



Weekly Message

Feb. 17, 2016

Message From State Superintendent Tony Smith, Ph.D.

Hello,

Last week, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) shared that the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) had [reached a decision](#) on the protest to the agency's procurement process for a new college entrance exam. The CPO denied the protest that had been filed by ACT, formally closing the procurement process and allowing ISBE to start negotiating a contract with the College Board to administer the SAT examination to all 11th-grade students this spring. However, it's important to note that ISBE does not have an appropriation for administering assessments this school year due to the budget impasse. I certainly understand the uncertainty that surrounds our next steps toward implementing the SAT and how they will affect schools' testing plans. We remain committed to ensuring that our highest-need students continue to have free access to a college entrance exam and will share additional details and updates as the process unfolds.

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On Thursday, we posted an FAQ document about the procurement process on our website at www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/2016/assessment-faq-college%20entrance%20exam-sy16.pdf. This resource provides helpful background information on how we reached this point and why the Board believes the SAT is the right test for Illinois. The SAT is a better tool to measure what our students are learning and to pinpoint their level of readiness after graduation. The test will also provide a cost savings to the state. Additionally, the SAT is more aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards and the agency's goal to have 90 percent or more of students graduating college and career ready, which is a priority for the Board.

The FAQ will be updated as more information becomes available.

Illinois has long been a national leader in administering a college entrance exam at no cost to all public school juniors. I appreciate your continued dedication to help maintain this vital opportunity, which has made college a reality for countless students who otherwise wouldn't pursue higher education.

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
- **Rescheduled standard testing window for all districts using paper materials on the ACCESS for ELLs assessment** – Jan. 25 to Feb. 26
- **PARCC Test Administration Walkthrough webinar** - Feb. 17
(<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8914931910005426946>)
- **Community Eligibility Provision webinar** – Feb. 18
(<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/46466832926124290>)
- **Deadline to complete the FY 16 Request for Proposal Intent to Apply for the Charter Schools Program Grant** – March 1 (www.isbe.net/charter/pdf/43-48A-charter-rfp-16-intent-to-apply.pdf)
- **“SNP – An Overview of Food Insecurity and Child Nutrition Programs in Illinois” webinar** – March 3
(<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2414476230016284673>)
- **2016 Race to the Top Regional Networking meeting in Springfield** – March 8
(https://reg.abcsignup.com/reg/event_page.aspx?ek=0044-0016-65b6361786e043d0b0fdabc9a4b931b9)
- **ISBE webinar on employee evaluations** – March 9
(<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/427558662978929666>)
- **2016 Illinois Arts Education Week** – March 14-20
- **Deadline to submit applications for fiscal year 2016 federal Migrant Education Program funding for summer school programs** – March 15 (www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/20-37A-migrant-summer-app.pdf)
- **Deadline to enter the 2016 Illinois Fatherhood Initiative Chicago White Sox Fatherhood Essay Contest** – March 15 (www.4fathers.org/)
- **2016 Race to the Top Regional Networking meeting in Malta** – March 16
(https://reg.abcsignup.com/reg/event_page.aspx?ek=0044-0016-c8d8466d32ae4cd484d72e795ff6b0be)
- **Deadline to apply for 2016-17 School Grants for Healthy Kids** – April 1
(www.actionforhealthykids.org/grants)
- **Seal of Biliteracy Symposium** – April 12 (biliteracy@isbe.net)
- **Ninth annual Illinois School Wellness Conference** – April 28
- **ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day** – May 30
- **Deadline to submit nomination forms for the 2016-17 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year program** – June 6 (www.isbe.net/those-who-excel/2017/03-10-twe-application16-17.pdf)
- **Deadline to submit data in the Student Health - Vision system** – June 30
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in fall 2016** – Aug. 12, 2016 (See www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)

Assessment and Accountability

PARCC Test Administration Walkthrough Webinar Scheduled for Today

A Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Test Administration Walkthrough webinar is scheduled for 3 p.m. today.

This webinar is targeted at school and district test coordinators and will provide a step-by-step walkthrough of the test administration process at the classroom level. There will be significant time for questions.

