules); choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to the relevant Part number. If you print any of the affected Sections, please remember to include the table of contents to the Part, since that changes each time a set of rules is amended.

**Emergency Amendment to Part 25 (Certification)**
Provision for a one-year deferral in the schedule of accreditation reviews for institutions of higher education with approved preparation programs for educators.

**Affected Section:** 25.115.

**Effective Date:** November 21, 2008, for a maximum of 150 days.

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

Grants to the four state universities with approved teacher preparation programs in agricultural education and the community colleges with an “articulated agriculture science teacher education course of study” under P.A. 94-973.

**Affected Sections:** All.

**Effective Date:** November 26, 2008

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**E-Bulletins**

**Requirements Posted for Targeted Assistance School Programs and Schoolwide Programs**

A new E-Bulletin has been posted on the ISBE website. NCLB authorizes two distinct program structures under Title 1, Part A. This bulletin covers the two types: targeted assistance and schoolwide programs and serves as a refresher on the requirements to operate each type under Title I, Part A.

E-Bulletins contain guidance and technical assistance for districts to meet the requirements of NCLB. If you have a suggestion for an E-Bulletin topic, please e-mail it to NCLB@isbe.net.

To access E-Bulletins, go to ISBE’s website at: [http://www.isbe.net/e-bulletins/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/e-bulletins/default.htm).

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**Curriculum & Instruction**

**FY2009 Erate Application Filing Window**

The FY 2009 Erate application filing window opened at noon EST on **Tuesday, December 2**, and will close at 11:59 p.m. EST on **Thursday, February 12, 2009**. The filing window will be open for 73 days.

Applicants should note that FY2009 Forms 470 can be filed now.

Traditionally, a high percentage of Forms 471 arrives at USAC during the final week that the window is open. We urge you to file early so that:

- You have an opportunity to review your work and make corrections if necessary.
- You can re-file your form if an error you made cannot be corrected.
- USAC has your information and can start reviewing your application.
- We also urge you to file online.
- The system notifies you of possible errors and allows you to correct them.
- The system does your calculations for you.
- You can review your information online before you submit it.
- Your information is submitted to us quickly and correctly.

For additional information, go to [http://www.usac.org](http://www.usac.org).

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**History Teacher of the Year Award**

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and ISBE are looking for elementary school teachers in Illinois who teach American History. To qualify teachers must have:

- At least three years of classroom experience in teaching American history.
- A commitment to teaching American history, including local and state history.
- Evidence of creativity and imagination in the classroom that address literacy and content beyond state standards.
- Close attention to primary documents, artifacts, historic sites, and other primary materials of history, including oral history.
- Evidence of thoughtful assessment of student achievement.

**Eligibility:** Any full-time elementary school teacher who teaches American history (including local and state history) as the primary subject, or one of the subjects he or she is responsible for in the classroom.
Nominations can be made by a department or division head, a school director, social studies director, principal or superintendent.

First Round Nominations Deadline: March 2, 2009
Submit the following to the state coordinator: Mike Hatfill; ISBE, 100 North 1st Street, C-215, Springfield, IL 62777 or by e-mail to dhatfill@isbe.net.
- The nominee’s resume.
- A letter of nomination that addresses the award criteria and includes quantitative measures of student achievement.
- A letter of support from a colleague, immediate supervisor, or education professional familiar with the nominee’s work.

Second Round: Additional Materials for Consideration will be due April 10, 2009. From the pool of first round nominations, state coordinators will select up to five finalists who will be asked to submit additional materials.

For additional information, contact Mike Hatfill, Curriculum & Instruction at dhatfill@isbe.net.

ICE 2009 Conference

This year’s conference will feature David Thornburg as the luncheon keynote. There is a special fee for this luncheon and space is limited, so register early if you would like to attend.

The pre-conference booklet contains information about the full-day and half-day workshops, Administrator Academy sessions, and the “Bring-Your-Own-Laptop” (BYOL) workshops. To print the booklet online go to http://www.iceberg.org/site/files/ice_2009.pdf.

