



Weekly Message

Jan. 25, 2017

Message From State Superintendent Tony Smith, Ph.D.

Hello,

The State Board of Education met yesterday and approved its fiscal year 2018 budget recommendation. Thank you to all who participated in the budget hearings this year. Your feedback provides an invaluable on-the-ground perspective as to the support and resources students need. The testimony of educators, administrators, and community members guided every part of our budget request. We adhered to three key principles: aligning with ISBE's goals; advocating for the needs of children across the state, as identified through requests from the field; and recognizing the need for universal and differentiated support to meet the unique needs of each and every child in the state.

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The Board's recommended FY 2018 General Funds Budget for pre-K through 12th grade educational support services for districts and students across Illinois amounts to \$7.727 billion, an increase of \$266.4 million (3.45 percent) over FY 2017 levels. ISBE will submit its budget recommendations to the General Assembly before Feb. 17.

We recommend fully funding General State Aid (GSA) in FY 2018 at the Foundation Level of \$6,119 per student, while maintaining the current GSA appropriation of \$5.078 billion. More than 95 percent of the total increase of \$266.4 million is attributable to seven areas:

- Mandated Categorical Reimbursements (\$130.5 million or 49 percent of the increase)
- Early Childhood Education (\$50 million or 18.8 percent of the increase)
- Bilingual Education (\$38.4 million or 14.4 percent of the increase)
- Student Health and Safety Initiatives (\$11.1 million or 4.1 percent of the increase)
- School Reform and Accountability (\$11.1 million or 4.1 percent of the increase)
- Other Statewide Categorical Assistance (\$6.6 million or 2.5 percent of the increase)
- Standards, Assessments and Accountability (\$6.4 million or 2.4 percent of the increase)

The budget request represents an investment in our children, our communities, and the future of our state. We also seek increased funding in support of special education, arts and foreign language programs, broadband expansion and other digital technology enhancements, teacher mentoring and diverse educator recruitment, and Advanced Placement exam fees for low-income students, among other critical investments to support students' growth to and through college and career.

Aside from the budget recommendations, I want to acknowledge that we have heard from superintendents and service providers throughout Illinois about the effects of delayed payments from the state. ISBE staff, Board members, and I understand your frustration. ISBE has vouchered all payments, including for Mandated Categorical Programs and the Early Childhood Block Grant, on time. The Comptroller's Office – and ultimately, the availability of funds and the needs of other agencies and citizens – determines what and when payments are made. We are grateful to the Comptroller's Office for continuing to prioritize GSA payments and to issue them consistently to all school districts on time.

We encourage you to utilize the Financial Reimbursement Information System (FRIS) resource on the ISBE website to help communicate with your stakeholders and families. FRIS provides a full account of any unpaid vouchers issued to your district by ISBE. (After entering your RCDT Code on the [FRIS Inquiry](#) home page, you can click the "Project Based" button to the right and then the "Vouchers Awaiting Processing by Comptroller" link.)

Thank you for your tireless advocacy on behalf of your students. ISBE remains committed to the vision of Illinois as a state of whole, healthy children nested in whole, healthy systems supporting communities wherein all citizens are socially and economically secure. We look forward to sharing local stories and successes with the General Assembly as they consider our FY 2018 budget request. To read the full request, visit <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Budget.aspx>.

Thanks,
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>.

- **Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Application Deadline** – Jan. 27 (www.isbe.net/Pages/Great-Ideas.aspx)
- **5Essentials Survey deadline** – Jan. 30
- **FY 17 IDEA excess cost worksheets due to IDEA grant coordinators** – Jan. 31
- **Deadline to submit 2016-17 Teacher Salary Study data form** – Feb. 1
- **Deadline to submit 2016-17 Noncertified Staff Salary Study data survey** – Feb. 1
- **Deadline to submit #GovClassroomVisit videos** – Feb. 10
- **ISBE offices closed for Lincoln's Birthday** – Feb. 13
- **Charter Schools Program Dissemination of Best Practices Grant FY 17 RFP due** – Feb. 14
- **FY 17 IMSP Grant Opportunity for Public School Districts K-8 RFP due** – Feb. 14
- **ISBE offices closed for Presidents' Day** – Feb. 20
- **Deadline to submit FY 18 Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal for the Prevention Initiative: 3 to 5 Years RFP** – Feb. 28 (www.isbe.net/Pages/Birth-to-Age-3-Years.aspx)
- **Deadline to submit FY 18 Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal for the Preschool for All Expansion Grant: Birth to 3 Years RFP** – Feb. 28 (www.isbe.net/Pages/Preschool-Development-Grant-Expansion-Grant.aspx)
- **Deadline to submit FY 18 Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal for the Preschool for All: 3 to 5 Years RFP** – Feb. 28 (www.isbe.net/Pages/Preschool-For-All.aspx)