To register, visit

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8914931910005426946>.

English Language Learning

Seal of Biliteracy Symposium on April 12

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will host a Seal of Biliteracy Symposium from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 12 at National Louis University's Lisle campus, 850 Warrenville Road in Lisle.

The symposium will provide an opportunity for districts to share information and resources for setting up the program, review the program outcomes, and discuss ideas for future development. This half-day event will include presentations by field experts and researchers that address pathways to biliteracy for students from preschool through high school. Educators who are developing the programs in districts also will share their experiences.

Registration information will be forthcoming. Please email biliteracy@isbe.net or contact the Division of English Language Learning at (312) 814-3850 with any questions.

- Seal of Biliteracy Symposium
- April 12
- 8:30a.m. to 1 p.m.
- National Louis University's Lisle campus, 850 Warrenville Rd.

Charter Schools

Deadline Extended for Charter School Program Grant RFP Intent to Apply

The deadline for design teams to complete the fiscal year 2016 Request for Proposal Intent to Apply for the Charter Schools Program Grant has been extended to March 1. The Intent to Apply is necessary in order to access the secure online RFP to be released this year. The form is posted at www.isbe.net/charter/pdf/43-48A-charter-rfp-16-intent-to-apply.pdf.

For any questions, please contact Claudia Quezada at cquezada@isbe.net or (217) 524-4832.

Charter School Program – Quality School Options 101 Webinar on Feb. 19

ISBE is hosting a Charter School Program – Quality School Options 101 webinar at noon Feb. 19.

For more details and to register, visit

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1683763890902593025>.

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

New Rules: PE Assessment and Data Collection and Reporting

[Public Act 98-0859](#) created the Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education. The purpose of this task force was to submit recommendations for ISBE to consider for adopting rules for implementation of physical fitness assessments as well as the collection and reporting of aggregate fitness information.

The assessment to be used in schools would measure “aerobic capacity, body composition, muscular strength, muscular endurance and flexibility” of students in grades 3 and above in order to ascertain the effectiveness of Goal 20 of the Illinois Learning Standards for physical development and health, which is to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness based upon continual self-assessment.

The task force submitted its recommendations to ISBE on April 1, 2015, and after seeking public comment, ISBE adopted rules based on these recommendations. These rules went into effect Jan. 27 and were released on Feb. 16 in the [Illinois Register](#) (Part 1, Section 1.425). The new Section 1.425(g) puts into rule the Task Force's recommendations regarding the use of the Fitnessgram or the Brockport Physical Fitness Testing for students with disabilities whose individualized education program identifies the Fitnessgram as not appropriate. Scores achieved on the testing may not be used as part of a student's grade or to evaluate a teacher.

Schools must begin using the Fitnessgram assessments in the 2016-17 school year and electronically report results from the fitness testing to the State Board (through IWAS) by May 1, 2017, and annually thereafter.

For further assistance, including a document containing commonly asked questions and answers, please go to www.isbe.net/EPE/default.htm.

March 3 Webinar on Food Insecurity and Child Nutrition Programs in Illinois

ISBE's Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division, in partnership with the Illinois Commission to End Hunger and Illinois No Kid Hungry, is hosting a webinar on food insecurity and child nutrition programs in Illinois at 10 a.m. March 3.

The webinar will provide Illinois school food authorities (SFAs) an overview of Food Insecurity in Illinois and what resources, including grants, might be available for SFAs to implement a variety of Child Nutrition Programs in your communities. More detailed information about the Illinois Commission to End Hunger is available at www.illinois.gov/gov/endhunger/Pages/default.aspx. More information on Illinois No Kid Hungry is available at www.riseandshineillinois.org.

- “SNP – An Overview of Food Insecurity and Child Nutrition Programs in Illinois” webinar
- March 3
- 10 a.m.
- Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2414476230016284673>

Summer Food Service Program Information Sessions and Workshops

It's only February but the Summer Food Service Program, also known as Summer Meals, is preparing for the 2016 summer session. The program is for non-profit sponsors or meal sites eligible by school data or census. If you know of schools or community organizations interested in participating, please refer them to the Information Sessions document at www.isbe.net/nutrition/PDF/sfsp-info-sessions-2016.pdf.