All registrations must be done online at http://www.iceberg.org/form.php?f?id=efc8ad5aeeb37b5ebf1d5a0113044296.

For questions about registration procedures, contact ICE at 630-628-1088 or info@iceberg.org.

Reading First Evaluation Report
The Illinois Reading First Program Evaluation Report for the 2007-2008 school year has been released.

It may be accessed at the following link: http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/reading/html/read_first.htm.

Illinois Virtual High School RFSP
A Request for Sealed Proposal (RFSP) for the Administration of the Illinois Virtual School (IVS) has been posted on the Illinois Procurement Bulletin www.purchase.state.il.us
The purpose of this RFSP is to identify a contractor who will guide the transformation of the Illinois Virtual High School into the Illinois Virtual School (IVS), building on the successes of the IVHS and taking advantage of the most current research and technology available.

This school is intended to expand the number of traditional students served, expand the grade levels to include grades 5 - 8, operate in an “anywhere, anytime” mode, and serve nontraditional students (e.g., credit recovery, dual enrollment). The IVS will supplement and complement school districts’ efforts, rather than replace or compete with opportunities offered locally.

If interested, access the website address above and select the "Registration" button located at the top of the screen and complete the form following the instructions given.

Once registered, click on “IllinoisBid” and then on the top right select “Sort by Agency”. Scroll down to “SBE” and click on the triangle. The solicitation for the Administration IVS will be listed. Click on the solicitation number and the RFSP will be located at the bottom of the screen as an attachment. You must register if you wish to open the RFSP.

For assistance, contact the Illinois Procurement Bulletin Help Desk toll free at 1-866-ILL-BUYS (1-866-455-2897). Registration is not required if you only want to browse through the site, however, you need to register with CMS to view any RFSPs or solicitations.
Legal

Student Health Records Guidance

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued “Joint Guidance on the Application of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (administered by USDE) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) (administered by HHS) to Student Health Records.”

This joint guidance is most welcomed as the intersection of these two complicated federal laws has long raised many questions regarding access to and disclosure of student health records by school districts and their employees (including school nurses).

The web address is http://www.isbe.net/pdf/FERPA-HIPAA_records.pdf.

Data Analysis & Progress Reporting

Teacher Service Record Updates

District superintendents are encouraged to check their IWAS accounts for updated information on the Teacher Service Record (TSR) data collection process.

On Monday, December 1, a bulletin providing official notice of changes beginning spring 2009 was sent via IWAS to all TSR application users. The notice has also been posted on the TSR application home page and on the Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division website at http://www.isbe.net/research/default.htm (see link under Announcements).

Special Education

Revised IDEA Regulations Part B

The U.S. Department of Education issued the final regulations for IDEA Part B, 34 CFR Part 300. The following changes are of considerable importance and impact.

Parental Consent: § 300.9(c)(3) is added, indicating that when a parent evokes consent for IDEA services after the parent’s child has been receiving such services:

- The revocation must be in writing; and
- The public agency is not required to amend the child’s education records to remove any reference to the child’s previous receipt of such services.

§ 300.300(b)(4) is added. A parent can revoke consent for continued IDEA services provided to the parent’s child.

- The revocation must be in writing;
- The public agency must provide the parent with written notice under § 300.503 (which may be one way of establishing just when the services should cease);
- The public agency may not utilize mediation or the due process procedures to challenge the parent’s revocation of consent;
- The public agency is not required to convene an IEP Team or develop an IEP; and
- The public agency will not be deemed in noncompliance with the IDEA for failure to provide a FAPE to an otherwise eligible child.

Hearing Rights § 300.512(a)(1) has been amended to indicate that State law will determine whether a party (parent or public agency) can be represented by a non-attorney.

Monitoring and Enforcement § 300.600(e) is added, establishing a one-year time frame within which a State must ensure an LEA achieves corrective action based upon incidents of noncompliance identified through the monitoring process. (NOTE: In the Comment/Discussion section at p. 73020, the USDE indicates a State can enter into a Compliance Agreement with the USDE where corrective action will take more than one year. A Compliance Agreement is effective for up to three years from its execution.)

§ 300.602(b)(1)(i)(A) establishes that a State must, no later than 120 days after submitting its annual performance report (APR) to the Secretary, provide a report to the public on the performance of each LEA.

Please note: The December 3, 2008, Weekly Message included the statement “This doubles the current allowable time frame.” In fact, no time frame for public reporting was previously addressed by IDEA 2004 regulations. The recently proposed regulations would have established a 60-day timeline for this public reporting; however, this was extended by the U.S. Department of Education after public comment. Thus the remark regarding a doubling of time allowed...
for public reporting referred to the proposed regulations and not previously existing regulations.

These are just the highlights of the final regulations. The Federal Register for December 1, 2008, can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/IDEA_regs12-08.pdf.

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**Professional Development**

**Charter School Webinar Available**

The Illinois Network of Charter Schools (INCS) will present an interactive webinar on **Tuesday, December 9**. The webinar, Designing a High-Quality Charter School, will be presented by Anne Levy Brown and Steve Zemelman from 3:30-5 p.m.

This interactive webinar will provide the information needed to begin planning a high-performing charter public school in Chicago’s suburbs and greater Illinois. It will help to:

- Understand the process and requirements for charter school start-up in Illinois.
- Gain a roadmap for designing an excellent school.
- Learn about common stumbling blocks and how to overcome them.
- Get answers to your pressing questions.

To register for the webinar go to: [http://www.incschools.org/start_a_charter.html](http://www.incschools.org/start_a_charter.html)

Webinar details will be e-mailed to all registered participants.

For questions contact Anne Levy Brown at alevybrown@incschools.org or 312-235-0798 ext.18.

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**Student Opportunities**

**McKelvey Foundation Entrepreneurial Scholarships**

The McKelvey Foundation awards entrepreneurial scholarships for college to high school seniors who have started their own businesses.

The Foundation began awarding scholarships in 2006. This year the goal is to award scholarships to 100 students of up to $10,000 per year to attend any four-year colleges in the United States.

The next annual deadline to submit applications is **January 25, 2009**. The Foundation is trying to reach as many potential applicants as possible.

For scholarship criteria and application information visit [http://mckelveyfoundation.org/entrepreneurial/](http://mckelveyfoundation.org/entrepreneurial/)

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**IEPA Poster, Poetry and Prose Contest**

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) invites fifth and sixth grade students to compete in its annual Poster, Poetry and Prose Contest. This year’s focus is on the importance of water conservation and clean water. The contest theme is “Your Water Footprint … Keep it Small, Keep it Clean!”

Each school can enter up to 12 items (six posters and six written works). Entries must be postmarked and sent to the IEPA by **February 6, 2009**. Contact Kristi Morris-Richards at IEPA for more information at 217-558-7198 or at 1021 North Grand Avenue East, P.O. Box 19267, Springfield, IL 62794-9276.

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**IDPH Reminders**

**Reporting and Preventing Illnesses**

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) requests that schools contact their local public health department with questions about reporting illnesses or using prevention measures to control illnesses in their schools. In the event a county has no local public health department (there are only two such Illinois counties), school personnel can reach IDPH Communicable Diseases at 217-782-2016.

The following link is to Illinois' reportable disease list. The number of hours or days allowed to report each disease is also noted.

Hand Washing Awareness Week

Each year, the first full week of December is National Hand Washing Awareness Week. Materials to promote hand washing among pre-school, primary and intermediate grades are available at the following link: http://www.henrythehand.com/pages_blocks/images/links/HandwashIllinois1.pdf

If you have the ability to send these materials to education centers who serve these age groups, please do so. It is important to reinforce proper hand washing as we approach the season when cold viruses and respiratory "bugs" circulate more than any other time of year.

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

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at: http://www.isbe.net/news/2008/newsclips/081205.htm