



# Weekly Message

**April 5, 2016**

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

Hello,

We are rapidly approaching the first administration of the new Illinois Science Assessment (ISA). Testing will occur throughout May. If possible, we hope to open the testing window later this month to provide greater flexibility.

Assessment staff members are holding a webinar this week to go over how to roster students as well as to introduce the new ISA System User Guide. To accommodate as many participants as possible, the webinar will be held on two separate dates – at 10 a.m. both Wednesday and Thursday. Each webinar session will cover the same content. Additional details are available underneath the Dates and Deadlines section of the newsletter. I encourage all districts to have a representative available to attend one of these live sessions. We also expect to email user account information by the close of business today, so please keep an eye on your inboxes.

Additional updates will also be posted to our [ISA webpage](#), which now includes an updated [FAQ document](#). The recordings and PowerPoint presentations from the Assessment Division's weekly webinars are also posted at [www.isbe.net/assessment/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/default.htm).

The ISA will only be available in an online format and is aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards in science incorporating the Next Generation Science Standards, which were adopted in 2014. We understand some of you have concerns that the ISA will take place this spring, though full implementation of the science standards is not required until the upcoming school year. Please note that there is quite a bit of crossover between the current and previous standards. Two documents are posted on the ISA webpage to help explain the [similarities](#) and [differences](#) between the 1997 Illinois Learning Standards and the current standards.

Students in fifth and eighth grade will take the ISA's grade-level assessment while high school students enrolled in one of the following courses and who do not have a prior full year credit in any of the following courses must test: 03051A000 Biology, 03052A000 Biology – Advanced Studies, 03056A000 AP Biology, or 03057A000 IB Biology.

Each student will participate in one testing session that must be completed in a single day. Our [FAQ document](#) includes a table that shows estimated testing times by grade level/course. The testing sessions should take no more than one hour to administer including set-up and sign-off. Districts will have the

### Table of Contents

Assessment and Accountability .....	3
Every Student Succeeds Act .....	3
Center for Educator Effectiveness .....	3
Charter Schools .....	4
Student Advisory Council .....	4
Data Analysis .....	4
Funding and Disbursements.....	5
Title Grant Administration.....	5
Nutrition and Wellness Programs.....	6
Special Education Services .....	7
School Safety Issues .....	7
In Brief.....	8

flexibility to continue testing if students need more than the estimated hour to complete the test. Again, I encourage you to check our ISA webpage frequently for updates and to participate in this week's webinar for the latest updates.

Have a great week,  
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 register for the April 20 School Safety Conference in Mount Prospect** – April 5 ([www.gbriskcontrol.com/retasecurityregistration](http://www.gbriskcontrol.com/retasecurityregistration))
- **First date for the Illinois Science Assessment - Rostering of Students and Introduction to ISA System User Guide Webinar** – April 6 (<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8040875142589621507>)
- **Second date for the Illinois Science Assessment - Rostering of Students and Introduction to ISA System User Guide Webinar** – April 7 (<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/9211029293047288068>)
- **Illinois Healthy & High-Performing Green Schools Symposium** – April 8 ([www.usgbc-illinois.org/events/schoolssymposium/](http://www.usgbc-illinois.org/events/schoolssymposium/))
- **Deadline to register for the April 26 Team Up for School Nutrition Success meeting in Springfield** – April 8 ([www.surveymonkey.com/r/TeamUp42616](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TeamUp42616))
- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 27 (Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields)** – Public comment ends April 11
- **Seal of Biliteracy Symposium** – April 12
- **Illinois Association of Title I Directors Spring Conference** – April 12 ([www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1804223](http://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1804223))
- **Guidance on Developing and Submitting the Quality School Options RFP webinar** – April 15 (<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3716657538566102273>)
- **Deadline to submit data for Employment Information System employment, position records, and non-certified aggregated FTE counts** – April 15 ([www.isbe.net/eis/html/archived-meetings.htm#eis-basics](http://www.isbe.net/eis/html/archived-meetings.htm#eis-basics))
- **Deadline to register for a FY 2017 Consolidated Application Technical Assistance Workshop** – April 25 ([www.isbe.net/grants/html/essa-workshops.htm](http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/essa-workshops.htm))
- **Deadline to submit the Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) FY 2017 RFP** – April 25
- **Team Up for School Nutrition Success meeting** – April 26
- **Ninth annual Illinois School Wellness Conference** – April 28 ([www.actionforhealthykids.org/component/events/event/395](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/component/events/event/395))
- **Deadline to apply for entities interested in providing Performance Evaluation Reform Act training to board members for the Optional Alternative Evaluation Dismissal process** – May 1 (<http://isbe.net/pera/html/oaed.htm>)
- **National School Nurse Day** – May 11 (<http://www.nasn.org/AboutNASN/NationalSchoolNurseDay>)
- **Deadline to submit proposals for the Prevention Initiative Training and Technical Assistance: Birth to 3 Years RFP** – May 16 (<http://isbe.net/earlychi/html/birth-3.htm>)

- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 20 (Standards for Endorsements in Elementary Education), Part 25 (Educator Licensure) and Part 26 (Standards for Endorsements in Early Childhood Education and in Elementary Education)** – Public comment ends May 16
- **Deadline to apply for ISBE’s 2016-17 Student Advisory Council** – May 27 ([www.isbe.net/sac/](http://www.isbe.net/sac/))
- **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](http://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
- **Deadline for Focus or Priority schools to update or develop and submit an Intervention or Transformation plan to ISBE** – June 30
- **ISBE offices closed for Independence Day** – July 4
- **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](http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm) for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- **ISBE offices closed for Labor Day** – Sept. 5

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## **Assessment and Accountability**

### **Webinar to Explain ISA Student Rosters & New System User Guide on April 6 & 7**

A webinar to explain how to roster students and to introduce the new System User Guide for the Illinois Science Assessment will be held Wednesday and Thursday.

The webinar is scheduled for two separate dates to accommodate as many participants as possible. Both sessions will begin at 10 a.m. and will cover the same material.

To register for the April 6 session, go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8040875142589621507>. Please note that this session is almost at capacity.

To register for the April 7 session, go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/9211029293047288068>.

A confirmation email will be sent to participants containing information about how to join the webinar.

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## **Every Student Succeeds Act**

### **ISBE Adds Dates to ESSA Listening Tour**

Additional dates have been added to the Illinois State Board of Education’s (ISBE) listening tour to collect feedback on the new Every Student Succeeds Act

(ESSA). For a complete schedule and additional information, visit [www.isbe.net/essa](http://www.isbe.net/essa).

With assistance from the Regional Offices of Education, ISBE is holding meetings across the state to provide overview information on ESSA and allow participants to share their ideas on how this important law should be implemented.

The tour is the first opportunity to provide input on ESSA. ISBE will also engage stakeholders throughout the process until full implementation takes place in 2017-18.

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## **Center for Educator Effectiveness**

### **Optional Alternative Evaluation Dismissal Process Training Requirements**

Senate Bill 7 established a new section of the School Code, Section 24-16.5, that creates the Optional Alternative Evaluation Dismissal (OAED) process. The OAED process may be utilized on or after a school district’s Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) Implementation Date and is designed to further streamline the hearing procedure for the dismissal of tenured teachers related to performance. This dismissal process may be used only after a “teacher has failed to complete a remediation plan with a rating equal to or better than a proficient rating. . . [and] the unsatisfactory performance rating evaluation that preceded remediation resulted from a PERA evaluation.” [105 ILCS 5/24-16.5].

The statute prescribes that only “PERA-trained board members” may participate in the vote on whether to retain or dismiss a teacher when the district uses the OAED process. Board members seeking to be trained on PERA for the purposes of the OAED process must complete training offered by an entity approved by ISBE. Note: only board members in districts that will be using the OAED process must be PERA trained.

Entities interested in providing PERA training to board members for the OAED process must apply by **May 1**. Application materials and additional information can be found at <http://isbe.net/pera/html/oaed.htm>.

Questions can be directed to [oaedapplication@isbe.net](mailto:oaedapplication@isbe.net).

