

ISBE'S WEEKLY MESSAGE

July 25, 2023


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Dear Colleagues,

Today officially marks my first five months as state superintendent. Across the state and throughout my listening tour, the teacher and staff shortage is one of the most pressing issues we face.

Last week, my column (</Pages/Weekly-Message-Display-Form-V4.aspx?ItemId=357>) highlighted 12 best practice resource documents (</Pages/Teacher-Vacancy-Grant-Pilot-Program.aspx>) for strengthening the teacher pipeline at the local level. We just added a new strategy brief  (</Documents/Bilingual-Educators-memo.pdf>) for recruiting and supporting bilingual teachers. This past spring, ISBE's major legislative initiative focused on the teacher pipeline, adding flexibility, reducing administrative burden, and providing

relief, while upholding high standards. Governor Pritzker signed this bill into law on June 29.

Public Act 103-0111 (<https://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/103/103-0111.htm>) accomplishes something school district leaders have been requesting for years: it allows school districts to adopt a policy to waive tuition costs for non-resident pupils who are children of district employees. School districts that choose this route are no longer required to submit this type of waiver application with ISBE. If your district has already submitted an application for this Fall's waiver cycle, agency staff will reach out to you with more information.

Public Act 103-0111 also changes the residency requirement for alternative teacher preparation programs from two years to one year. Candidates still have to meet all the same standards and will be supported with a year of intensive in-district mentoring, with the option for a second year if they still need additional support. Residencies started in Illinois as one-year programs and were hugely successful, especially for allowing additional licensing options for educators across Illinois. Research shows that residency programs improve teacher preparation and retention as well as student learning outcomes.

Check out ISBE's tip sheets on residencies (<https://app.air.inc/a/bQdlhsTx6/b/bf939f35-1b5c-440f-8976-4c89a3bcec51/c/4fd47f91-4702-4fc7-b459-dac05534c5bd>) and apprenticeships (<https://app.air.inc/a/bQdlhsTx6/b/bf939f35-1b5c-440f-8976-4c89a3bcec51/c/e5df70ca-74f1-403b-b5d0-5627b7a5c03d>) for guidance on utilizing this strategy to get career changers into the classroom faster with the strongest possible hands-on preparation.

Public Act 103-0111 provides relief in two more ways: it extends the sunset for individuals with a Gateways ECE Credential Level of 5 and individuals with an ELS-TBE license to teach in Preschool for All and Preschool for All Expansion programs and extends the sunset for the short-term substitute teacher license to 2028.

Public Act 103-0088 (<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=103-0088>) extends the ability for retired teachers to return to the classroom for up to 120 days or 600 paid hours – without impacting their retirement status – through June 30, 2026. The parameters revert to 100 days and 500 hours thereafter.

HB 3690 (<https://ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=10300HB3690lv&SessionID=112&GA=103&DocTypeID=HB&DocNum=3690&SpecSess=&Session=&print=true>) has been sent to the Governor’s desk for signature and consolidates in-service training requirements for teachers, administrators, and school support personnel, providing that time spent training in mandated topics shall be credited toward professional development required for license.

I sincerely appreciate the General Assembly and Governor Pritzker for supporting these initiatives. Along with the \$45 million teacher pipeline grant, \$6 million teacher marketing campaign, Minority Teachers of Illinois Scholarship (<https://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/scholarships/minority-teachers-of-illinois-mti-scholarship-program.html>), and steady increases in Evidence-Based Funding, these new laws will make a difference.

Pictured: High five! Argo Community High School celebrated students who earned a 5 on their Advanced Placement tests. Teachers surprised students with a visit and delivered yard signs to celebrate their success!

All my best,
Tony

DATES AND DEADLINES

Please note this is not a complete list of events, meetings, and deadlines. For more events and details, visit the ISBE Calendar page (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ISBE-Meetings.aspx>).