- **Deadline to submit Migrant Education Program applications** – March 10 (www.isbe.net/Documents/20-37A-FY17-SUMMER-all-12-19-2016-Secured.pdf)
- **2017 Illinois Arts Education Week** – March 13-19
- **ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day** – May 29
- **Deadline to submit nomination forms for the 2017-18 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year program** – June 6 (www.isbe.net/Documents/03-10-those-who-excel.pdf)
- **Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data Vision** – June 30
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in fall 2017**– Aug. 11 (See www.isbe.net/Pages/Waivers.aspx for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)

School Business Services

School District Annual Financial Report Review Process

All district superintendents should have received an email broadcast asking them to review their preliminary Financial Profile Report and verify the Operating Expense per Pupil (OEPP)/Per Capita Tuition Charge (PCTC).

District administrators may submit comments regarding their district's finances that will be published along with their Financial Profile Report (500 characters max). **The comments must be submitted no later than Feb. 6.**

The email included links to the memorandum, instructions, and definitions to assist with the review process. These documents are also available in [IWAS](#) and on the [School District Financial Profile Score & OEPP/PCTC Verification Information webpage](#).

The email broadcast and Superintendent's Weekly Message will be the only notices sent to the district. If you have not received the email, please contact ISBE at (217) 785-8779. If you have given another person authority to review these reports, please forward the email to them.

It is crucial that districts review their financial profile data and score because the financial profile designation will be approved and publicly released by ISBE. Any district that wishes to include comments that support the Financial Profile Report may do so directly in [IWAS](#) beneath the report. Comments are optional, but they are encouraged; this is an opportunity for districts to explain significant financial circumstances.

The deadline of **Feb. 15** and instructions in completing the OEPP/PCTC verification process are important because once the deadline passes, changes to the 2016 Annual Financial Report data are not permitted.

The financial profile scores will be adjusted to reflect any mandated categorical aid payments due to school districts that were not paid by June 30, 2016, and not included in their FY 2016 Annual Financial Report.

If you have questions regarding the school profile score, please contact Christine Kolaz at (217) 785-8779 or by email at ckolaz@isbe.net. If you believe your OEPP/PCTC report is incorrect, please contact Debbie Hemberger in School Business Services at (217) 785-8779 or by email at dhemberg@isbe.net.

Governor's Learning Tour

#GovClassroomVisit

Governor Rauner is encouraging classrooms to submit videos showcasing what they are learning and how. The videos can focus on anything from computer or technology projects to hands-on assignments and everything in between. They should center around the unique ways Illinois students are learning either inside or outside of their classrooms. The governor plans to do a Learning Tour and visit several schools throughout the state to highlight the hard work and creativity of teachers and students. These video submissions will determine where he goes to learn first. Entries should be no longer than 5 minutes in length.

#GovClassroomVisit submissions will be taken through Feb. 10 at 5 p.m. Three finalists will be selected. For questions, please contact catherine.kelly@illinois.gov.

Illinois Virtual School

IVS Program Expansion and Summer Registration

The Illinois Virtual School (IVS) has announced the following major enhancements to student opportunities and added convenience for partner schools just in time for summer registration:

- **Summer 2017 is open for registration:** Visit <http://www.ilvirtual.org/about/Summer.cfm> for more information.
- **Middle School Series:** <http://www.ilvirtual.org/courses/Middle-School-Series.cfm> - IVS has overhauled its Middle School offerings, creating a new Middle School Series. The series offered will include Learning Recovery, Bridge options, and core Full Service Courses.
- **Credit Recovery Success Plan:** <http://www.ilvirtual.org/courses/credit-recovery-courses.cfm> - IVS has implemented new Credit Recovery policies and resources all focused on increasing student completion rates by offering more time and support at no additional cost.
- **Payment Option Flexibility:** <http://www.ilvirtual.org/courses/Costs-and-Payments.cfm> - Starting April 15, IVS partner schools will be able to have responsible parties billed directly, rather than the local school. IVS will also now be able to accept PayPal from individuals. These changes will allow more schools and students to benefit from IVS.

Early Childhood

Now Available – Notice of Intent to Submit FY 2018 Request for Proposal

This Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal **MUST** be submitted by **Feb. 28** by all entities that intend to apply for FY 2018 Early Childhood Block Grant funds.

Please note, there are three different links -- one for each RFP. Questions regarding the Intent to Submit survey can be emailed to earlychi@isbe.net.

[FY18 Birth to 3 Years Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal Prevention Initiative](#)

[FY18 Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal - Preschool for All 3 to 5 Years](#)

[FY18 Notice of Intent to Submit Proposal - Preschool for All Expansion 3 to 5 Years](#)

Those Who Excel

Illinois Teacher of the Year Applications Now Available

The 2017-18 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year nomination form is available for completion online at www.isbe.net/Documents/03-10-those-who-excel.pdf. Hard copies will soon be mailed.