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## Charter Schools

### Guidance on Developing and Submitting the Quality School Options Grant RFP

A webinar is scheduled for April 15 to provide an overview of the first round of Quality School Options Grants, as well as to provide guidance on completing the online request for proposals (RFP).

The webinar will include a summary of the grants available, an update on the revised timeline for the competition, and the rules and requirements for the grants. The RFP for the grants will be entirely online; therefore, the guidance will include a review of each of the components for a complete RFP, discussion of budgets, goals, objectives, and narratives in order to present a coherent plan.

The webinar should take approximately two hours, with a 10-minute intermission and opportunities for questions throughout. Charter school consultants will be available during the remaining time to answer any site or context-specific questions that individual attendees may have.

If you are unavailable to attend the live webinar, the informational portion will be recorded and posted to ISBE’s [charter school website](#).

- **Guidance on Developing and Submitting the Quality School Options RFP webinar**
- **Date:** April 15
- **Time:** 1 to 3:30 p.m.

- **Register:**  
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3716657538566102273>

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## Student Advisory Council

### Student Advisory Council Application Available Online for 2016-17 School Year

Applications are currently being accepted for ISBE’s Student Advisory Council for the 2016-17 school year.

Students attending a public high school in Illinois who are entering the fall semester as a sophomore, junior, or senior are eligible to apply. The application is now available at [www.isbe.net/sac](http://www.isbe.net/sac).

Twelve positions are open for the 2016-17 school year. Interested candidates must complete the application and essays. The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. May 27.

If you have questions, please contact Vince Camille at (217) 782-5396 or [vcamille@isbe.net](mailto:vcamille@isbe.net).

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## Data Analysis

### Final EIS Deadline for Federal Requirements Approaching

This notice is to remind districts that the final deadline to submit data for Employment Information System (EIS) employment, position records, and non-certified aggregated FTE counts to comply with federal reporting requirements is April 15.

As covered in the October webinar “Introduction to 2016 EIS: New Features and Updates” (available at [www.isbe.net/eis/html/archived-meetings.htm#eis-basics](http://www.isbe.net/eis/html/archived-meetings.htm#eis-basics)), certain data elements have been enhanced or introduced, in accordance with federal law. A brief explanation of these changes includes:

- Clarification on entering district superintendents and principals
- Adjusted FTE minimum
- New single salary model to allow for multiple positions and work locations
- Position codes have been added or removed as needed
- Capability to generate IEIN numbers has been removed

For detailed descriptions of these updates as well as information on upcoming enhancements, please reference the webinar at [www.isbe.net/eis/html/archived-meetings.htm#eis-basics](http://www.isbe.net/eis/html/archived-meetings.htm#eis-basics).

Again, the final deadline for 2016 EIS employment, position records, and non-certified employee aggregated FTE counts is April 15. Please submit the data using IWAS or batch files. For tutorials explaining data entry with both IWAS submissions and batch uploads, please see ISBE's interactive EIS Basics Course at [www.isbe.net/eis/html/training.htm](http://www.isbe.net/eis/html/training.htm).

For further assistance, contact the EIS help desk at (217) 782-3950 or email [datahelp@isbe.net](mailto:datahelp@isbe.net). For technical assistance with IWAS, please contact the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

### **At-A-Glance Report Optimized**

The At-A-Glance report has been updated on the Illinois Report Card. The At-A-Glance report is a great way to get a quick overview of how your school or district is performing in relation to the rest of the state.

The report is now optimized to reflect Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment data, including new graphs (the Academic Success graph and the Success by Student Group graph) that break down student achievement using PARCC's five-point performance level scale.

The report has also been enhanced with new graphs that show how well districts that serve high school students have prepared them for college. These graphs compare school or district percentages to state averages. Additionally, the Achievement Gap graphs have been expanded to reflect PARCC findings in both English language arts (ELA) and math.

For questions regarding the Report Card, please call the Data Analysis division at (217) 782-3950 or email [reportcard@isbe.net](mailto:reportcard@isbe.net).