Jul. 25-26	School Nutrition Programs Back to School Conference (https://www.isbe.net/snpb2s)
Jul. 26	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (Marion) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Jul. 27	Illinois Literacy Plan Listening Tour (Mt. Vernon) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-Literacy-Plan.aspx)
Jul. 27	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (Champaign) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Jul. 27	Webinar: School Improvement Continuation Grant (https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/4757703791162090078)
Jul. 31	Deadline to submit Student Discipline Data in SIS
Jul. 31	Illinois Literacy Plan Listening Tour (virtual) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-Literacy-Plan.aspx)
Jul. 31	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (virtual) - REGISTRATION CLOSED (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 1	Illinois Career Pathways Overview Administrators Academy (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeSCWy3L5J_14x0c2grMOFvw1RzBA07q9WPF_gFtFXpSQUGVA/viewform)

Aug. 2	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (Chicago) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 3	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session for Students/Youth (virtual) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 4	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (virtual – NEW SESSION ADDED) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 7	School Nurse Bootcamp 2023 (https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7192097304910375261)
Aug. 8	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session for Parents/Caregivers/Community Members (virtual) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 17	FY 2023 Site-Based Expenditure Report due in IWAS
Aug. 17	Webinar: 2023 Report Card Open Forum (http://Register%20now:%20https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6447798301584358238)
Aug. 22	Deadline to apply for U.S. EPA grant to replace existing school buses with clean and Zero Emissions school buses (https://www.epa.gov/grants/2023-clean-school-bus-csb-grant-program)
Sept. 1	Deadline to File School Treasurer Bond Affidavit with local ROE/ISC
Sept. 1	Deadline to submit FY 2024 School Improvement Continuation Grant application in IWAS
Sep. 4	ISBE offices closed for Labor Day
Sep. 5	Deadline to apply for Driving a Cleaner Illinois grant to replace old, diesel school buses with new all-electric school buses (https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/air-quality/driving-a-cleaner-illinois.html)
Sept. 8	Deadline to submit Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Feedback Form – districts take in IWAS under “Surveys”
Sept. 14-15	#DigLitCon, a conference on teaching and understanding digital literacy, hosted by the Learning Technology Center (https://www.ltcillinois.org/diglitcon/)
Sept. 15	Deadline to submit letter of intent and application for approved alternate climate survey to 5essentials@isbe.net (mailto:5essentials@isbe.net)
Sept. 18-20	Illinois Association of Title I Directors Fall Conference (https://www.iatd.net/domain/42)
Sep. 29	Deadline to submit U.S. Presidential Scholars nominations (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/US-Presidential-Scholars.aspx)

NEW

LEARNING RENEWAL

Each week this section will focus on the learning renewal that is taking place in Illinois schools. We invite you to share
(<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?>

[id=hv5kA8ZJ9Eq1LDNameV30Ufi4KgH87ICv6FRRQI8cviUNTdHWktDS1NJWjJZVDFaQ09RVINCUVdMRI4u](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=hv5kA8ZJ9Eq1LDNameV30Ufi4KgH87ICv6FRRQI8cviUNTdHWktDS1NJWjJZVDFaQ09RVINCUVdMRI4u)) how you are investing federal relief

funds to help students recover.

PRINCIPAL MENTORING TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT NEW LEADERS IN SY 2023-24

School leaders face unique challenges as they transition into new roles. ISBE invested federal pandemic relief funds to work with seven partners, including the Illinois Principals Association (<https://ilprincipals.org/mentoring/>) (IPA), so that new principals in their first year of employment get the support they need through a mentorship match with veteran principals who have demonstrated success as leaders. The program has matched approximately 500 new principals with mentors over the past two years. A trained mentor provides opportunities for reflection, feedback, guided planning, and strategic support for new leaders.

Rachel Davis, principal at Staunton Elementary School in Staunton CUSD 6, was paired with Angi Woll, a veteran principal at Trenton Elementary School in Wesclin CUSD 3, through the IPA. Here's what Davis said about the program:

"The mentoring program has been wonderful. The principalship is often individual, and I can see how new administrators feel alone and quickly overwhelmed. Having my mentor this year took those fears away from me. My mentor and I have worked through a series of questions for the year. She has helped me with my own principal evaluation, the Preschool for All Grant, and multiple facets of curriculum. We have visited each other's schools to explore teaching styles and curriculum. All of this helped me to gain a better understanding of where my building is at as well as prioritizing goals for the future. Building a relationship with someone who understands your daily life is essential to success in your first few years as a principal. No one else can really understand what it's like."

As a mentor, Woll also benefitted from the experience. She shared this:

"The mentoring program has been a great experience for me! The training involved has connected me with other leaders around the state and has energized my own practice. My protégé and I have hit it off and I am learning just as much from her as she is learning from me. The opportunity to get out of your own four walls and get the inside scoop on what is happening in other comparable schools is invaluable."

New principals interested in participating in this program can visit ISBE's website (</Pages/District-School-Leadership.aspx>).

