



Weekly Message

May 3, 2016

Message From State Superintendent Tony Smith, Ph.D.

Hello,

Last month, I was pleased to announce Illinois' partnership with the Lead Higher Initiative to close equity gaps in high school Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. We were the first state selected for this partnership, which will provide tools and resources to strengthen our efforts to find underrepresented students who are eligible for AP and IB courses and give them greater support.

Seven Illinois school districts have already committed to close their AP and IB gaps through their collaboration with Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS), a Lead Higher partner, by fall 2016. These districts are Barrington 220 School District, Fenton High School District 100, Glenbard High School District #87, Lake Park Community High School District, Leyden High School District 212, Sterling Public Schools, and Woodstock Community Unit School District 200. Fifteen more have been selected for the 2016-17 Lead Higher district cohort.

EOS recently informed us that Woodstock High School is one of the first in the state -- and among less than 1 percent of high schools in the country -- that fully reflects its diverse student body in rigorous AP courses. Glenbard South High School and Sterling High School are also closing in on reaching full equity in their AP course requests for the 2016-17 school year. I am incredibly proud of these schools' leadership and the lessons they can provide in not only achieving this milestone but sustaining it as well. You can read more about the Lead Higher Initiative [here](#).

Such ground-breaking work would not be possible without the dedication and talents of caring educators who work to uncover and nurture their students' potential. I hope we all take a moment today, which is National Teacher Appreciation Day, and every day to thank the incredible teachers who put in countless hours and seemingly endless energy to engage and inspire our students to believe in themselves and fulfill their dreams. Their efforts make a lifelong impact, and I am so grateful for their service and commitment to making our schools safe, healthy, and innovative places of learning.

Finally, congratulations to Tremont High School's Roboteers Team 2481 for winning first place in the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition over the weekend in St. Louis. More than 20,000 students from around the globe participated in the FIRST

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Championship events, and Tremont students were part of an alliance of four teams to be named world champions. You can read more [here](#).

Have a great week,
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>.

- **National Teacher Appreciation Week** – May 1-7
- **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
- **Deadline to complete the Educator Data Survey** – May 17 (www.surveymonkey.com/r/J53XB23)
- **“Pump Up P.E.: Promote Health, Learning, & Lifelong Fitness” training** – May 24 (http://iphionline.org/pump_up_pe_springfield/)
- **Webinar on guidelines for entering 2016 salary data into Employment Information Systems** – May 25 (<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4206849509939692545>)
- **Deadline to apply for ISBE's 2016-17 Student Advisory Council** – May 27 (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)
- **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/cnscaendar/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)
- **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)
- **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 for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- **ISBE offices closed for Labor Day** – Sept. 5

Innovation and Improvement

Teacher and Administrator Feedback Sought for New Educator Data Dashboard

ISBE is developing an Educator Data Dashboard for Regional Offices of Education, districts, schools, and classrooms that will provide access to local and state data in an easy to understand format to help educators.

All teachers and administrators are asked to provide feedback on what data should be included in a dashboard at all levels. Input can be submitted through the Educator Data Survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/J53XB23. The survey will be open until May 17.

A webinar has been recorded and posted at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/4340458864327178243> to explain the survey in more detail.

There is an optional portion of the survey for respondents to provide additional information as well as participate in focus groups and a pilot of the dashboard. If you have questions, please contact the outreach team at outreach@isbe.net.

U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

Illinois Semifinalists Announced for 2016 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

Twenty-two Illinois students have been named as semifinalists in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

The program was established in 1964 to recognize and honor some of the country's most distinguished graduating seniors. In 1979, the program was expanded to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional scholarship and talent in the visual, creative, and performing arts. In 2015, the program was expanded once more to recognize students who show ability and accomplishment in career and technical fields. Up to 161 students annually are selected to become U.S. Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students.

A total of 689 semifinalists have been selected from across the country. These semifinalists form the pool from which the 2016 U.S. Presidential Scholars will be chosen.

For a complete list of semifinalists, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/psp/2016/semifinalists.pdf>.

Data Analysis

May 25 Webinar on Guidelines for Entering 2016 Salary Data into EIS

ISBE is hosting a webinar from 1 to 3 p.m. May 25 that will define and review the guidelines for entering 2016 salary data into Employment Information Systems (EIS). This webinar will assist users with entering salary data as well as provide an update on relevant changes in EIS.

Please sign up to reserve your spot at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4206849509939692545>.

A question-and-answer session will be conducted at the end of the webinar. For tutorials explaining data entry with both EIS submissions and batch uploads, please see our EIS Basics Course at www.isbe.net/eis/html/training.htm.

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

Funding and Disbursements

2015-16 Pupil Transportation Claim Reimbursement System Now Available

Please be advised that the Pupil Transportation Claim Reimbursement System (PTCRS) is now available for local education agencies to enter claim data for the 2015-16 school year. Please refer to the 2015-16 Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim Instructions at www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/pupil_reimburse_instruct.pdf for assistance in completing the claim.

Please note the following change to the claim instructions for 2015-16:

- Page 14 – Added further information in regards to revenues that offset expenditures in Line 19C. When looking at the AFR and a grant is reported in another fund other than fund 40, the expenditures reported in that fund needs to offset

said amount in other revenue (Line 19C) when filing your transportation claim.

Per statute, the Annual Pupil Transportation Reimbursement claim is due to ISBE on or before Aug. 15. If you have questions regarding PTCRS, please contact Mark Morten at mmorten@isbe.net or call (217) 782-5256.