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## **Funding and Disbursements**

### **2014-15 Driver Education Cost Report**

Per Public Act 97-1025, effective Jan. 1, 2013, the State Board of Education is required to provide an

annual report of the per capita Driver Education cost. The 2014-15 report has been compiled and is at [www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/driver-ed-cost-rpt-14-15.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/driver-ed-cost-rpt-14-15.pdf). The report utilizes expenditure and revenue data submitted by school districts via their audited Annual Financial Report ending June 30 as well as the number of students provided Driver Education in the same year. District Annual Financial Reports for fiscal year 2015 are at [www.isbe.net/sfms/html/financial\\_archive.htm](http://www.isbe.net/sfms/html/financial_archive.htm).

Questions can be directed to Lisa Willhoit in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at (217) 782-5256 or [lwillhoi@isbe.net](mailto:lwillhoi@isbe.net).

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## **Title Grant Administration**

### **Illinois Association of Title I Directors Spring Conference Scheduled for April 12**

The Illinois Association of Title I Directors will be hosting its annual spring conference at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. April 12.

Fiscal and assessment updates will be provided. The remainder of the meeting will focus on the Every Student Succeeds Act. To see a copy of the draft agenda, visit [www.iatd.net/Files/93/IATD%20%20Tentative%20April%20AGENDA.pdf](http://www.iatd.net/Files/93/IATD%20%20Tentative%20April%20AGENDA.pdf).

- **Illinois Association of Title I Directors Spring Conference**
- **Date:** April 12
- **Time:** 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Crowne Plaza, 3000 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield
- **Register:** [www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1804223](http://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1804223)

### **FY 2017 Consolidated Application Technical Assistance Workshops**

ISBE staff from the Title Grants and Federal and State Monitoring divisions is hosting one-day technical assistance workshops across the state this spring.

Each workshop will offer a new directors session, provide updates on what's new in the fiscal year 2017 Consolidated Application, and review the federal



OmniCircular and its impact on auditing and monitoring. The afternoon session will focus on the Every Student Succeeds Act. More information on ESSA can be found at [www.isbe.net/essa](http://www.isbe.net/essa).

Workshops will be held May 3-12. The event is free and lunch will be provided. Space is limited, and participants should sign up for only one session.

For more information about these workshops, including instructions for registering, please visit <http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/essa-workshops.htm>. The deadline to register is April 25.

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### **Nutrition and Wellness Programs**

#### **Team Up for School Nutrition Success Meeting Planned for April 26 in Springfield**

One school food service representative from each district is invited to participate in the Team Up for School Nutrition Success meeting on April 26 in Springfield.

The meeting is presented by ISBE's Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN).

In recent years, school nutrition professionals across Illinois have made incredible strides in improving the nutritious options offered in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, as well as in food and beverages outside of the reimbursable meals sold to students in schools, as they are now subject to the USDA Smart Snacks requirements.

As a result of changes in both federal regulations and local practices, schools are providing more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins in age-appropriate portion sizes. Students are trying a variety of foods they may be seeing for the first time, introducing them to healthy habits that they will hopefully adopt for life.

ISBE and USDA staff members understand that introducing these changes has not been easy and learning best practices as well as implementation tips from school nutrition professionals helps to improve the programs across the country. Therefore, Team Up for School Nutrition Success meetings are being held

across the country. This type of meeting focuses on areas of concern for the participants and brings together groups of school nutrition professionals to discuss and ultimately plan for goals and strategies to improve operations within the programs.

The meeting agenda and additional details will be available in the weeks ahead. If you have questions regarding this meeting, please contact Roxanne Ramage at [rramage@isbe.net](mailto:rramage@isbe.net) or (800) 545-7892.

- **Team Up for School Nutrition Success meeting**
- **Date:** April 26
- **Time:** Registration begins at 7:30 a.m.; meeting ends at 5 p.m.
- **Location:** Illinois Education Association Professional Development Center, 3440 Liberty Drive, Springfield
- **Register:** Complete the registration survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/TeamUp42616](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TeamUp42616) by April 8.

#### **Registration Open for Annual Illinois School Wellness Conference**

Registration is now open for Illinois Action for Healthy Kids' ninth annual Illinois School Wellness Conference.

This year's conference will be held on April 28 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. The event is intended for school administrators, educators, physical education teachers, school food personnel, school nurses, school health/wellness team members, board members and other leaders of health organizations, students, and community advocates.