NEW

DATA, ACCOUNTABILITY, & ASSESSMENT

2023 REPORT CARD OPEN FORUM

The 2023 Illinois Report Card Forum is **10-11:30 a.m. Aug. 17!** This webinar will briefly cover important dates and tools for managing your district's Report Card data. It will provide an open forum for questions related to the Report Card. Register now for the 2023 Illinois Report Card Forum [📄](https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6447798301584358238) (<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6447798301584358238>).

DATA COLLECTIONS Q&A WEBINAR


Please join us for our Monthly Data Collections Q&A Webinar [📄](https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/2174502371330329612) (<https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/2174502371330329612>) at **10 a.m. Aug. 10**. The purpose of this webinar is to give Illinois school districts a chance to ask any questions they have about the ISBE data collections. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at 312-814-9192 or datahelp@isbe.net (<mailto:datahelp@isbe.net>).

NEW

FINANCE

DEADLINE TO FILE SCHOOL TREASURER BOND AFFIDAVIT: SEPT. 1

Section 3-8 (105 ILCS 5/3-8) and Section 8-2 (105 ILCS 5/8-2) of the Illinois School Code require regional superintendents of schools to file a yearly affidavit with ISBE showing which treasurers of school districts in their region are properly bonded. This affidavit must be filed before **Sept. 1**. Please note: Copies of the actual school treasurer bond should not be filed with ISBE.

Each school district treasurer is required to be properly bonded. The bond shall be payable to the township trustees of schools or payable to the school board of the district, whichever is applicable. Recently passed Public Act 103-0049  (<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/103/PDF/103-0049.pdf>) requires the penalty of the treasurer bond to be determined by the school board in an amount no less than 10 percent of the amount of all bonds, notes, mortgages, moneys, and effects of which the treasurer is to have custody as measured on the final day of the school district's most recent fiscal year.

School districts shall file the bond with the regional superintendent of schools, not ISBE. The regional superintendent shall carefully examine the bond of any school treasurer after it has been filed. If the bond is found to be according to law and the sureties sufficient, the regional superintendent shall endorse his/her approval and file it with the papers of his/her office. If the bond is in any respect defective or if the sureties are insufficient, the bond shall be returned for correction.

For schools in Cook County, the responsibilities and duties of the regional superintendent concerning school treasurer bonds and the required affidavit filing will be assumed by the respective Intermediate Service Center.

An electronic version of the affidavit and other information can be found on the School Treasurer Bond webpage (</Pages/School-Treasurer-Bonds.aspx>). For more information or questions, please 217-785-8779 or mheninge@isbe.net (<mailto:mheninge@isbe.net>).

NEW

ILLINOIS TEACHER OF THE YEAR

NEW PODCAST: A CONVERSATION WITH 2022 TEACHER OF THE YEAR KIM RADOSTITS

Listen to ISBE's latest *We Love Illinois Schools* podcast episode, a conversation with Kim Radostits, the Oregon High School teacher known as Ms. Rad who served as the 2022 Illinois Teacher of the Year and claimed the title of National Teacher of the Year finalist. She talks about motivational theory, why she advocates for having special education students in her Spanish class, how she overcame her fear of public speaking, the role llamas played in improving her teaching technique, what she does in her spare time, and so much more. You can listen on Apple, Spotify, or isbe.net/podcast (<https://isbe.net/podcast>), where you'll find all of our podcast episodes.

NEW

SAFE & HEALTHY CLIMATE

UPDATED MEDICAL CANNABIS-INFUSED PRODUCT TRAINING NOW AVAILABLE

A school nurse with a Professional Educator License (PEL) or school administrator who may administer a medical cannabis-infused product to a student who is a registered qualifying patient while on school premises is required to complete annual training. Other school personnel and non-PEL nurses may view the seminar if interested and also receive professional development credit.

- **Administrators or PEL school nurses** can access training by logging into ELIS. Then go to PD+ to view the training.
- **Non-PEL nurses and other school personnel** may access the seminar on ISBE's School Health webpage (</Pages/Health.aspx>) under the Training Opportunities dropdown.
- **Both the training and seminar** professional development credit is available through June 30, 2024.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL BOOTCAMP FOR NURSES

ISBE and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) will host School Nurse Bootcamp 2023 from **8:50 a.m.-3 p.m. Aug. 7**. School nurses, health office staff, school office personnel, immunization/health exam reviewers, and health department personnel are encouraged to attend. The virtual bootcamp will feature speakers from both ISBE and IDPH.

