



Weekly Message

Jan. 5, 2016

Message From State Superintendent Tony Smith, Ph.D.

Hello,

Welcome back from winter break. I hope you all had a happy and safe holiday season with your loved ones. As we begin the new year, I know many of you have questions about the future of a state-funded college entrance exam for Illinois juniors and how to cover the cost. I want to share the latest information about where the selection process stands.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) released a Notice of Award to the College Board (SAT) after an intensive, multi-month process reviewing sealed proposals from vendors seeking to administer the assessment for college entrance to all 11th-grade students in Illinois. However, the State Board cannot yet provide definitive information regarding the administration of the SAT this spring.

The College Board was posted as the successful bidder on Nov. 23. ACT filed a protest to the Notice of Award on Dec. 16. As a result, the procurement for a college entrance examination remains open as the state's Chief Procurement Office (CPO) considers the merits of the protest. Once this process is complete, the CPO will issue a written determination. There is no set time frame for a determination, but ISBE has made the CPO aware of the urgency of this procurement. (You can read more about the administrative rules regarding protests [here](#).)

Additionally, without a complete fiscal year 2016 state budget, the State Board does not yet know if appropriations will be available to fund the cost of providing a college entrance exam to students this spring. We certainly understand the uncertainty that exists as this process remains unresolved. We will work to keep you updated.

Please know that ISBE remains committed to providing all 11th-grade students the opportunity to take a state-funded college entrance exam on site in their school district during the school day. This practice has afforded opportunities and provided access to higher education to students who would have otherwise not made their goal of higher education a reality. I realize this uncertainty will likely cost some students the opportunity to take a high quality college entrance exam during the school day. Please contact me at statesup@isbe.net if you have questions, need support for local fundraising (a letter from me), or can partner with other districts to provide access for students. The plan is to

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provide two options for a spring administration date from which districts will be able to choose. This was a requirement built into the procurement to allow for additional district autonomy.

Our agency remains committed to ensuring that all 11th-grade students have access to a high-quality college entrance exam that is administered at school during a regular school day. While it is our hope to administer the SAT this spring, we are preparing for all possible outcomes and will provide the necessary guidance, materials, and resources as soon as procedural questions are resolved. I appreciate your patience and partnership as we work through this process and hope this update is helpful to share with your teachers, students, and families as you discuss options for the spring.

Thank you,

Tony

Upcoming ISBE Dates and Deadlines

Please note this is not a complete list of events, meetings, and deadlines. For questions, call the Illinois State Board of Education at (866) 262-6663 or (217) 782-4321 or visit the agency's official website at <http://www.isbe.net>.

- **2016 Illinois 5Essential Survey administration window** – Jan. 11-March 11
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in spring 2016** – Jan. 15, 2016 (See www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- **Deadline to submit written opt-out petition for the SFSP mandate (Public Act 096-0734) to regional superintendents of schools** – Jan. 15
- **ISBE offices closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day** – Jan. 18
- **Deadline to apply for “Schools of Opportunity” Recognition Program** – Jan. 20 (<http://opportunitygap.org>)
- **Rescheduled standard testing window for all districts using paper materials on the ACCESS for ELLs assessment** – Jan. 25 to Feb. 26
- **“Overview of Flexible Delivery Models for the Gifted/Talented” webinar** – Jan. 27 (<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8183144248605751297>)
- **Deadline to submit IDEA excess cost worksheets to the Special Education Services Division** – Jan. 29
- **Deadline to submit proposals for the Educator Equity Program Development Grant** – Feb. 1 (http://isbe.net/funding_opps/htmls/rfp.htm)
- **Deadline to complete and submit the 2015-16 Noncertified Staff Salary Study data survey** – Feb. 1
- **Deadline to complete and submit the 2015-16 Teacher Salary Study data form** – Feb. 1
- **Illinois Association for Gifted Children's 21st Annual Gifted Convention** – Feb. 7-9 (www.iagcgifted.org/committees/twenty-first-iagc-convention.html)
- **ISBE offices closed for Lincoln's Birthday** – Feb. 12
- **ISBE offices closed for Presidents' Day** – Feb. 15
- **2016 Illinois Arts Education Week** – March 14-20
- **Ninth annual Illinois School Wellness Conference** – April 28
- **ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day** – May 30
- **Deadline to submit data in the Student Health - Vision system** – June 30

Assessment and Accountability

ACCESS 2016 Testing Window Adjustment

Paper testing materials for the ACCESS for English Language Learners (ELLs) assessment will not be shipped to Illinois districts and schools as originally scheduled due to data system complications. Paper ACCESS materials are now expected to arrive by Jan. 19. The testing window is being adjusted accordingly.