For more information, contact Illinois State Coordinator Ryan Monroe at [rmonroe@actionforhealthykids.org](mailto:rmonroe@actionforhealthykids.org).

- **Ninth Annual Illinois School Wellness Conference**
- **Date:** April 28
- **Time:** 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Location:** Crowne Plaza, 3000 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield
- **Register:** [www.actionforhealthykids.org/component/events/event/395](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/component/events/event/395)

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## **Special Education Services**

### **New Autism-Focused Resources Available Online at No Cost**

The Illinois Multi-Tiered System of Support Network (IL MTSS-Network) has developed a set of free online training modules for educators, other professional providers, and families who support individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The modules provide information on:

- Understanding ASD
- First signs for ASD
- Assessment practices for ASD
- Social skill strategies and support for students with ASD

With many students receiving services for an ASD in the Illinois public school system, individuals are encouraged to access these free online modules at [www.iltss.net/autism-module](http://www.iltss.net/autism-module).

### **Indicator 14 Update**

Per Indicator 14 of the State Performance Plan (SPP), states are required to collect and report data to the U.S. Department of Education on postsecondary education/training and employment outcomes for youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) one year after leaving high school. Some districts in Illinois have been selected each spring to survey former students, using an eight-question data collection tool that meets minimum federal reporting requirements.

Districts selected to administer the survey in 2016 will be offered the choice to use the existing data collection tool or use an expanded survey that will allow youth to provide additional information on their postsecondary experiences in education, employment, and independent living, as well as how high school prepared them for adult living.

Also for the first time with this year's survey, districts will be able to access aggregate data provided by their former students in the web application used to administer the survey. These changes are intended to make the information that is collected through the Illinois Post-School Survey more useful to local districts in evaluating the

secondary transition services it provides to students with disabilities.

All small unit districts in the state and a sample of the high schools in City of Chicago School District 299 will be administering the Illinois Post-School Survey during the spring 2016 cycle. Districts selected to administer the survey will be notified in writing in the coming weeks. The anticipated window to complete the survey administration will be April 1 through June 30.

If you have questions about the Illinois Post-School Survey, please contact Mark Conyer at (217)782-5589 or [mconyer@isbe.net](mailto:mconyer@isbe.net). You can also visit the Indicator 14 Tools and Resources page at [www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/indicator14.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/indicator14.htm) for further information.

### **PUNS Update**

ISBE's Division of Special Education Services has added updated information on the Prioritization of Urgent Needs for Services list (PUNS), which is a statewide waiting list of individuals with developmental disabilities who have applied for, and are awaiting, funding and/or services. Before one can be awarded funding for services, one must register on the PUNS list by meeting with a Pre-Admission Screening/Independent Service Coordination agent to determine eligibility for services.

The updated information includes a list of Illinois PUNS Agencies by regions, a one-page chart that lists services that are provided by the 18 Illinois agencies, and an informational brochure that may be distributed at IEP meetings.

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## **School Safety Issues**

### **School Safety Conference on April 20**

ISBE, RETA Security, Oak Park and River Forest High School, Oak Park Police and Fire Department, and Proviso Area for Exceptional Children are hosting a gathering of experts in the field of school safety and crisis prevention to heighten safety awareness. The April 20 event in Mount Prospect is free and will teach participants how to enhance the safety and security of their school facility on a day-to-day basis and long term. This vital information will be practical and easy

to apply, and there will be ample time for specific questions.

- **Date:** April 20
- **Time:** 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Location:** Bristol Palace, 828 E. Rand Road, Mount Prospect, IL 60056
- **Registration:**  
[www.gbriskcontrol.com/retasecurityregistration](http://www.gbriskcontrol.com/retasecurityregistration)

Registration is open through April 5. District administrators, school administrators, police and fire officials, transportation directors, and any other party in charge of school safety are encouraged to attend. Registration is limited to four people per department or school. If more than four participants are needed, please call Randy Braverman at (224) 578-0484.