ISBE will provide updates pertaining to:

- Nurses

- Professional educator licensure
- Emergency medications and plans
- Undesignated medications

IDPH will speak on topics including:

- Immunizations
- Communicable disease
- Chronic disease
- School health programs

Register for School Nurse Bootcamp 2023 here  (<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7192097304910375261>).

SY 2023-24 LETTER OF INTENT AND APPLICATION FOR APPROVED ALTERNATE CLIMATE SURVEY

All Illinois public schools, including alternative schools that fall under a district’s domain, are required to participate in a school learning conditions survey every year. To fulfill this requirement, ISBE provides the 5Essentials Survey (/Pages/5Essentials-Survey.aspx) free of charge as a tool to inform all stakeholders about the school’s learning environment and to guide improvement.

However, a school district may elect to use an alternate survey of learning conditions. The approved alternate surveys for school year 2023-24 are Cognia and the Comprehensive School Climate Survey. Any district that wishes to administer an approved alternate survey must complete a letter of intent and application and email it to 5essentials@isbe.net (<mailto:5essentials@isbe.net>) by **Sept. 15**. Failure to submit the signed letter of intent and application to ISBE will result in the district being required to use the 5Essentials Survey.


Please contact 217-782-5270 or 5Essentials@isbe.net (<mailto:5Essentials@isbe.net>) if you have questions regarding the survey.


NEW

SCHOOL & DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CONTINUATION GRANT APPLICATION & WEBINAR

The fiscal year 2024 School Improvement Continuation Grant application has opened. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may secure a July 1, 2023, start date by submitting a substantially approvable grant application in IWAS/eGMS by **Sept. 1**.

LEAs with schools in Comprehensive or Targeted status (/summative) receive School Improvement Grant funds pursuant to Title I, Part A, Section 1003 to develop their schools’ capacities to implement effective continuous improvement practices. An allowable use of funds guidance document  (/Documents/Title-I-Part-A-Section-1003-School-Improvement-Allowable-Use-of-Funds.pdf) is available to support the purpose of the grant in building adult capacity.

ISBE will host a webinar at **1 p.m. July 27** to provide information about developing an approvable FY 2024 grant application. Register here for the webinar  (<https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/4757703791162090078>). Grantees are encouraged to attend one of the live webinars or to view a recording of one afterward.

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

CAREER CONNECTED ILLINOIS

Northern Illinois University’s Illinois CTE Project team will lead multiple administrator academies in the upcoming weeks – all **free** and sponsored by ISBE. It’s not too late to register!

- **Illinois Career Pathways | 9 a.m. - noon, Aug. 1 via Zoom | Register**
(https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeSCWy3L5J_14x0c2grMOFvw1RzBA07q9WPF_gFtFXpSQUGVA/viewform)
- **2023-24 Work-Based Learning Asynchronous Online Course | Sign up** (<https://drive.google.c>)

NEW

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

POSTPONED: PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT B-5 RENEWAL APPLICATION LISTENING SESSIONS

The Preschool Development Grant Birth–5 Listening Sessions have been postponed. The PDG B-5 Notice of Funding Opportunity will not be released until spring 2024, so the listening sessions will be rescheduled for the spring. Stay tuned for more information.

IN BRIEF

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Ed Leaders Network

Did you miss an Ed Leaders Network webinar? You can find recordings of all their webinars on YouTube!

#DigLitCon Digital Literacy Conference

On average, young adults today spend nearly 10 hours a day consuming media, including at school and in their free time. Within that timeframe, they can be exposed to thousands of media messages – some of which require extra effort to analyze and contextualize.

Do these young adults fully understand what they are seeing on a daily basis? Can they distinguish between real or altered content? Now more than ever, digital literacy — the ability to use technology to locate, evaluate, interpret, and create information — is a critical skill that needs attention if students are going to thrive in the classroom and beyond.

The Learning Technology Center (LTC) is hosting #DigLitCon, a conference on teaching and understanding digital literacy, on **Sept. 14-15**. This conference will bring together educators from across Illinois to share expertise, strategies, and best practices on topics such as digital citizenship, media literacy, and artificial intelligence. More information is available on the LTC website (<https://www.ltcillinois.org/diglitcon>).

FEATURED ISBE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Obligations Specialist (/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=851)
- Program Monitor (/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=849)
- Internal Auditor III (/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=850)

View all open positions at ISBE (/Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx).