A SAMPLER OF ISBE ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS (ILS)

**Reading First**: This initiative, more than all others preceding it, provides strong alignment with the ILS. We had reading experts review and revise our grade-by-grade reading performance descriptors to ensure alignment with the Reading First content standards. Reading First requires screening, diagnostic and classroom assessments as well as reading programs and materials that meet rigorous scientifically based reading research requirements. ISBE will provide intensive technical assistance and professional development and a rigorous evaluation study of every Reading First school to ensure they are making adequate yearly progress. Approximately, 175 schools will be funded in the first year, scaling up to over 400 in six years. Fifty-four school districts are eligible, based on high poverty and low performance.

**Performance Standards and Classroom Assessments**: ISBE staff, in collaboration with over 280 school districts, developed performance standards, classroom assessments, scoring rubrics, and samples of student work at the “meets” and “exceeds” levels for every standard in every learning area and for every grade level. These will be disseminated this fall on ISBE’s website; ISBE will also provide every school district copies of CDs.

**Standards-Aligned Classrooms**: This professional development program now in its third year trains school teams in how to develop and implement lesson plans and classroom assessments that are aligned with the ILS with high reliability and validity. This professional development activity is ongoing and establishes a learning community in each participating school. The team participating in SAC in turn trains other teachers in their schools. Over 3000 teachers have participated in SAC since its inception, who in turn trained another 5000 teachers.

**Collaboratory Project**: This Northwestern University project adopted the recently developed performance descriptors to create an interactive, web-based program through which teachers can develop learning activities for their students. The Collaboratory has plans to develop a similar system for the classroom assessments, rubrics and student work.

**Community Involvement in Learning Standards Implementation**: Although not yet captured by our evaluation study, this project is beginning to make considerable progress. By forming partnerships with over 25 major statewide business and community organizations, information on the standards has been disseminated through communication channels of those organizations. This information helps parents, businesses, and community organizations understand how they can support standards implementation and raise student achievement. For example, the Illinois Jaycees distributed this information to all of their members and will feature the ILS at their statewide convention this year. The project has reached out to 25,000 persons thus far.

**Academic Standards for Career and Technical Education Programs**: CTE and academic educators collaborated this spring to develop academic performance standards, classroom assessments and scoring rubrics for all high school levels of CTE programs. These resources will be field tested during the 2002-2003 school year to obtain samples of student work validated by academic and CTE teachers. The goal is for CTE teachers to hold students to the same academic standards as their counterparts in academic subjects.