



# Weekly Message

**Dec. 6, 2016**

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

Hello,

STEM education is more important than ever, especially as we work to better prepare our students for college and career in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The drafting of the ESSA State Plan provides us with an opportunity to consider how we can use technology to enrich learning experiences, support student success, and ensure that all Illinois kids have equitable access to a high-quality, well-rounded education. ISBE will conclude the third ESSA listening tour this week with meetings in Crystal Lake, Galesburg, and Decatur. Thank you for sharing your insight and your comments on [ESSA State Plan Draft #2](#) at these meetings and online. As a reminder, comments on Draft #2 must be submitted to [essa@isbe.net](mailto:essa@isbe.net) by Dec. 27. Please continue to send your feedback to us!

### Table of Contents

Illinois Green Ribbon Schools .....	3
Every Student Succeeds Act.....	3
Youth In Care.....	3
Nutrition and Wellness Programs.....	3
Charter Schools.....	4
Illinois Classroom Connectivity Initiative ...	4
Illinois Report Card .....	5
In Brief.....	5

We all know how important technology is in the classroom and beyond. In the spirit of Computer Science Education Week, I would like to recognize some of the great STEM work happening across the state. On Monday, the [White House](#) highlighted organizations, districts, and schools across the country that have committed to increasing access to computer science. Several programs were recognized for pledging to support Illinois students. Among the programs are the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Creative Technologies Research Lab, which will work to identify instructional strategies and supports for students with disabilities and others at risk for academic failure, and Deaf Kids Code, which will facilitate computer science workshops for deaf/hard-of-hearing youth. Schools and districts across the state have also demonstrated their dedication to expanding computer science opportunities by signing the [CSforAll K-12 Pledge](#). Taylor School in Chicago was recognized for taking immediate steps to increase access to computer science offerings. More broadly, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) has launched a series of initiatives to engage students and their families, including the [Code60+](#) month-long campaign promoting coding offerings and a program that will support all CPS elementary schools in hosting [Family Code Nights](#). We would like to know about all the great #CSEdWeek, #CSforAll, and #HourOfCode events out there, so tag #ISBE in your posts on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) or email your stories and pictures to [social\\_media@isbe.net](mailto:social_media@isbe.net).

The Next Generation Science Standards have encouraged Kirk Lange, a seventh-grade science teacher at Channahon Junior High School, to revamp his science instruction. Lang has incorporated technology into his classroom, embedded more opportunities for collaboration and discussion into his lessons, and

developed interactive and engaging activities. Lang's innovative [classroom](#) was featured in the U.S. Department of Education's Weekly Digest Bulletin.

Western Springs School District 101's "out-of-the-box thinking" was featured in a [news article](#) this week as well. The district is launching a multiyear professional development initiative, Digital Leader Corps, in partnership with Discovery Education. It is being funded by the Western Springs Foundation for Educational Excellence. The program will bring together educators from different grade levels to collaborate and share best practices for enhancing the use of technology across the district.

Finally, [congratulations](#) to Bartlett High School Project Lead The Way teacher Gary Cotie for being named the 2016 High School Teacher of the Year by the Technology Education Association of Illinois. Project Lead The Way uses computer science, engineering, and biomedical science pathways to equip students with technical skills, train them to be critical thinkers, and empower them to lead. In bringing Project Lead The Way to Bartlett, Cotie initiated one of the largest districtwide implementations of the organization's science, technology, engineering, and math curriculum in the state.

