To: Superintendents

From: Chris Koch, State Superintendent

Re: Double-testing/Determination Flexibility Waiver

Date: November 8, 2013

The U.S. Department of Education has issued guidance on applications for double testing flexibility and determination flexibility. The Illinois State Board of Education is planning on completing an application to provide districts this flexibility in relationship to the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) field testing and the Dynamic Learning Maps field testing (for the students who would have taken the Illinois Alternate Assessment). Double testing flexibility refers to the administration of both the Illinois Standards Achievement Test and the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) and notes, “any individual student within Illinois will be permitted to take only one assessment in each content area in 2013–2014 — either the current State assessment or the full form of the field test of the new assessment aligned to college- and career-ready standards.” (United States Department of Education)

Determination flexibility “permit(s) ISBE and selected LEAs to refrain from reporting performance against AMOs for the subject(s) being field tested in any school or single-school LEA that participates in the field test of the new assessments aligned to college- and career-ready standards.” (USDE)

Many districts have received notification of invitation to participate in the field testing for these two tests. Additionally, many districts have requested to participate if not chosen or have requested to participate with more classrooms than the original sample. The field test samples are continuing to be developed and a final list of districts and schools participating in the two tests will be distributed later this fall.

Based on the guidelines put forward by the USDE, ISBE has determined that flexibility can be requested for those schools in which participating classrooms in grades 3 through 8 will be taking the English/language arts or mathematics PARCC field test or DLM field test. Unfortunately, due to the structure of the high school Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE), we cannot waive the English/language arts or the mathematics assessments for these schools.

There is an exception to the request that ISBE is submitting. We cannot request double-testing or determination flexibility for schools that have received a School
Improvement Grant (SIG). Some of the SIG grantees have not been chosen to participate in the field tests, however, those that have been chosen to field test will not be eligible for a waiver.

As a part of the waiver application to the USDE, the State Board is required to collect input from the field. We would appreciate it if you could take a few moments to complete the survey located at the following link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8HNRW86. The input that you provide will be reviewed by ISBE staff and provided to the USDE for consideration.

If you have any questions about this waiver, please contact Mary O'Brian at 866.317.6034 or email at mobrian@isbe.net. Thank you.