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### ***In Brief***

#### **Educator Recognition**

- John Reid of Carlinville is one of 14 teachers nationwide who has received a **2016 Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Award**. Award recipients each receive \$10,000 and are showcased, along with the former students they inspired, on a [website](#) dedicated to inspirational teachers. Read more about John's career [here](#). Congratulations, John!

#### **District Recognition**

- **J. Sterling Morton High School District 201** has been named a College Board Advanced Placement® District of the Year. The award recognizes the district as the nation's leader among medium-size school districts in simultaneously expanding access to challenging AP courses while improving AP exam performance. Read more [here](#).

#### **Upcoming Events**

- The **Illinois Network of Charter Schools** is hosting a free webinar series called "Origin Stories" that explores why educators and community leaders start charter schools, what are the challenges, what impact are they making in children's lives, and so on. The first webinar in the series will take place at 4 p.m. April 13 with an interview of Namaste Charter School founders Allison Slade and Allison Jack about

why these former teachers created the school. Slade is a founder and executive director of the school and Jack is a founding board member. To register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/WebinarApr13>.

#### **Classroom Resources**

- The **Veterans National Education Program** (V-NEP) provides free resources for teaching modern history and current conflicts from World War II to the present time. The organization also has created the [Global Awareness Map](#) initiative, an online, interactive tool that offers more than 600 video clips that encourage middle and high school students to explore real-world problems and challenges in more than 40 countries. V-NEP recently added 30 new video clips on France and Belgium. For more information, visit <http://v-nep.org>.

#### **Grant Opportunities**

- **GetEdFunding** is a free grant-finding resource dedicated to helping educators and institutions identify the funding they need. The resource hosts a collection of thousands of grants and opportunities available from federal, state, regional, and community sources. It is available to public and private preK–12 schools, school districts, and educators; higher education institutions; and nonprofit organizations that work with them. For more information, visit [www.getedfunding.com/c/index.web?s@I2DZMu gPAAkuo](http://www.getedfunding.com/c/index.web?s@I2DZMu gPAAkuo).

#### **Educator Opportunities**

- The official state affiliate of the national Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents has formed. The **Illinois Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents** (IALAS) is made up of like-minded professionals focused on education and a commitment to all students. Its mission statement is to provide authentic, high-quality learning opportunities for students by building capacity among Latino educational leaders and by advocating for responsive, informed policy development. IALAS is currently running a free membership drive. Information about becoming a member, its newsletter, and upcoming events can be found at [www.ialas.org](http://www.ialas.org).



- The Illinois Association of School Administrators is hosting a series of **Leadership in Literacy workshops** for its members in April. The workshops will focus on innovative solutions, including resolving grade-level reading deficiencies through the Sonday System from Winsor Learning and the influence of reading preparedness on lifelong learning supported by myOn. Click [here](#) for dates and registration information.

### 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@kidsexplorerclub.com](mailto:beatrice@kidsexplorerclub.com).

### District Opportunities

- Applications are now being accepted for the \$100,000 **Innovations in American Government Awards**. Offered by Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, the Innovations Award recognizes programs that demonstrate creative and effective government at its best. All units of government are eligible to apply for recognition. Applications and additional information are available at [www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu](http://www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu). The deadline to apply is April 15.

### Student Opportunities

- **Latino Art Beat** is offering \$1,000-minimum scholarships to the winners of its 2016 visual arts competition for high school juniors and seniors. For the arts competition, students may select one of two themes: "Friendship: Between the Youth of the USA and Cuba" and "What Hispanic Heritage & Culture Means to Me." Artwork must be accompanied by an entry form and original essay describing the piece. Latino Art Beat is also offering its film and animation competition for

students under 21 who attend a high school or college in Illinois. Films must be original, with an original score and 15 minutes or less total running time. The deadline for all entries is May 27. For more information, visit [www.latinoartbeat.com](http://www.latinoartbeat.com) or contact [latinoartbeat@hotmail.com](mailto:latinoartbeat@hotmail.com).

### School Safety

- The **Illinois School Resource Officers Association's Annual Training Conference** will take place June 22-24 in Normal. The event is open to all school-based law enforcement officers, school administrators, and school security/safety professionals. For more information, visit [www.ilsroa.org](http://www.ilsroa.org).

### 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>.