



# Weekly Message

**April 26, 2016**

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

Hello,

Technology plays a crucial role in how we can better engage and inspire all students to reach their full potential. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is working with the Office of the Governor and other state agencies to build a comprehensive action plan for digital learning in our state that gives all students and teachers greater access to digital technologies. To advance this work, Illinois has been selected to participate in the K-12 Broadband and Digital Learning Policy Academy.

The academy is a partnership of the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and EducationSuperHighway (ESH) to help states provide broadband Internet access to all schools to reach every student and enhance digital learning. Participation in the policy academy will allow Illinois to learn from national best practices and share tools, technical assistance, and consulting services with school districts at no cost. We believe this opportunity and partnership with NGA and ESH will ultimately help us improve the equity and quality of Illinois' public education system by ensuring all children have affordable access to the Internet and the most up-to-date digital learning programs. You may read more about the academy and available resources at [www.isbe.net/news/2016/apr22.htm](http://www.isbe.net/news/2016/apr22.htm).

Illinois is also making progress and earning federal recognition for our efforts to minimize testing and reduce test prep that takes away from precious learning time. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) recently released a series of case studies that demonstrate how some states and school districts are working to decrease testing time and guarantee fairer and higher quality assessments for students. Illinois' Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts pilot is among the initiatives highlighted.

The pilot study ended in August 2015 and helped the participating districts – Bensenville School District 2, West Aurora School District 129, and Urbana School District 116 – streamline their local assessment systems to ensure that all assessments provide valuable information and experiences that are not available on the state's large-scale assessment or in the classroom through daily instructional activities. The process allowed these districts to determine which local assessments provide valuable information to educators and which assessments could be eliminated. You can read ED's case studies at [www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/testing-action-plan-profiles.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/testing-action-plan-profiles.pdf). More information about ISBE's assessment inventory pilot is also available in the newsletter below.

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I believe that good teaching, combined with the use of high-quality assessments that align with standards and curricula, is truly the best preparation for testing. Training on the assessment inventory process is available to all districts through Regional Office of Education Foundational Services as part of the Statewide System of Support. Resources are available on ISBE's Balanced Assessment webpage at <http://isbe.net/assessment/htmls/balanced-asmt.htm>. Achieve also provides resources at [www.achieve.org/assessmentinventory](http://www.achieve.org/assessmentinventory).

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>.

- **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 submit Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program grant applications for the 2016-17 school year** – April 29 ([www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/ffv\\_program.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/ffv_program.htm))
- **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 apply to serve on the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education** – May 13
- **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
- **“Pump Up P.E.: Promote Health, Learning, & Lifelong Fitness” training** – May 24 ([http://iphionline.org/pump\\_up\\_pe\\_springfield/](http://iphionline.org/pump_up_pe_springfield/))
- **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))
- **Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois), Part 33 (Programs for the Preparation of Superintendents in Illinois) and Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant)** – Public comment ends June 13
- **Procurement in the 21st Century workshop** - June 15-16 (<http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnscheduler/asp/eventlist.asp>)
- **Deadline to apply for the 2016 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Cycle** - June 17 ([www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/funding-opportunities/ITEP](http://www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/funding-opportunities/ITEP))
- **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

- **Deadline to submit the FY17 Continuation Applications for the Alternative Learning Opportunities Programs (ALOPs)** – June 30 ([www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/alop.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/alop.htm))
- **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

### ISBE's Student Assessment Inventory Pilot Receives Federal Recognition

The U.S. Department of Education has released a series of case studies with examples of work states and districts are doing to ensure fewer, better, and fairer tests. The examples are part of the department's continued efforts to encourage promising practices and provide information to states and districts about thoughtful ways to improve and reduce testing.

Illinois was one of the states singled out for its Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts pilot. Three districts – Urbana School District 116, West Aurora School District 129, and Bensenville School District 2 – collected data from administrators, teachers, and parents about local assessment use and quality. As a result of this work, the districts made changes to their assessment systems. For example:

- In Bensenville, this review resulted in the recommendation to eliminate off-the-shelf assessments in reading and math to students in grades 2 through 8, enabling teachers to reclaim approximately 12 hours of instructional time per year to help students learn.
- The Urbana district eliminated benchmark tests in reading and math (provided by an outside vendor) that were not aligned to the district's current standards and that were not being effectively used by teachers to improve classroom instruction. Eliminating these assessments allowed the district to reclaim 270 minutes of instructional time per year.

The inventory process also provided information about professional development needs and engaged educators in thinking critically about assessments and the use of assessment information. To read all of the case studies, go to

<http://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/testing-action-plan-profiles.pdf>.

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## Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education

### Individuals Sought to Serve on Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education

The State Superintendent of Education is seeking individuals to serve on the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education ([ILCS 5/14C-13](http://www.ilcs.org/ILCS/5/14C-13)). New members will serve a three-year term of office, beginning on Sept. 1. New members will be expected to attend four meetings per year, as well as actively participate in additional meetings and special projects.