To register for an SFSP Workshop, please refer staff or organizations to <http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnscaendar/asp/eventlist.asp>.

Please remember that any school that operates a summer program in a building with a 50 percent or greater free and reduced-price percentage in the National School Lunch Program must serve a breakfast and/or a lunch to students in attendance.

These schools must also open their doors to children 18 and younger in the community to participate in the Seamless Summer Option or in Summer Meals, unless the regional superintendent has granted a waiver.

If you have questions about the Seamless Summer Option or Summer Meals, please call ISBE's Nutrition and Wellness Division at (800) 545-7892. You may also email cnp@isbe.net to order summer meals fliers so children in your community can locate the closest meal site.

Applications Now Available for 2016-17 School Grants for Healthy Kids

Action for Healthy Kids is accepting School Grants for Healthy Kids applications for the 2016-17 school year. Schools may apply for School Breakfast grants (\$500 - \$5,000) to pilot or expand their School Breakfast programs or Game On Grants (\$500-\$2,500) to fund physical activity/nutrition initiatives. The deadline to apply is April 1.

Visit www.actionforhealthykids.org/grants for more information and register for the following informational webinars: [School Breakfast](#) (March 1) and [Game On](#) (March 2).

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Two sets of proposed amendments recently reviewed by ISBE are available for public comment. The proposals and a summary of the issues involved have been posted at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net. The public comment period ends Apr. 11. The rulemakings are:

- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision)**
- **Part 27 (Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields)**

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that three sets of amendments recently adopted by ISBE became effective Jan. 13.

Changes have been posted at www.isbe.net/rules/archive/default.htm. Please choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to the Part number.

Part 70 (Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Assistance Grant): The rulemaking affected the entire Part.

Part 226 (Special Education): See Sections 226.10, 226.60, 226.75, 226.100, 226.110, 226.120, 226.125, 226.130, 226.135, 226.150, 226.160, 226.180, 226.220, 226.230, 226.300, 226.320, 226.550, 226.560, 226.570, 226.710, 226.730, 226.731, 226.735, 226.770, 226.800, 226.810, 226.820, 226.830, 226.840, 226.850, and 226.860

Part 375 (Student Records): See Section 375.10

Center for Performance

Register for Upcoming Employee Evaluations Webinar March 9

The Center for Performance and Data Analysis divisions will host a webinar on employee evaluations from **1 to 3 p.m. March 9**. Further communication that specifies which districts are required to participate is forthcoming. **While not all districts are required to participate in evaluations yearly, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) encourages all districts to attend the webinar.**

To register, go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/427558662978929666>.

The webinar will contain two sections: one for administrators that discusses evaluations from the statute perspective and one for data entry staff that outlines how to submit the evaluations through the Employment Information System (EIS). **ISBE recommends that participating districts have both an administrator and a data entry staff person attend the webinar.**

Employee evaluations were mandated in Senate Bill 315; Public Act 96-0861, which states in section 105 ILCS 5/24A-5 that:

“By no later than Sept. 1, 2012, each school district shall establish a teacher evaluation plan that ensures that:

- (1) each teacher not in contractual continued service is evaluated at least once every school year; and*
- (2) each teacher in contractual continued service is evaluated at least once in the course of every 2 school years. However, any teacher in contractual continued service whose performance is rated as either "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" must be evaluated at least once in the school year following the receipt of such rating.”*

For questions related to the statute, call the Center for Performance at (217) 782-3950. For questions related to EIS, call the Data Analysis Division at (217) 782-3950. For assistance with technical issues, call the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

Race to the Top

2016 Spring Regional Networking Meetings for Race to the Top

ISBE invites all Race to the Top districts to participate in the March 2016 Race to the Top Regional Networking meeting. This meeting will be held at two locations to facilitate easier travel.