The standard testing window for all districts using paper materials is now Jan. 25 to Feb. 26. The date by which to have materials picked up for return to the vendor (DRC) is March 4.

Please note the following provisions that apply only to the 2016 ACCESS testing cycle.

- ACCESS testing with paper materials may actually begin earlier than Jan. 25. If you have materials and are ready, it's not necessary to wait until Jan. 25.
- For online ACCESS testing, there is no schedule delay. It may begin as originally scheduled for your district (as early as Jan. 11), but it may now continue until Feb. 26. This is to accommodate districts that are using both the online and paper formats.
- The window for ordering additional paper materials still begins on Jan. 6 but now extends to Feb. 19.

This schedule adjustment is not expected to delay the availability of preliminary ACCESS results for data corrections, currently scheduled for May 9-27.

ISBE apologizes for this late change in the ACCESS testing cycle. If you have questions, feel free to contact Barry Pedersen in the Division of Student Assessment at (866) 317-6034 or bpederse@isbe.net.

If any school districts currently scheduled to administer ACCESS on paper are interested in switching to the online format, wholly or partially, DRC is more than happy to work with them toward that end. They may be reached at (855) 787-9615 or wida@datarecognitioncorporation.com.

Data Analysis

2015-16 Noncertified Staff Salary Study Survey Now Available

The 2015-16 Noncertified Staff Salary Study data survey is now available in IWAS. This form must be completed and submitted by Feb. 1. It is the district administrator's responsibility to review the completed survey for accuracy and submit it to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Districts with 1,000 or more enrolled students as of the last school day in September of 2015 must submit this survey. The district administrator or a district document author may complete this survey.

Reference the following documents for assistance:

- User Guide: <ftp://help.isbe.net/webapps/NoncertStaffSalStudy/UserGuide.pdf>
- Example for completing the survey: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/ccss-instructions-12.pdf
- Worksheet: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/ccss-worksheet-07.pdf

For further assistance, please contact the Data Analysis Division at (217) 782-3950.

For technical assistance accessing IWAS, please contact the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

2015-16 Teacher Salary Study Form Now Available

The 2015-16 Teacher Salary Study data form is now available in IWAS. These forms must be completed and submitted by Feb. 1. If your district didn't employ teachers this school year, disregard this message.

In addition to completing the form, please send a copy of your salary schedule/policy and negotiated agreement to the address below. This is not necessary if you provided copies of the schedule/policy and agreement previously and they are still in effect. Send updated schedules and policies to:

Data Analysis Division
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street, S-284

Springfield, Illinois 62777

For further assistance, please contact the Data Analysis Division at (217) 782-3950.

For technical assistance accessing IWAS, please contact the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

College and Career Readiness

Curriculum Revitalization Project Update

The Curriculum Revitalization Project (CR Project) provides curriculum, resources, and professional development for career and technical educators throughout the state of Illinois. The CR Project is grant-funded by ISBE. To provide service to all career and technical education (CTE) teachers in Illinois, staff are employed in the following areas:

- Business, Marketing & Computer Education
- Family & Consumer Sciences
- Technology & Engineering Education
- Health Science Technology
- School Counseling

Recently, the CR Project has added the December newsletter, Illinois InCiTE, with special school features, and new Career Profiles to the website at www.ilcte.org. For more information, please contact the CR Project Coordinator Rod McQuality at rmcquality@cwd.siu.edu.

Note: To ensure that the CR Project emails are being received by all CTE teachers and administrators within your district, please check with your tech specialist to allow emails to come through unfiltered. The email communications for the CR Project come from ctecurriculumproject@cwd.siu.edu.

Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education Project Earns National Award

Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE) of Rantoul has received the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) Outstanding Cooperation award.

Funds from the ISBE budget's agricultural education line item support the FCAE project, which was established in 1989. Six FCAE program advisors

provide on-site technical assistance and support to each of the 381 secondary agriculture teachers in Illinois. Last year, 96 percent of agriculture programs in the state were visited at least once by an FCAE program advisor.

Due to the effort of current and past FCAE staff, agriculture teachers in the state have online access to more than 1,200 lesson plans that are aligned to the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards. The curriculum includes lesson plans, power point presentations, online student content, reading and comprehension assessments, and Common Core math assessments.