If you are interested in serving on the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education, please email a cover letter and resume to Tina Paduck of ISBE's Division of English Language Learning at [tpaduck@isbe.net](mailto:tpaduck@isbe.net) before the close of business on May 13.

Successful candidates selected to serve on the IACBE will be notified by the State Superintendent in August. Please contact Ms. Paduck with any questions.

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## Nutrition and Wellness Programs

### Training Opportunity for Central and Southern Illinois Physical Educators

The Illinois Public Health Institute will hold one more free "Pump Up P.E.: Promote Health, Learning, & Lifelong Fitness" training this school year for elementary/middle school-level physical educators in central and southern Illinois. Professional development hours are available.

The training will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 24 at Wanless Elementary School, 2120 E. Reservoir St., in Springfield.

Physical educators will learn practical, immediately applicable strategies and tools and resources to:

- Increase moderate to vigorous physical activity using modified games and classroom management procedures
- Use backwards design to align curriculum with state learning standards
- Administer the fitness tests that will be required in Illinois starting in the 2016-17 academic year
- Understand what to do with fitness data – keys to meaningful implementation
- Teach the brain/body connection – getting students to “own” their fitness
- Champion P.E. and wellness efforts in your schools, districts, and communities

Register at

[http://iphionline.org/pump\\_up\\_pe\\_springfield/](http://iphionline.org/pump_up_pe_springfield/). For questions, contact Sarah Chusid at [sarah.chusid@iphionline.org](mailto:sarah.chusid@iphionline.org) or call (312) 850-4744.

### **Procurement in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workshop**

The Illinois School Nutrition Association (ILSNA), in partnership with ISBE, will offer the Institute of Child Nutrition’s two-day Procurement in the 21st Century workshop on June 15 and 16 in Peoria. This 16-hour training provides general concepts about the procurement of goods, products, and/or services for School Nutrition Programs.

Participants will identify key factors for implementing a fair, open, and cost-effective procurement system that supports compliance with federal, state, and local policies. Major topic categories include procurement principles; competitive purchasing; solicitation for goods, products, and services; contracts; and cooperative purchasing groups.

The workshop is free and will be held in conjunction with the ILSNA Annual Conference. The target audience is foodservice directors, assistant directors, supervisors, and managers and space is limited to the first 50 registrants.

Registration for the [2016 ILSNA Annual Conference](#) is available and includes the Procurement in the 21st Century workshop as an option. Those unable to attend the conference may still attend the procurement workshop. Please complete registration online at <http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnscalendar/asp/eventlist.asp>. For any questions of ISBE regarding this workshop,

contact Roxanne Ramage at (800) 545-7892 or [rramage@isbe.net](mailto:rramage@isbe.net). For questions regarding the ILSNA Annual Conference or membership, contact ILSNA directly at (217) 529-6578.

### **Project Produce Grants for Schools**

The Chef Ann Foundation has teamed up with superfoods company Skoop to launch Project Produce: Fruit and Veggie Grants for Schools. These grants help expand students’ palates and encourage increased consumption of and exposure to fresh produce through engagement in lunchroom education activities that encourage students to taste new vegetables and fruits offered either in a dish, cooked, or raw. The goal of Project Produce is to provide funds to support the food cost of these activities.

Grants of \$2,500 are available. Districts and independent schools participating in the National School Lunch Program are eligible to apply.

Please contact the Chef Ann Foundation for more information and to apply for this funding at [www.thelunchbox.org/programs/grants/](http://www.thelunchbox.org/programs/grants/).

### **2016-17 Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Applications Due April 29**

The [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\) grant application](#) for the 2016-17 school year is now available. All elementary schools (grades 8 and below) that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and have 50 percent or more of their students eligible for free and reduced-price meals are eligible to apply. The deadline to apply is April 29.

The purpose of FFVP is to increase fresh fruit and vegetable consumption in elementary schools participating in the NSLP. FFVP grant funds are used to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to children at no cost during the school day outside of the reimbursable meal(s) periods. This program is different from the Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. The DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program allows schools to use USDA Foods entitlement dollars to buy fresh produce.

If you have questions regarding this FFVP grant, contact Roxanne Ramage at [rramage@isbe.net](mailto:rramage@isbe.net) or Shawn Backs [sbacks@isbe.net](mailto:sbacks@isbe.net).

## Enhance Physical Education with the Presidential Youth Fitness Program

Schools and districts can now apply to receive resources to enhance implementation of the nation's youth fitness education and assessment program.



Eligible schools and districts (10 or more schools) can receive up to \$1,000 in resources, including software and student recognition

items. Let's Move! Active Schools that have completed their school assessment are eligible to receive up to \$2,000 in resources.

Funding applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. This funding opportunity is being provided by the National Foundation on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition. To learn more and to apply, visit [www.pyfp.org](http://www.pyfp.org).