Fill out the form using Internet Explorer, then print it out. Be sure to have your district superintendent or chief administrator sign the form. Attach the other required information and mail it to:

Illinois State Board of Education
Public Information Division
100 N. First St., S-404
Springfield, IL 62777-0001

Nominations must be postmarked by June 6. Please call the Office of Communications at (217) 782-4648 if you have questions.

2017 Illinois Teacher of the Year Available for Speaking Engagements



Ricardo "Ricky" Castro is the 2017 Illinois Teacher of the Year and he is ready to share his thoughts on teaching with you! Ricky talks openly about his involvement with gangs as a young teen in Chicago. He freely admits that he was a bad student and on the verge of choosing an entirely different path but he credits caring

teachers who listened to him, encouraged him, and helped him to make choices that were positive. Their concern and mentoring led Ricky to his true calling — becoming a teacher.

Ricky has been teaching for 10 years. He has been teaching English as a Second Language, English Arts, and Spanish for the past three years at Elk Grove High School in Township High School District 214. Ricky teaches students how to develop what he calls

“biliteracy,” which helps students develop a proficiency in multiple languages that will serve them well throughout their lives.

Ricky recognized that students of poverty often need more than academic success to achieve success in life so he created a tiered leadership program called Estudiantes Unidos. This innovative program encourages high school students to mentor students in junior high and elementary schools. The program teaches the value of citizenship and the importance of community and encourages students to be leaders. Today the co-curricular endeavor impacts more than 200 students throughout the district.

If you would like Ricky to share strategies, thoughts, and ideas with your staff, please visit

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdovmxgqAocxF5ejfYKCA-](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdovmxgqAocxF5ejfYKCA-PHbhNNhrWwcUIGwuy93SLmFah6g/viewform)

[PHbhNNhrWwcUIGwuy93SLmFah6g/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdovmxgqAocxF5ejfYKCA-PHbhNNhrWwcUIGwuy93SLmFah6g/viewform) and submit the form.

Every Student Succeeds Act

2017 ESSA Statewide Conference

The 2017 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Statewide Conference - TURNING POINT: FROM NCLB TO ESSA is Feb. 13-15 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Chicago.

Highlights of the conference include:

- Special sessions on the Illinois ESSA State Plan
- Five outstanding keynote speakers
- More than 170 concurrent sessions and workshops in such topical strands as content instruction; technology in the classroom; engagement with parents, families, and communities; assessment and use of student data; innovative approaches to education; professional development plans; education for the homeless; and more
- A particularly strong focus on early childhood education on Tuesday, Feb. 14
- State and federal updates and grant support
- ISBE technical assistance

For further information about the program and registration, please visit www.thecenterweb.org/essa.

Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot

Reminder: Program Applications Due Jan. 27

In November, ISBE launched a call for applications for the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot. The pilot will allow up to 12 innovative school districts to replace high school graduation requirements with a competency-based learning system of the district's design. In competency-based learning, educators assess and advance students based on demonstrated mastery of specific skills, abilities, and knowledge, rather than on time in the classroom. The deadline for program applications is **Jan. 27**.

For more information and to apply, please visit <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Great-Ideas.aspx>.

Funding and Disbursements

New Census Estimates Released for FY 2018 Title I Low Income

The U.S. Department of Education has released the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for income year 2015. These estimates will be used to calculate fiscal year 2018 Title I allocations. A file of 2015 Poverty Data by Local Education Agency (LEA) is provided in an alphabetical listing of LEAs, Poverty Count, 5-17 Population, Poverty Percentage, and Total Population at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/New-Census-Estimates-Released.aspx>

LEAs can use this data to determine their potential eligibility for Basic, Concentration, Targeted and Education Finance Incentive grants (EFIG).

Basic Grant eligibility: An LEA must have at least 10 poverty children and the number of poverty children must be greater than 2 percent of the LEA population of children ages 5-17.

Concentration Grant eligibility: An LEA must have at least 6,500 poverty children or the number of those children exceeds 15 percent of the total 5-17 population.

Targeted Grant and EFIG qualifications: An LEA must have at least 10 poverty children and that number must be at least 5 percent of the 5-17 population.

The following link to the Census Bureau, www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/index.html, provides various aspects of the SAIPE count, including the data sources and methodology used to prepare these data. We will be using the 2015 data to calculate school year 2017-18 Title I, Part A allocations because they are the most recent available data.

Superintendents, business managers, and Title I directors should carefully examine the data for their LEA as this will be the first indication as to whether your LEA may be gaining or losing in eligibility for Title I funds in FY 2018. ISBE neither controls nor generates the data. The challenge period for the 2015 estimates ends March 13, 2017. Refer to the Census Bureau link at www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/contact/challenges.html, if interested.