FCAE staff also plan professional development programs for agriculture teachers, helping them stay up to date with technical and teaching skills. To recruit new agriculture teachers, FCAE conducts the Elite Conference, a day-long experience that targets academically high-achieving students and encourages them to become agricultural educators.

The award was presented at the NAAE annual convention in New Orleans on Nov. 20.

Gifted Education

Gifted Education Webinar Set for Jan. 27

Every class has at least one child who is gifted and talented, and these children need the opportunities to learn something new every day. The Illinois Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children is hosting a webinar, titled "Overview of Flexible Delivery Models for the Gifted/Talented," from 9 to 10 a.m. Jan. 27.

The webinar is for teachers and administrators to learn about different methods of working with gifted children. Register at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8183144248605751297>.

21st Annual Gifted Convention Feb. 7-9

The Illinois Association for Gifted Children will hold its 21st Annual Gifted Convention from Feb. 7-9 at the Naperville Marriott.

Participants can gather together with attendees from throughout Illinois and the country who support the

needs of gifted children: classroom teachers, gifted coordinators, administrators, and parents as well as exhibitors, board members, committee chairs, staff, volunteers, and scholarship award recipients. New nationally recognized presenters will also join returning favorites.

Visit the convention webpage at www.iagcgifted.org/committees/twenty-first-iagc-convention.html for complete information about registration, schedule, exhibitors, hotel reservations, and visiting Naperville.

Educator Effectiveness

RFP Available for New Educator Equity Program Development Grant

ISBE is releasing a request for proposal for a new Educator Equity Program Development Grant. The information is located on the Funding Opportunities page of the ISBE website at http://isbe.net/funding_opps/htmls/rfp.htm. The purpose of the competitive grants is to select four eligible applicants to develop and implement programs; collect, analyze, and report data; and share best or promising practices related to educator recruitment and retention, teacher leaders, and family and community engagement that will help ensure that every student has access to highly effective educators.

Eligible applicants include school districts, public university laboratory schools approved by ISBE, charter schools, and area vocational centers that have a district enrollment of fewer than 10,000 students; receive Title I and Title II funds; are identified as a Priority District; have a three-year average teacher retention rate of less than 80 percent; if a Title I participating or eligible secondary school has a graduation rate of less than 60 percent during the past three years; and are in the highest quartile of school districts for percentage of both high-poverty and minority students.

The deadline for submitting proposals is 4 p.m. Feb. 1. A technical assistance webinar for eligible applicants will be held from 4 to 5 p.m. Jan. 8. To register, visit <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2020324399543984897>.

Educator Recognition

Four Illinois Educators Among Top 50 Finalists for 2016 Global Teacher Prize

Four Illinois educators are among the top 50 finalists for the 2016 Global Teacher Prize. The Varkey Foundation started the award, dubbed the “Nobel Prize” for teaching, in 2014 to raise the stature of the teaching profession.

The top 50 were selected from thousands of nominations and applications from 148 countries. Illinois’ finalists are:



Joe Fatheree of Effingham High School

– Joe’s students learn by producing music, books, and short films on topics like poverty, death, bullying, homelessness, and human rights. His students also use 3D printing and drone technology in their

projects, build educational games for young children using Minecraft, and engage in public speaking. Read more at www.globalteacherprize.org/finalist/joe-fatheree.



Jacqueline Lopushonsky of Lincoln Elementary School (Wheaton)

– Jacqueline has dedicated her teaching to English language learning and children with learning disabilities and behavior disorders. Many of her

students meet or surpass state standards in the areas of reading, writing, and math and have also won countless awards and recognition in academic, speech-, and fine arts- related competitions. Read more at www.globalteacherprize.org/finalist/jacqueline-lopushonsky.



Paul Solarz of Westgate Elementary School (Arlington Heights)

– Paul has created a Global Awareness Curriculum to help his students learn about other cultures. This includes

Skyping with authors and experts from other parts of the world, and “Mystery Skyping” with students in other countries. He has identified 34

different 21st-century skills that pupils need to learn and helps each of them record their progress with these. Read more at www.globalteacherprize.org/finalist/paul-solarz.



