



# Weekly Message

**March 1, 2017**

## Message From State Superintendent Tony Smith, Ph.D.

Hello,

Safe school environments create the space for students to try new things, to question and challenge each other, and to learn to be their best selves. All of our students deserve to be and feel safe in school.

Last week I had the opportunity to visit Dewey Elementary School in Evanston/Skokie School District 65. I was excited to see the educators, administrators, and staff at Dewey focused on the education of the whole child. They place as much value on students’ social emotional well-being and growth as they do on students’ academic achievement.

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Dewey is working to build a culture where all members of the community are safe to make and learn from their mistakes. The goal of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at Dewey is to “create a positive environment where children learn to own their behaviors, correct their mistakes, and develop empathy for others.” Dewey has implemented restorative practices hand in hand with the PBIS framework. Teachers, staff, students, and families are all working to use the system and make it productive for students. Circles are one restorative practice that can be used to build community, repair

harm, and resolve conflict. Circles foster self-reflection, empathy, leadership, equity, and inclusion. At Dewey, circles do not only happen in classrooms; there are circles in other spaces, such as in PE class, during lunch, in staff meetings, and in PTA meetings. ISBE’s [PBIS webpage](#) shares more information about the PBIS approach to improving school climate. For more information on restorative practices, visit the [Illinois Balanced and Restorative Justice Project’s webpage](#).

When the system is truly functioning well, students are able to discern a place of emotional readiness within themselves and among their peers so they can work through issues. At Dewey, students are self-regulating and engaging in restorative practice themselves. If there is a conflict on the football field, they are leaving the field and calling circles.

The integration of restorative practice has been an organic process for the school and has been reinforced through professional learning and district-level support. The district is thinking about the big

questions of equity and inclusion, as evidenced by its [Racial and Educational Equity Statement](#). The district's commitment and support have allowed these courageous conversations to be held in a safe environment.

Schools are incredible places to build awareness and relationships, and to learn how to be good community members. I am in awe of the capacity of our young people to engage in courageous conversations as thoughtful and informed participants. Naperville North High School junior Samia Abdul-Qadir attended President Trump's address to the joint session of Congress yesterday in Washington, D.C., as the guest of U.S. Representative Bill Foster. Samia shared her personal experiences at Foster's recent community discussion at the Islamic Center of Naperville. Samia's story illustrates the power of youth leadership and the importance of diverse student populations speaking to the needs of our communities.

You may have already seen our [press release](#) last week about the Advanced Placement (AP) accomplishments of Illinois students and districts, but I would like to again recognize the students and educators for their hard work to close equity gaps. We have a record numbers of graduates both taking and excelling on AP exams. Illinois has made it a priority to continue to increase access to these courses. In December 2016, the Illinois State Board of Education approved an agreement with the College Board to maintain the cost of taking AP tests at \$15 per exam for low-income students for the May 2017 test administration.

Keep up the great work!

Tony

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### **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>.

- **Deadline to submit proposals for Illinois Teach to Lead Summit** – March 1
- **Deadline to submit application for TECH 2017** – March 8 (<http://iceberg.org/tech>.)
- **Deadline to submit Migrant Education Program applications** – March 10 ([www.isbe.net/Documents/20-37A-FY17-SUMMER-all-12-19-2016-Secured.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/20-37A-FY17-SUMMER-all-12-19-2016-Secured.pdf))
- **2017 Illinois Arts Education Week** – March 13-19
- **Illinois State Board of Education Meeting** – March 15
- **Deadline to submit Charter School Program - QSO RFP** – March 20
- **Nonpublic/Public School ESSA Conference** – April 5 ([www.isbe.net/nonpublicprograms](http://www.isbe.net/nonpublicprograms))
- **Illinois State Board of Education Meeting** – April 13
- **Every Kid Healthy Week** – April 24-28
- **Illinois State Board of Education Meeting** – May 24
- **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](http://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](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Waivers.aspx) for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)

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## **E-Rate Matching Grant Program**

### **Technical Assistance Webinar**

A technical assistance webinar will be held at 10 a.m. on March 8 for the E-Rate State Matching Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity/Request for Proposals. This webinar will provide an overview of the [Request for Proposal](#) and a question-and-answer session. The webinar will be recorded. All questions and answers will be listed in a Frequently Asked Questions section on the [Broadband Information](#) page.

Register directly at

<https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/6674579120213960193> or from the link on the [Broadband page](#).

