

[REDACTED]

Ms Marcilene Dutton  
Deputy Legal Counsel  
Illinois State Board of Education  
100 N. 1st Street  
Springfield, IL. 62777-0001

December 4, 2015

Dear Ms. Dutton,

As representative of ISBE, I'm requesting under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) a legal response regarding Common Core Learning Standards from a letter received from Dr. Christopher Koch, then (State Superintendent of Education) dated August 2013?

It stated in his letter, that Gemini Junior High School (East Maine School District 63) failed to meet the required learning standards in the 2012/2013 school year in Reading and Math.

My Daughter [REDACTED] was a student at Gemini School [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and District 63 was receiving Title 1 funding.

My question specifically is what was the time requirement for District 63 to notify in a (Public School Choice Letter) of Gemini School failing in Reading and Math? The District already knew that they were failing in Reading and Math when they were reading the report cards after the school year ended in June of 2013.

Also, is that state regulation alien with federal regulations regarding notifications to the parents?

Finally, what ramifications if any, does District 63 have if they violated the time requirement for notifying the parents?

Ms Dutton, I'm not suggesting about a few days off, but a few weeks!

Could you provide me the legal definition with some enclosed documentation?

Thank You,  
[REDACTED]

Enclosures: Dr. Koch Letter, AYP Status Report.





# Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001  
www.isbe.net

Gery J. Chico  
Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

August 2013

## ***EXHIBIT 1***

Dear Parents,

I hope that you enjoyed summer with your families and that you are excited to begin a new school year. I am writing to update you on several initiatives that we believe will better prepare our more than 2 million Illinois public school students to succeed today and ultimately become contributing citizens in the 21st century global economy.

A few years ago, a group of governors and state school chiefs, including myself, began a grassroots effort to develop a common set of more rigorous learning standards for students in grades K-12, whether they lived in Illinois or Idaho. These new Common Core Learning Standards have been adopted by more than 40 states and set clear expectations for what we want our students to know and be able to do in math and English language arts.

Since the State Board of Education adopted these standards in June 2010, our nearly 4,000 schools in Illinois have been developing and revising curriculum and preparing lessons and instructional materials to meet these higher, internationally benchmarked standards. Instruction will go deeper into the core foundational concepts, and students must show not only acquired knowledge but the application of that knowledge in real-world situations.

With these higher standards also comes the need to ensure students are performing at a higher level. Just as we raised the bar in 2010 by adopting more rigorous learning standards, we also raised the bar on the state's annual standardized achievement tests (also known as ISATs) for students in grades 3-8 by increasing the performance expectations on the 2013 test.

By raising performance expectations on the ISATs, we are seeing a drop in the 2013 test scores for elementary students and schools. This does not mean that students know less or that teachers don't provide good instruction, but it does give us an earlier indication of where students perform in terms of college and career readiness.

Before this adjustment, the ISAT was not a good measure of college and career readiness; that important information wasn't generated until students took a test in 11<sup>th</sup> grade called the Prairie State Achievement Exam (also known as the PSAE), which includes the ACT. This is far too late to know that a student will not be prepared for success after high school. We have observed this disconnect when comparing ISAT scores, which showed 82 percent of elementary students met or exceeded standards in 2012, with our PSAE scores, which showed only 51 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> graders met or exceeded standards that same year. Students did not fall behind when they left grade school, but they faced a higher bar. This year, all students, in grades 3-12, are being measured against the same bar.

We know that it's not easy to suddenly see a drop in your student's or school's scores but we also know our state has great teachers and leaders who are working hard every day to prepare your children for these new, higher expectations for learning. Several other states are taking similar measures, given the implementation of new learning standards.


In the spring of 2014, elementary students will once again take the ISATs, with questions written to the Common Core. Then, in 2014-15, Illinois is preparing to distribute new online assessments that are being specifically developed to align with the Common Core. The new tests will demand students show more critical thinking, problem-solving and excellent writing skills. Students will be assessed at least twice within a year's time span in order to better gauge progress and help their teachers identify specific areas of need and provide appropriate interventions to support student success.

As we change the way we assess students, we are also improving the way we report those results to you. This year, Illinois will debut a simplified, more consumer-friendly 2013 school and district report card that offers facts such as extracurricular activities and school honors to showcase the unique qualities of our schools. We hope that the redesigned report card for schools, districts and the state will better inform and support community-wide discussions about educational opportunities in your local schools.