This year’s Race to the Top theme is “Equity and Transformation.” In later meetings, these themes will be applied to district- and school-level implementation. The meetings will introduce and expand on the new state goal of equity, including context, legislative proposals, and ideas for implementation.

For more information on the Illinois Equity Plan, please see the official documentation at www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/equitable/ilequityplan060115.pdf.

Any questions for the March facilitators (Dr. Jason Helfer and Dr. Anjale Welton) can be submitted in advance by emailing lea@isbe.net by Feb. 23. Time will be allotted for questions during the meetings as well. The meeting dates and registration information are as follows:

- **Date:** March 8
- **Location:** Illinois State Board of Education , 100 N. First St., Springfield, Conference Room 4A+B
- **Time:** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., registration begins at 9 a.m.
- **Registration information:**
https://reg.abcsignup.com/reg/event_page.aspx?ek=0044-0016-65b6361786e043d0b0fdabc9a4b931b9

The deadline to register for the March 8 event is **Feb. 23.**

- **Date:** March 16
- **Location:** Kishwaukee College, 21193 Malta Road, Malta
- **Time:** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., registration begins at 9 a.m.
- **Registration information:**
https://reg.abcsignup.com/reg/event_page.aspx?ek=0044-0016-c8d8466d32ae4cd484d72e795ff6b0be

The deadline to register for the March 16 event is **March 9.**

Those Who Excel

Illinois Teacher of the Year Applications Now Available

The 2016-17 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year nomination form is available for completion at www.isbe.net/those-who-excel/2017/03-10-twe-application16-17.pdf. Hard copies have been 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, Illinois 62777-0001

Nominations must be postmarked by June 6. Please call Public Information at (217) 782-4648 if you have questions.

Illinois Fatherhood Initiative

2016 Illinois Fatherhood Initiative Chicago White Sox Fatherhood Essay Contest

The 2016 Illinois Fatherhood Initiative (IFI) Chicago White Sox Fatherhood Essay Contest is now open to all school-aged children in the state. This year's theme is "What My Father Means to Me."



All students submitting an essay through their school will receive a certificate of participation, a coupon sheet, and specially priced White Sox baseball game tickets.

One hundred and fifty-six finalists will be recognized at the May 22 Faces of Fatherhood Celebration at U.S. Cellular Field and watch a White Sox game. Twelve finalists will receive BrightStart College Scholarships and be invited with their fathers to the 2016 IFI Fatherhood Dinner Celebration in June. Four essayists and their fathers will be invited to a White Sox game to throw the pre-game ceremonial first pitch.

The top 25 participating schools will each receive a starter kit of fathering resources. All fathers who provide a "dad's response" to their child's essay will become charter members in the IFI 21st Century Dads Club.

The deadline for submissions is March 15. For more details and entry materials, visit www.4fathers.org/. For questions, email Wayne Sneed, project director, at 4fathers.sneed@gmail.com.

Funding and Disbursements

Rollout of New I-Star System 2016-17

All local education agencies are formally advised that ISBE is on target to roll out the new I-Star system for the 2016-17 school year. I-Star is the new ISBE web-based special education database system and data management tool for all districts and joint agreements. I-Star incorporates all aspects of student and personnel approvals and claims as well as an optional individualized education program component. The current iePoint> software and data transmissions will be eliminated in favor of I-Star.

Some of the features of the new I-Star system include:

- Access via ISBE's IWAS portal. Local administrators will assign security to specific staff and access to modules within I-Star as appropriate.
- All student demographic information will be populated from the Student Information System, eliminating duplication and overlapping entries between local education agencies.
- Personnel data will be populated from the Employment Information and Educator Licensure Information Systems.
- Feedback of all user entries and verification of data with ISBE systems in I-Star are in real time.

Through the 2015-16 school year, pilot sites around the state have been testing the new I-Star system. A list of pilot sites is at www.hbug.k12.il.us/IStar/pilot_sites.aspx. Feedback and enhancements are being tested and implemented in advance of full integration of I-Star beginning in the 2016-17 school year.

Training, questions, and further information on I-Star can be accessed via Harrisburg Project's I-Star webpage at www.hbug.k12.il.us/IStar/default.aspx.