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

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## **Assessments and Accountability**

### **College Board Webinar: Getting Ready for the ISBE-Provided SAT School Day**

College Board is holding a webinar on March 14 to assist districts in preparing for the SAT testing dates in April. The webinar will include input from Illinois districts that have experienced the first administration of the SAT, as well as tips from College Board. Two sessions will be held on March 14.

Registration:

[March 14, 9 – 10:30 a.m.](#)

[March 14, 2:30 – 4 p.m.](#)

For questions, please contact Sharon Cowley at [scowley@collegeboard.org](mailto:scowley@collegeboard.org).

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## **School Health Issues**

### **IDPH Guidance Available on PA 099-0922 Lead In Water Testing**

IDPH has issued guidance on Public Act 099-0922 Lead in Water Testing. The guidance is available via the [IDPH](#) and [ISBE's Nutrition and Wellness](#) websites.

For questions, please contact [dph.LeadH2O@illinois.gov](mailto:dph.LeadH2O@illinois.gov).

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## **College and Career Readiness**

### **Illinois Science and Social Science Workshop for Elementary Educators**

A workshop developed by ISBE content area specialists is being offered to help empower teachers and educational leaders to bring out the change necessary to implement the Illinois Learning Standards for science and social science in elementary classrooms.

Workshop objectives include engaging in elementary-aligned content that incorporates inquiry to emphasize the full intent of the standards, exploring sample interdisciplinary units and lessons into unit planning, examining implementation resources for elementary-level standards, encompassing content within the literacy block while fully meeting standards, and empowering educators to be advocates for change.

#### **Dates and Locations:**

All workshops are from 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

- March 30 - [East Peoria](#)
- March 31 - [Rockford](#)
- April 4 - [Marion](#)

For more information, visit

[www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/upcoming-professional-development.html](http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/upcoming-professional-development.html).

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## **In Brief**

### **District Opportunities**

- “Food, Culture, and Heritage” is the theme for this year's [International School Meals Day](#). Find out how school nutrition professionals, teachers, families, and students can get involved on the special day, which is set for March 9.
- The deadline for applications for **TECH 2017** has been extended to March 8. TECH 2017 showcases how students and teachers across the state use technology in classrooms to enhance student learning and is scheduled for May 9 at the Illinois State Capitol Building in Springfield. Find out more information, including how your district can be one of the 100 schools representing Illinois, at <http://iceberg.org/tech>.

## Student Recognition

- **Congrats to William Bauman and Kayli Roe** for being named Illinois' top youth volunteers in the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program! William is a junior at Grayslake North High School and Kayli is a seventh-grader at Immanuel Lutheran School in Palatine. For more information, visit <https://spirit.prudential.com/>. Great job, William and Kayli!

## Professional Development

- **Online Impact**, a program offered by the Center for Education Initiative at Illinois State University and supported by the Illinois State Board of Education, is offering educators from Illinois online workshops focused on classroom practice. Workshops can be completed at your own pace. They have been designed by Illinois educators with years of experience in the subject area of the workshop. For more information, visit <http://onlineimpact.isbe.net/>.
- The **National Board Resource Center (NBRC)** is seeking administrators interested in a research-based ongoing professional development opportunity. There are currently 47 National Board Professional Development Schools in Illinois led by administrator leaders. The NBRC is expanding this program to include an additional 25 schools/districts to take part in this opportunity during the 2017-18 school year. This program is school based and includes several research-based instructional strategies that focus on implementing effective teaching approaches that nurture critical thinking. Application deadline is March 27. Call Debra Kasperski at (309) 438-1833 for more information or to set up an appointment.
- The **Illinois High School & College Driver Education Association (IHSCDEA)** has developed a new format this year to service the State of Illinois driver education teacher education needs. The IHSCDEA and Northern Illinois University have joined together to offer the IHSCDEA Professional Development Program. Complete course overviews, costs, and enrollment information can be found at [www.IHSCDEA.org](http://www.IHSCDEA.org) by clicking on "CERTIFICATION" and looking for the IHSCDEA-PDP details.

## District Recognition

- Congratulations to **Haines Elementary School** for being named the 2017 Illinois National Title I Distinguished School. Keep up the great work!

## Educator Opportunities

- ROE West 40 ISC #2 is hosting the **Midwest Summit for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning** from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. on May 1 in Oak Brook. To register, please visit [www.mws.2017.eventbrite.com](http://www.mws.2017.eventbrite.com).

## Employment Opportunities

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