Finally, as part of our efforts to offer more comprehensive school information, we will release the results this fall from our first statewide survey of school climate and learning conditions, called the Illinois 5Essentials. Sixth through twelfth grade students and all teachers in the state were invited to take this survey last spring. I am pleased that 93 percent of Illinois districts participated, with 87 percent receiving enough responses to generate a report based on students, teachers or both. A summary of the survey findings will also be included on the 2013 school report card.

If you have any questions about any of these initiatives, we encourage you to talk with your local teachers and school leaders. Thank you for all you do to support your child(ren) and their educational journey. Have a great school year!

Sincerely,



Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education





# Illinois State Board of Education

Gery J. Chico, Chairman Christopher A. Koch, State Superintendent

05-016-0630-02-1003 East Maine SD 63

Gemini Jr High School

## 2013 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Status Report

Calculated based on 08/09/13 Approved Assessment Data and E-report Card 86-43 Data

Is this school making AYP?	No
Is this school making AYP in reading?	No
Is this school making AYP in mathematics?	No

Has this school been identified for School Improvement according to the AYP specification of the federal No Child Left Behind Act?	No
2013-14 Federal Improvement Status	
2013-14 State Improvement Status	Academic Watch Status Year 1

	Percent Tested on State Tests				Percent Meeting/Exceeding Standard*						Other Indicators			
	Reading		Mathematics		Reading			Mathematics			Attendance Rate		Graduation Rate	
	%	Met AYP	%	Met AYP	%	Safe Harbor Target**	Met AYP	%	Safe Harbor Target**	Met AYP	%	Met AYP	%	Met AYP
State AYP Minimum Target	95.0		95.0		92.5			92.5			92.0		85.0	
ALL	99.2	Yes	99.6	Yes	66.3	70.1	No	64.1	69.9	No	95.9	Yes		
White	99.6	Yes	99.6	Yes	72.8	76.1	No	71.5	73.6	Yes	94.7			
Black														
Hispanic	98.9	Yes	99.5	Yes	47.1	51.2	No	41.9	50.0	No	96.2			
Asian	99.2	Yes	99.6	Yes	74.7	74.4	Yes	74.7	77.6	No	96.9			
Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander														
Native American														
Two or more races														
LEP	96.9	Yes	100.0	Yes	31.4	43.8	No	32.1	43.4	No	95.8			
Students with Disabilities	98.9	Yes	97.9	Yes	12.8	20.3	No	18.6	28.3	No	94.7			
Economically Disadvantaged	99.1	Yes	99.5	Yes	58.0	59.4	Yes	55.9	57.8	Yes	95.4			

Four conditions required for making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) are:

1. At least 95% tested in reading and mathematics for every student group. If the current year participation rate is less than 95%, this condition may be met if the average of the current and preceding year rates is at least 95%, or if the average of the current and two preceding years is at least 95%. Only actual participation rates are printed. If the participation rate printed is less than 95% and yet this school makes AYP, it means that the 95% condition was met by averaging.
2. At least 92.5% meeting/exceeding standards in reading and mathematics for every group. For any group with less than 92.5% meeting/exceeding standards, a 95% confidence interval was applied. Subgroups may meet this condition through Safe Harbor provisions.\*\*\*
3. At least 92.0% attendance rate for non-high schools.
4. At least 85.0% graduation rate for high schools. The State would first examine whether the school met the target for the four-year graduation rate. If it did not, the State would then determine whether the school met the five-year graduation rate target. If either of those rates were met, this would indicate that the school met the other academic indicator for AYP. The largest number among the 4-year and 5-year graduation rates would be printed.

\* Includes only students enrolled as of 5/01/2012.

\*\* Safe Harbor Targets of 92.5% or above are not printed.

\*\*\* Subgroups with fewer than 45 students are not reported. Safe Harbor only applies to subgroups of 45 or more. In order for Safe Harbor to apply, a subgroup must decrease by 10% the percentage of scores that did not meet standards from the previous year plus meet the other indicators (attendance rate for non-high schools and graduation rate for high schools) for the subgroup. For subgroups that do not meet their Safe Harbor Targets, a 75% confidence interval is applied. Safe Harbor allows schools an alternate method to meet subgroup minimum targets on achievement.

**EXHIBIT 3**