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## Funding and Disbursements

### 2015-16 Final Public School Calendars

The Final Public School Calendar for the 2015-16 school year will be available **May 1** via the Public School Calendar system in IWAS. Please complete and submit the Final Calendar to the appropriate Regional Office of Education (ROE)/Intermediate Service Center (ISC) by the last day of school.

**A Final Public School Calendar must be submitted and approved prior to filing the 2015-16 claims for General State Aid, Pupil Transportation, and 18-3 Regular Education Orphanage.** The document type Final Calendar must be submitted even if the district has previous approval on a document type Amended Calendar. If a document type Amended Calendar is in Draft status, i.e., has not been submitted for RCDT Administrator or ROE/ISC for approval, leave it in draft status and proceed entering the Final calendar.

**HELPFUL HINT:** The unused proposed emergency days (calendar code XED) that are coded at the end of the school calendar may be removed by correcting the **Regular School End Date** to the last day of actual school activity. Once the Regular School End Date has been corrected, the calendar codes after that date will be omitted.

Questions that are not addressed in the [Public School Calendar Guidelines](#) or [Final/Proposed Calendar Checkpoints](#) may be directed to the ROE/ISC office or ISBE's Division of Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256. If you encounter technical issues with the Public School Calendar in IWAS, please contact the ISBE Call Center at (217) 558-3600, available Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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## Update on Criminal Background Checks

### Districts Urged to Register for CHIRP Web Portal for Criminal History Records

In an effort to reduce costs and improve efficiency, the Illinois State Police (ISP) Bureau of Identification will soon be unable to print and mail criminal history responses to districts and other users.

The ISP currently offers the Criminal History Information Response Process (CHIRP) web portal to registered users, which provides electronic responses. The website gives customers unlimited access to electronic criminal history record responses during the life span of the response. Please register and begin utilizing CHIRP as soon as possible in order to avoid any future disruption in the delivery of responses.

CHIRP is available at <https://chirp.isp.state.il.us/CHIRP/login.action>.

The troubleshooting guide may be requested from the Bureau of Identification Customer Support Unit. All IT-related support questions should be directed to your agency's help desk prior to contacting the ISP Customer Support.

If you have questions about the CHIRP website, contact the Customer Support unit at [BOI\\_Customer\\_Support@isp.state.il.us](mailto:BOI_Customer_Support@isp.state.il.us).

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## Rules and Waivers

### Invitation to Comment on Rules

Three 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](http://www.isbe.net/rules); choose "Proposed Rules and Amendments." Please submit

any comments or suggestions to [rules@isbe.net](mailto:rules@isbe.net). The public comment period ends June 13. The rulemakings are:

- **Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois)**
- **Part 33 (Programs for the Preparation of Superintendents in Illinois)**
- **Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant)**

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## In Brief

### Educator Recognition

- Three Illinois superintendents were selected as winners of the National School Public Relations Association's **2015-16 Superintendents to Watch program**. The [program](#) recognizes superintendents with fewer than five years of experience as a superintendent who use communication technology in innovative and effective ways. Congratulations to Illinois' honorees:
  - P.J. Caposey of Meridian CUSD 223
  - Dr. Ehren Jarrett, Rockford Public School District 205
  - Dr. Michael Lubelfeld, Deerfield Public Schools District 109
- 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!

### Upcoming Events

- Join local organizations, parents, and talented educators to learn how to create schools tailored to your students and community at the **Midwest Charter Design Institute** on May 14 at Robertson Charter School, a community-based charter in Decatur. Space is limited, so register early at [www.eventbrite.com/e/midwest-charter-design-institute-tickets-24327927486](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/midwest-charter-design-institute-tickets-24327927486). Learn more at [www.incschoools.org](http://www.incschoools.org).
- The Regional Offices of Education in Region 5 will host the **Midwest New Directions Conference** on June 14-15 in Collinsville. The

conference aims to bring the biggest and best names in education to present on the most up-to-date and relevant topics. For more information and to register, visit [www.directionsconference.com/](http://www.directionsconference.com/).

### Professional Development

- A variety of **Modeling Workshops** are planned for this summer. Most are three-week workshops that thoroughly treat the pedagogy using approximately one semester of the content for a high school physics, chemistry, physical science, biology or middle school course. A list of workshops and more details are available at <http://modelinginstruction.org/summer2016-workshops/>.

### Classroom Resources

- Two new video podcasts from the **Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Education** are available to show kindergarten and first-grade teachers how implementing a schoolyard wildlife habitat project can help meet Next Generation Science Standards. Go to <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/grants.aspx> and look in the "Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant and the NGSS" section of the page. Additional video podcasts are planned to show the correlations at other grade levels as well.

### 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).

### Student Opportunities

- The Tourette Syndrome Camp Organization will host the 23rd annual **Tourette Syndrome Camp USA** from June 26 to July 2 at YMCA Camp

Duncan in Ingleside. The camp serves boys and girls ages 7-16. Details and registration information is available at [www.tourettecamp.com](http://www.tourettecamp.com).

### **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>.