Mark Vondracek of Evanston Township High School—Mark promotes global awareness and citizenship by focusing on political debates where science plays a role, and he encourages and coaches students who enter academic contests. His Project

Excite works with middle school children from minority backgrounds to improve their science and mathematics skills in preparation for AP courses in high school. Read more at www.globalteacherprize.org/finalist/mark-vondracek.

The winner will receive the \$1 million Global Teacher Prize award and will be announced at the Global Education and Skills Forum in Dubai in March. Congratulations to these outstanding educators!

Special Education Services

Revised Child Health Examination Form – for School Year 2017-18

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the ISBE have revised the 2013 Child Health Examination Form required for school entry. The use of the new form is optional for school year 2016-17 and required the following year.

The new form is posted at www.isbe.net/school_health.htm?col9=open#CollapsiblePanel9 and at www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/life-stages-populations/maternal-child-family-health-services/school-health.

Students entering Illinois schools at kindergarten (or first grade if not enrolled at kindergarten), sixth and ninth grades must provide any Illinois public or private school, including charter schools, proof of physical examination on a form approved by both the IDPH and ISBE. The physical exam also must be provided by students entering Illinois schools for the first time at any grade level (entering from out of state or out of country). The examination must be completed no

earlier than a year (365 days) prior to the start of attendance in an Illinois school.

School Health Update

IDPH invites school nurses and others who provide school health services or assure compliance with student health requirements to attend one of five repeated training sessions this winter. The dates and locations are:

- Feb. 23 - Rend Lake Resort & Conference Center, 11712 E. Windy Lane, Whittington, IL 62897, (618) 629 -2211
- Feb. 24 - Northfield Inn & Suites Center, 3280 Northfield Dr., Springfield, IL 62702, (217) 523-7900
- March 1 - Radisson Hotel & Conference Center Rockford, 200 S. Bell School Rd., Rockford, IL 61108, (815) 226-2100
- March 2 - Hyatt-Lisle, 1400 Corporetum Drive, Lisle, IL 60532, (630) 852-1234
- March 3 - Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Chicago, 75 W. Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005, (847) 364-7600

Registration information will be provided this month.

School Nurses Receive Awards from Professional Association

Two Illinois registered nurses have been recognized by their professional nursing association for outstanding work as a school nurse or nurse administrator.

Mary Girardi, RN, School Nurse of the Year, was cited for her exemplary work. Girardi is employed by Elgin School District Unit 46.

Susan L. Gerardot, RN, was also recognized for excellence in school nurse administration as the School Nurse Administrator of the Year. Gerardot is employed by Plano School District 88.

Each of the nurses holds a Professional Educator License endorsed for school nursing, issued by ISBE. The nurses were nominated by their peers with support from their school districts and received their awards at the annual Illinois Association of School Nurses conference held in Lisle Oct. 23-24.

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

USDA Foods Show Conference Schedule

ISBE and the Illinois School Nutrition Association (ILSNA) are hosting a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foods Show conference at two locations in January.

The first event is scheduled for Jan. 12 at Abbington Banquets in Glen Ellyn. The second event will take place Jan. 14 at Gateway Center in Collinsville. Click [here](#) to register.

The foods show will include updates from ISBE's Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division, a food exhibit, and an opportunity to win professional development vouchers to be used at future ILSNA/SNA events. Participants will also earn professional standards continuing education hours.

School Recognition

Applicants Sought for “Schools of Opportunity” Recognition Program

The National Education Policy Center's “Schools of Opportunity” Recognition Program is seeking applications from outstanding public high schools. The project, which is being launched nationally this year, recognizes public high schools for what they do to give all students the chance to succeed, rather than turning to test scores to determine school quality.

The application deadline is Jan. 20. To learn more and to apply, visit <http://opportunitygap.org/>.

In Brief

School Opportunities

- The **21st Century Learning Exemplar Program** is accepting applications for its 2016-17 Exemplar cohort. The program helps the Partnership for 21st Century Learning identify, document, promote, and celebrate examples of successful 21st-century learning. It provides educators and communities a variety of models to draw from and offers policymakers and P21 State Partners local examples to help encourage their support. To learn more, visit www.p21.org/exemplar-program-case-studies/about-the-program.

Student Resources

- **ACLS Medical Training** has compiled a list of more than 30 educational scholarships for individuals with disabilities. The list is available at www.aclsmedicaltraining.com/financial-aid-opportunities-for-disabled-individuals/.

Employment Opportunities

- Watch for vacancy lists and find instructions for applying on ISBE's Human Resources webpage at <http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm>.