December 11, 2007

Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

We have had icy conditions throughout Illinois over the past week and the forecast shows more wintry weather is on its way. I hope everyone allows for some extra time when traveling and please be mindful of the rapidly changing weather conditions as our students engage in extra-curricular activities.

Members of the State Board are scheduled to meet in Springfield this week, weather permitting. They will be touching on a variety of topics of interest to you, particularly educator supply and demand and the Interactive Illinois Report Card (IIRC).

The Board will be reviewing the 2007 Educator Supply and Demand Annual Report, which is prepared to fulfill requirements of the School Code and give a snapshot of the education workforce demographics.

Some of the key findings from the 2007 report include an increase in the number of educators re-entering the profession. In 2007, the number of re-entries hired increased by 42% or more than 1,700 educators. Also, the downstate teaching force increased by 1.8% in 2007. This is the second year in a row this part of the state experienced an increase after seeing declining numbers in 2004 and 2005. Statewide, the number of unfilled positions decreased by 6% last year, with the majority of those unfilled positions in City of Chicago School District 299.

Through 2011, it is estimated that Illinois will need more than 7,500 special and 36,000 regular education teachers. In that same time period, Illinois is expected to need 3,000 administrators and 4,200 other educators.

The Educator Supply and Demand Annual Report is available on the ISBE website at http://www.isbe.net/board/meetings/dec07/eppe.pdf.

The Board will also be participating in a demonstration of the IIRC. Since 2003, ISBE and Northern Illinois University have partnered in the development of the IIRC, which provides direct, user-friendly access to test results, accountability information and classroom resources about districts and schools. Some of the key features of the IIRC include:

- “Point-and-Click” summary reports for every district and school in Illinois;
- Summary graphics showing multiple years of IIRC data on academic performance, demographics, educators, finances, and state and federal improvement plans;
- Easy-to-use, interactive tools for analyzing data to compare schools and improve decision-making;
- Quick access to learning standards, lesson plans, student work, test items and other classroom resources; and
- Access to interactive e-plans for school and district improvement plans

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In closing, I want to say congratulations to all of Illinois’ newly recognized National Board Certified Teachers. Illinois was fourth in the nation with more than 500 teachers achieving our profession’s highest credential in 2007. All of the success that happens inside of a classroom starts with the teacher. The quality of a teacher’s skills, practices and teaching knowledge is an essential component in raising student achievement. I congratulate each and every National Board Certified Teacher in Illinois who has worked so hard to achieve this prestigious national certification.

Be safe and have a great week.

Chris

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**Upcoming Deadlines**

- **Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report (87-01)** – December 31, 2007
- **Pre-charter Planning Grant applications** – December 31, 2007
- **Deadline for commenting on draft guidelines for Green Cleaning Schools Act** – January 8, 2008
- **Waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Spring 2008** – January 11, 2008
- **Deadline for schools and districts to apply for TECH 2008** – January 14, 2008
- **Student applications for National Science Youth Camp** – February 18, 2008
- **Non-Certified Staff Salary Study survey** – February 29, 2008
- **Charter Planning Grant applications & Charter Implementation Grant applications** – April 30, 2008

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**Accountability**

**FY08 Charter School RFP Released**

The Illinois State Board of Education was again successful this past summer in receiving a Federal Charter School Start Up grant. Illinois was one of only ten successful candidates to receive the charter school funding. The FY08 Federal Charter School Start Up grant Request for Proposals has now been posted and is available online at [http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/RFP.htm](http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/RFP.htm).

Three types of charter grants are available. Eligible applicants for a Pre-charter Planning grant are not-for-profit entities which have submitted a charter school application to a local educational agency (school district). Proof of the delivery must be provided to ISBE to receive the Pre-charter grant. Once the local educational agency approves the charter school application, the not-for-profit entity may receive a Charter Planning grant. After the charter school opens, a Charter School Implementation grant may be applied for.


Planning and Implementation grant applications must be received by April 30, 2008 – although an earlier submission is preferred.

Grant application forms may be obtained from Richard Loman in the Accountability Division. He can be reached at 217-782-2948 or rloman@isbe.net.

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**Funding & Disbursements**

**SB 140-PA 95-0338 Student’s with instruction permits and cell phone use**

Please be advised that effective January 1, 2008, all persons under the age of 19 who hold an instruction permit may not drive a vehicle on a roadway while using a wireless phone. The new law modified Section 12-610.1 of the Vehicle Code and changed the student age from 18 to 19. The new law does not apply when the
wireless phone is being used for emergency purposes, including, but not limited to, an emergency call to a law enforcement agency, health care provider, fire department, or other emergency services agency or entity.

Rules & Waivers

Green Cleaning Schools Act

The Illinois Green Government Coordinating Council has posted the draft guidelines for the Green Cleaning Schools Act, which requires all elementary and secondary schools in Illinois to purchase environmentally sensitive cleaning supplies.

Passed into law on August 13, 2007, the Green Cleaning Schools Act will protect Illinois students, teachers and school staff from polluted indoor air that may be five to 100 times more polluted than outdoor air. This pollution is due in part to the chemicals found in everyday cleaning supplies.

The guidelines and specifications for the act were created by the council in coordination with the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Regional Offices of Education, Illinois State Board of Education and a panel of interested stakeholders.

The public comment period on the draft guidelines is now through January 8, 2008. Comments may be submitted in writing online at GreenSolutions.il.gov or in person at one of three public comment hearings:

- **10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Wednesday, December 12** – Capital Development Board, board room, Stratton Building, Springfield
- **1:30 – 3:30 p.m., Monday, December 17** – James R. Thompson Center, Room 2-025, 100 W. Randolph St., Chicago
- **10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 8** – James R. Thompson Center, Room 2-025, 100 W. Randolph St., Chicago

It is possible to join the meetings by teleconference or videoconference. Please visit GreenSolutions.il.gov or call Kate Tomford at 312-814-4083 for more information.

Data Analysis & Progress Reporting

2007-2008 Non-Certified Staff Salary Study

The Non-Certified Staff Salary Study survey will be available in IWAS for submission of 2007-2008 school year data from November 15, 2007.

Two useful documents can be found online at:


The deadline date for submission is February 29, 2008. Districts with student enrollment (as of the last school day in September 2006) of less than 1000 may ignore this message.

If you have questions please call the Helpdesk at 217-558-3600.

Nutrition

10 Top Common Citations on Administrative Reviews

Beginning in January 2008, Nutrition Programs staff will begin administrative reviews – Coordinated Review Effort (CRE) – that are scheduled for school year 2007-2008. Here are the top 10 citations in random order:

- Benefit Issuance – not updated for changes from verification or from the previous year’s application rolled over.
- Meal Count Edits – edits are not completed monthly. Problems noted are not followed up.
- Verification – process is not completed for every application chosen for review.
- On site reviews – not completed by February 1st or three or more reviews are completed on the same day by the same individual.
- Local Wellness Policy – no policy in place. This year the local wellness plan is required to be evaluated based on the goals established in your policy.
• Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan – No functioning plan in place based on HACCP principles.
• Sanitation Reviews – less than two reviews are conducted per school year. No documentation requesting review to the local health department.
• Offer versus Serve under food based menu approaches – directing the student selections (entrée and milk).
• Production Records – not completed or did not list all food items available in a given day, including condiments.
• NuMenu Nutrient Based Approach – analysis not on file for each week or meals did not meet regulatory guidelines.

Please review our National School Lunch Program – Administrative Review Checklist to see if you have complied with all areas of the breakfast/lunch program. The checklist is available online at www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/requirements.htm under school based programs.

Champions for Healthy Kids grant applications

Entering its fifth year, the General Mills Foundation, in partnership with the American Dietetic Association Foundation and the President's Council on Physical Fitness, announces the Champions for Healthy Kids grant program. Fifty $10,000 Champions for Healthy Kids grants will be awarded to community-based groups that develop creative ways to help youth adopt a balanced diet and physically active lifestyle. Grant applications are due January 15, 2008, and grants will be awarded in May 2008.


Summer Mandate

Do not miss your opportunity to “Get the Scoop” on the Summer Mandate, Public Act 095-0155, signed by Governor Blagojevich on August 14, 2007. Workshops are scheduled to clarify the details of this amendment. The legislation along with questions and answers are accessible at www.isbe.net/nutrition on either the National School Lunch Program or Summer Food Service Program webpage under Summer Mandate.

Time is running out. Visit our website today at www.isbe.net/nutrition to register for a workshop in your area. Pre-registration is required. If you have any questions, contact our office at 1-800-545-7892.

Go for the Bronze, Silver or Gold - HealthierUS School Challenge

With nutrition standards, wellness policies, and increased emphasis on physical education and activity; we know more schools are approaching the HealthierUS School Challenge criteria. New to this special recognition is a bronze level. Schools with a percent average daily participation (ADP) of school lunch of 62 percent or greater and meeting the silver level criteria are eligible for the bronze level consideration. Illinois has yet to recognize a HealthierUS School Challenge school. Be the first one and apply for the HealthierUS School Challenge today! Visit http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/HealthierUS/index.html for the application packet.

Legal

Missing Children Records Act — Important Update

Public Act 95-0439 (http://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=095-0439&GA=095) amends the Missing Children Records Act (325 ILCS 50/5) to require, effective January 1, 2008, all preschool educational programs, child care facilities, and day care homes or group day care homes licensed under the Child Care Act of 1969 to collect a certified copy of a child’s birth certificate or other reliable proof of the child’s identity and age, such as a passport, visa, or other governmental documentation, when a child is enrolled for the first time. The new Public Act describes specifically how this documentation is to be collected and the steps to follow when the documentation is not provided to the center.

It is our understanding that additional information will be provided to you by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). DCFS is currently drafting changes to the rules for licensing standards and will provide further guidance.

Curriculum & Instruction

2007 Illinois Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results Released

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in collaboration with representatives from state and local departments of education and health, other federal agencies, and national education and health organizations. The YRBS was designed to focus on behaviors among youth related to the leading causes of mortality and morbidity among both youth and adults and to assess how these risk behaviors change over time. The YRBS measures behaviors that fall into six categories:

- Behaviors that result in unintentional injuries and violence
- Tobacco use
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Sexual behaviors that result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies
- Dietary behaviors
- Physical activity

The YRBS also measures self-reported height and weight to allow calculation of body mass index and asthma. The Illinois YRBS was completed by 1,319 students in 28 public high schools in Illinois (excluding Chicago Public Schools) during the spring of 2007. The school response rate was 74%, the student response rate was 87%, and the overall response rate was 64%. The results are representative of all students in grades 9-12. Students completed a self-administered, anonymous, 87-item questionnaire. Survey procedures were designed to protect the privacy of students by allowing for anonymous and voluntary participation. Local parental permission procedures were followed before survey administration.


Governor’s Award

Governor’s Green Youth Award

Illinois students are encouraged to apply for the annual Governor’s Green Youth Award. The award recognizes outstanding and inventive efforts of Illinois youth who are working on environmental protection and conservation projects.

Students currently enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade at an Illinois public, private, or home school, who have participated in an environmental project started no earlier than January 2006, are eligible to submit their project for the Green Youth Award. Clubs and other organizations such as Scouts and 4-H are also encouraged to apply.

This spring, awards will be presented at a special ceremony in Springfield hosted by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Winners will also receive tickets to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield.

Applications are due by March 17, 2008. More information, including application materials, is available online at www.epa.state.il.us/green-youth/ or by calling 217-557-7826.

Professional Development

17th Annual Early Literacy and Illinois Reading Recovery Conference

The 17th Annual Early Literacy and Illinois Reading Recovery Conference is scheduled for January 17 – 18, 2008, at the Renaissance Schaumburg Hotel and Convention Center in Schaumburg.

The 2008 Early Literacy and Illinois Reading Recovery Conference is designed to provide excellent professional development opportunities for K-3 classroom teachers, reading specialists, school and district administrators, board members, special education professionals, and Reading Recovery staff. Reading Recovery is a successful short-term early intervention to enable the lowest achieving first-grade children to become independent readers and writers. The Conference will continue to focus on collaborating for change and will emphasize the critical importance of school-wide dialogue and the complimentary roles of all educators in supporting literacy learning for all children.

More conference information, including registration materials is available online at
www.illinoisreadingrecovery.org. For additional information or questions, contact Ellen Swengel, conference coordinator, at eswengel@insightbb.com.

Student Opportunities

**Illinois high school seniors sought for National Youth Science Camp honors**

Two of Illinois’ most promising high school seniors will receive a full scholarship to attend a three-week summer camp experience – June 29 – July 26, 2008 – that honors and challenges seniors from the Class of 2008 from each state. Scientists from across the nation who work on some of the most provocative topics in science today; present lectures; do hands-on research projects; and interact informally with student delegates. The delegates will participate in two overnight expeditions into the Monongahela National Forest and a visit Washington, D.C. The selected delegates must not only demonstrate academic achievement in science, but also show potential for thoughtful scientific leadership. The National Youth Science Camp is offered at no cost to its selected participants; the scholarship will cover all educational and recreational programming, meals, lodging, and round-trip air passage.

Application forms are available on the Science Camp website at [www.nysc.org/2008](http://www.nysc.org/2008) and must be submitted directly to the Illinois State Board of Education by **February 18, 2008**:

Gwen Pollock  
NYSC-Illinois state coordinator  
100 North First Street  
Springfield, IL  62777

For further information and assistance, contact Gwen Pollock, Curriculum & Instruction Division, at 217-557-7323 or gpollock@isbe.net and visit [www.nysc.org](http://www.nysc.org). The NYSC is hosted and operated by the National Youth Science Foundation ([www.nysf.com](http://www.nysf.com)).

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**