Important Changes to Dec. 1 Special Education Child Count Reporting

Federal regulation at 34 CFR 300.641 requires that all local education agencies (LEAs) annually collect and report an accurate and unduplicated number of children with disabilities receiving special education and related services. Further, 105 ILCS 5/2-3.30 of the School Code requires that students reported must be eligible to receive services or be in a special education program receiving direct or related services approved by a public school district on Dec. 1, be at least age 3 through age 21, inclusive (i.e., through the day before the student's 22nd birthday) (see 34 CFR 300.101(a)), and have an individualized education program or individualized services plan in place.

The federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires that all state education agencies report special education students counted on Dec. 1 by the following April each year. For the 2015-16 school year, the due date for state reporting is April 6. For

many years, ISBE has met the federal April deadline but has permitted LEAs to add unreported students receiving services on Dec. 1 on subsequent approval transmissions through June 30. This flexibility has created a variety of problems, including, but not limited to:

- An inaccurate count to compute the state's annual IDEA Part B grant award
- Data integrity related to the submission of the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) and monitoring
- Inability to timely compute the state's maintenance of effort and LEA nonpublic proportionate share of IDEA Part B funds

Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, all students receiving special education and related services on Dec. 1, 2015, must be reported with the March 4 approval transmission. To help with this process, ISBE will provide a report listing all students who are identified as duplicates by early February. These duplicates must be resolved before the March 4 transmission. After the March 4 transmission is received and processed at ISBE, reports listing your official child count number will be sent to you. There will be a short validation period to confirm that this number is correct or to transmit another approval file with additions. The deadline for the validation period is March 21. Please be advised that the Dec. 1, 2015, child count reported to OSEP on April 6 will constitute the state's official 2015-16 special education count.

All LEAs can continue to report additions and changes for students with disabilities on subsequent approval transmissions for the 2015-16 school year through June 30, but no changes will be made to the official Dec. 1 count. All 2015-16 special education approval and claim dates can be accessed at www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/sped-due-dates-15-16.pdf.

Questions regarding the FACTS approval procedures should be directed to Jamie Johnson at jjohnson@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256

Questions pertaining to the operation of iePoint or NetCheck should be directed to the Harrisburg Project at (800) 635-5274 or support@hbug.k12.il.us.

New Census Estimates Released for FY 2017 Title I Low Income

The U.S. Department of Education has released the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for income year 2014. These estimates will be used to calculate fiscal year 2017 Title I allocations. A file of 2014 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 www.isbe.net/funding/excel/title1-census-fy17.xlsx.

With this data, LEAs can determine their potential eligibility for Basic, Concentration, Targeted and Education Finance Incentive grants.

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 2014 data to calculate school year 2016-17 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 2017. ISBE neither controls nor generates the data. The challenge period for the 2014 estimates ends March 8. 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.

In Brief

Student Opportunities

- The **American Legion Illinois Premier Boys State program** teaches citizenship and gives youth the opportunity to learn about government “by doing” through a weeklong camp. This year’s session will take place June 11-17 at Eastern Illinois University. To learn more and to register, visit <http://illinoisboysstate.org/>.

School Opportunities

- The **Kid Explorer Club** is a comprehensive reading curriculum for pre-K through sixth grades that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The curriculum is diversity inclusive, enhances the student’s existing school education, and is customized to overcome individual learning challenges. Students at Title I schools qualify for a tuition grant that will cover nearly 100 percent of the tuition cost. To become a host site for the summer or next school year, contact Regional Director Beatrice Cooper at (773) 672-7492, ext. 1, or beatrice@kidexplorerclub.com. The deadline to apply is April 8.

Student Recognition

- Three high school students who received awards in the **2015 Illinois Arts Education Week** poster contest were recently recognized at the Student Show Reception during the Illinois Art Education Association Conference. The students are: Jessa Mae Mendiola of Hinsdale South High School in Darien, Jeremiah Yang of Glenbrook South High School in Glenview, and Becca Timko, also of Hinsdale South High School.

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>.