Employer's TRS Contribution on Federally Funded Salary for Summer Activities

The Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) requires earnings for summer work to be reported on an accrual basis. Earnings for work performed in June 2016 must be reported on the 2015-16 TRS Annual Report, even if the member is not paid for the June work until July or August. The 2015-16 TRS and THIS contribution rates apply to accrued earnings for work performed in June, regardless of when the June earnings are paid to the teacher.

Earnings for work performed in July and August 2016 must be reported on the 2016-17 TRS Annual Report. The 2016-17 TRS and THIS contribution rates apply to accrued earnings for work performed in July and August, regardless of when the July and August earnings are paid to the teacher.

Based on several questions from the field regarding what federal TRS rate to use for SUMMER salaries, the Teachers' Retirement System (trs.illinois.gov/) has instructed local educational agencies to use the new employer TRS contribution on federally funded salaries that are providing services AFTER the start of the new fiscal year (July 1, 2016). Below are three scenarios and what federal TRS rate to use in each scenario:

1. FY 2016: federally funded staff/teachers that have completed their assignments by June 30, 2016, but being paid after July 1: The CURRENT RATE (FY 2016) applies (36.06 percent).
2. FY 2016: federally funded staff/teachers providing services and being paid after July 1: The NEW RATE (FY 2017) applies (38.54 percent). (Please note that an FY 2016 amendment may be needed in this scenario.)
3. FY 2017: federally funded grant staff: The NEW RATE applies (38.54 percent).

More information is available on the TRS website at <http://trs.illinois.gov/employers/payments/contributions.htm>.

Further questions can be directed to the TRS Employer Services Division at employers@trs.illinois.gov or (888) 877-0890.

Deadline for Final FY 2016 State & Federal Grant Amendments & End Date Extensions

Many state and federal grant projects are approaching a June 30 end date for obligating fiscal year 2016 grant funds. All state and federal project end date extension requests and final budget amendments must be received at ISBE no later than 30 calendar days prior to the end date of the project.

As a reminder, please be advised of the following regarding the need for a project end date extension:

- An end date extension past June 30 is NOT needed for regular term staff salaries paid on a 12-month salary schedule.
- An end date extension past June 30 is NOT needed to pay obligations (e.g., purchase order for supplies) incurred June 30 or prior.
- An end date extension past June 30 IS NEEDED for new activities and obligations incurred July 1 or later (e.g., Summer School, Professional Development).

Final amendments for state and federal grants with a project end date of June 30, 2016, must be received by ISBE no later than May 31, 2016. For those grants with a project end date of Aug. 31, 2016, the last day amendments will be accepted is Aug. 1, 2016. However, budget increases for state-funded grant projects must be received by June 30, even if the project end date has been extended. For grant applications in the electronic Grants Management System (eGMS), the deadline is also referenced on the Program Overview page under "Amendment Due Date."

Note to Special Education and Education for Employment Cooperative Administrators: Member district amendments need to be submitted to the Cooperative/EFE Administrator timely to accommodate a final review for accuracy and

approvability before acceptance and approval to ISBE on or before the May 31/Aug. 1 deadline.

Questions regarding this information can be directed to Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

2015-16 Final Public School Calendars

The Final Public School Calendar for the 2015-16 school year is now available 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.

School Health Issues

Health Insurance Coverage Parity Training

Health insurance consumers and behavioral health and substance use disorder care providers are invited to participate in an in-person training session on health insurance coverage parity.

The training session, "Health Insurance Coverage Parity: What Consumers and Providers Need to Know about Navigating Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Care through Health Insurance Plans," includes live presentations from the state agencies involved in parity coverage issues followed by a question-and-answer session with attendees.

The event is free. A list of training dates and locations is available at

www.isbe.net/learningsupports/pdfs/insurance-parity-events-flyer516.pdf.

To preregister or ask questions, contact Carol.West@illinois.gov or (312) 848-7398 (for Moline, Rockford, Normal, and Collinsville) or Natalie.Pacheco@illinois.gov or (312) 805-9523 (for Chicago).

Additionally, the Illinois Department of Insurance (DOI) has a "[Consumer Toolkit for Navigating Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Care Through Your Health Insurance Plan](#)." This toolkit is a free, step-by-step, plain-language template that families and providers can use to submit requests for pre-authorization of medically necessary behavioral health services to insurance companies. Additionally, DOI directed resources within the Office of Consumer Health Insurance (OCHI) in response to families looking for assistance in navigating access to mental health and substance use disorder needs within their health insurance plans. Illinois residents can call OCHI toll-free at (877) 527-9431 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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>.

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](#)). 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 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.

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/. For questions, contact Sarah Chusid at sarah.chusid@iphionline.org or call (312) 850-4744.

Procurement in the 21st 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/cnscaendar/asp/eventlist.asp>.

For any questions of ISBE regarding this workshop, contact Roxanne Ramage at (800) 545-7892 or 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/.

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.

In Brief

Student Recognition

- **Tremont High School's Roboteers Team 2481** won first in the [FIRST \(For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology\) Robotics Competition](#) in St. Louis. More than 20,000 students from around the globe participated in the FIRST Championship events, and Tremont students were part of an alliance of four teams to be named world champions. Congratulations, Roboteers!

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

Upcoming Events

- 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. Learn more at www.incschools.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/.

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.

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.

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>.