Note that this preliminary data does not include other non-census information, such as foster, neglected, or delinquent counts that may be used to calculate Title I allocations.

If you have questions, please contact Sally Cray in the Division of Funding and Disbursements at scray@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.

Final FY 2017 Mandated Categorical Prorations Now Calculated

Final prorations and payments have been calculated for all 2015-16 school year categorical claims that will be vouchered in fiscal year 2017. If you have questions regarding this information, contact ISBE's Division of Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

- Special Education Personnel – 100 percent
- Special Education Private Facility – 96 percent
- Special Education Funding for Children Requiring Special Education Services – 99 percent
- Special Education Summer School – 89 percent
- Special Education Orphanage – 100 percent
- Special Education Transportation – 91 percent
- Regular/Vocational Transportation – 71 percent
- Regular Education Orphanage – 100 percent

Federal Interest Income – Quarterly Reminder

The Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34-Education, Part 80 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, Subpart C-Post Award Requirements, Section 80.21 Payment requires grantees and subgrantees to promptly, but at least quarterly, remit interest earned on advances to the appropriate federal agency. The grantee or subgrantee may keep actual interest amounts up to \$100 per year gained on federal deposits per bank account, if applicable, for administrative purposes. Grant recipients have discretion to set up account(s) that are non-interest bearing to avoid returning interest.

LEA fiscal officials should ensure compliance with federal administrative requirements by developing internal controls and a sound methodology to calculate and return, at least quarterly, interest earned in excess of \$100 on federal program funds. Interest calculation methodologies must be based on actual, not estimated, interest earnings on federal funds.

Interest should be returned using the following guidelines:

- Checks for interest earned should be made payable to the Illinois State Board of Education.
- Checks should not include the return of unexpended disbursements from ISBE. Even though unexpended disbursements and interest payments are made payable to the Illinois State Board of Education, separate checks should be issued for both.
- Checks should be accompanied by a statement identifying the program and the program year from which the interest was earned.

All checks must be mailed to the Illinois State Board of Education, Funding and Disbursements Services Division (E-320), 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL 62777-0001.

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Registration Underway for ISBE Wellness in Schools Workshops

Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division staff will present a workshop related to Wellness in Schools. This half-day workshop will provide an overview of topics related to wellness in schools, including physical fitness and the new assessment requirements; HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchrooms techniques; Smart Snacks; and the Local Wellness

Policy, which is required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Three locations are being offered: **Lisle (March 7), Springfield (March 9), and Collinsville (March 16).**

We encourage school administrators, wellness coordinators, health and physical education teachers, food service professionals, and anyone with an interest in issues impacting Wellness in Schools to attend! A link to registration is under “What’s New?” at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Nutrition-and-Wellness.aspx>.

Illinois Report Card

MyIRC Train the Trainer Events

Attend the next in the ongoing series of Train the Trainer events, “What’s New at MyIRC – Spotlight: PARCC,” and learn how to facilitate use of data available on the Illinois Report Card and MyIRC, including the PARCC individual student data for the past two years.

MyIRC is free to all public schools in Illinois. Participants will receive training, facilitators guide, presentation materials, and technical support to be able to redeliver training to local communities, schools, or districts.

The final professional development event is from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the following venue and is free:

- Jan. 31 at ROE #11, 730 7th St., Charleston. To register, go to <http://www.roe11.k12.il.us/event/whats-new-at-the-illinois-report-card-and-myirc-train-the-trainer-event/>.

In Brief

Student Recognition

- Congrats to **Taylor Vidmar**, a graduate of Central A&M CUD 21 and a writer and student at Richland Community College, for being appointed to the [Better Make Room Student Advisory Board](#) for Michelle Obama’s college opportunity campaign. Awesome job, Taylor!

Upcoming Events

- The EPA** is holding a webinar from 12 - 1 p.m. on Jan. 30 titled “3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools.” To register, please visit <http://login.icohere.com/registration/register.cfm?reg=3416&evt=3TsJan2017>.

Grant Opportunities

- CATCH Global Foundation** will award up to two Let’s Move! Active Schools District Grants to support implementation of the CATCH Coordinated School Health model. Learn more at <https://goo.gl/8YVW8g>; the deadline to apply is Jan. 31.
- The School Nutrition Foundation** is now accepting applications for two equipment grants: Winston Industries Equipment Grant and Baxter Equipment for Education Grants. For more information, please visit <http://schoolnutrition.org/equipmentgrants/>.

Professional Development

- The School Nutrition Foundation** is accepting applications for [SNA Conference Scholarships](#) and [Professional Development Scholarships](#). For questions, please contact scholarships@schoolnutrition.org.

Employment Opportunities

- Watch for ISBE career opportunities and find instructions for applying at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx>.