Keep up the amazing work and 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 submit Illinois Arts Education Week posters** – Dec. 6 ([www.isbe.net/arts-week/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/arts-week/default.htm))
- **ESSA Listening Tour Stop # 6 and # 7 (Crystal Lake and Galesburg)** – Dec. 7 ([www.isbe.net/essa/](http://www.isbe.net/essa/))
- **ESSA Listening Tour Stop # 8 (Decatur)** – Dec. 8 ([www.isbe.net/essa/](http://www.isbe.net/essa/))
- **State Board of Education Meeting** – Dec. 15 (<http://www.isbe.net/board/pdf/2016-board-meetings.pdf>)
- **Annual Statement of Affairs (ISBE Form 50-37) due to ISBE** – Dec. 15
- **Illinois Green Ribbon Schools Program Application Due** – Dec. 16 ([www.usgbc-illinois.org/index.php?s=green+ribbon](http://www.usgbc-illinois.org/index.php?s=green+ribbon))
- **ISBE offices closed for Christmas Day** – Dec. 26
- **Certificate of Tax Levy (ISBE Form 50-02) to the county clerk** – Dec. 26
- **ESSA State Plan Draft #2 Comments Due** – Dec. 27 ([www.isbe.net/ESSA](http://www.isbe.net/ESSA))
- **ISBE offices closed for New Year's Day** – Jan. 2
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in spring 2017** – Jan. 13 (See [www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm) for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition, and Supervision)** – Public comment period ends Jan. 16
- **State Board of Education Meeting** – Jan. 18-19 ([www.isbe.net/board/pdf/2017-board-meetings.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/board/pdf/2017-board-meetings.pdf))
- **Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Application Deadline** – Jan. 27 ([www.isbe.net/ed-technology/html/competency-based-pilot.htm](http://www.isbe.net/ed-technology/html/competency-based-pilot.htm))
- **FY 17 IDEA excess cost worksheets due to IDEA grant coordinators** – Jan. 31
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in spring 2017** – Jan. 13 (See [www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm) for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- **2017 Illinois Arts Education Week** – March 13-19
- **Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data Vision** – June 30

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## **Illinois Green Ribbon Schools**

### **Deadline for Illinois Green Ribbon Schools Program Application Dec. 16**

Applications for the 2017 Illinois Green Ribbon Schools Program are due at noon on Dec. 16. The Illinois Green Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools that are leading the way to promote sustainability and environmental education. Working in partnership ISBE, U.S. Green Building Council-Illinois is accepting applications from schools that integrate best practices in energy, water and waste management, healthy school environments, and environmental education. Winning applications for the Illinois Green Ribbon program demonstrate progress and achievements in each area of the three pillars:

1. Reduce environmental impact and costs;
2. Improve the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff; and
3. Provide environmental education, which teaches many disciplines, and is especially good at effectively incorporating STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways.

Applications are scored by a panel of individuals with strong backgrounds in the three pillars. The top scoring schools are submitted to the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools Program for consideration at the national level.

Click [here](#) to complete the 2017 Green Ribbon Schools application. For more information, visit [www.usgbc-illinois.org/index.php?s=green+ribbon](http://www.usgbc-illinois.org/index.php?s=green+ribbon).

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## **Every Student Succeeds Act**

### **Draft of ESSA State Plan #2 Released**

The draft of the Illinois' ESSA State Plan #2 was presented to the Board at its meeting on Nov. 18. The draft is available at [www.isbe.net/essa/](http://www.isbe.net/essa/).

ESSA State Plan #2 provides information on accountability, assessments, and statewide system of support, among other topics, for all schools in Illinois. Throughout the draft, there are a series of questions on topics where ISBE requests additional insight from the field. ISBE encourages individuals to

read the plan and share their ideas, critiques, and potential solutions.

When submitting comments, please include the name of individual and/or organization, section number, and page number. **All comments should be submitted to [essa@isbe.net](mailto:essa@isbe.net) no later Dec. 27.**

### **Round Three of Statewide Listening Tour**

ISBE, with assistance from Regional Offices of Education, is hosting a third round of listening tour meetings to collect feedback on ESSA. A series of meetings will be held across the state to provide overview information on ESSA and allow participants to engage in a group discussion regarding the ESSA State Plan. The second draft of the plan was posted recently at [www.isbe.net/essa](http://www.isbe.net/essa). Comments may be sent to [essa@isbe.net](mailto:essa@isbe.net).

For additional information and to download a detailed schedule, please visit [www.isbe.net/essa/](http://www.isbe.net/essa/).

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## **Youth In Care**

### **Reminder From DCFS Regarding Suspensions and Expulsions**

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Guardianship Administrator Debra Dyer-Webster would like to remind all Illinois school districts of their obligation to notify her when children committed to her guardianship face possible suspension or expulsion. If youth in care have a serious discipline issue that involves suspension or expulsion, she can be notified by faxing a written report to the Office of the Guardian, School Discipline Division at (312) 793-3546. If the discipline involves police or law enforcement, the Office of the Guardian should be called immediately at (312) 814-8600.

For questions, please contact the Office of the Guardian at (312) 814-8600.

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## **Nutrition and Wellness Programs**

### **USDA Plans Webinar on Web-Based Application for School Meals Dec. 15**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service will host the "Introduction to the

New Web-Based Prototype Application for School Meals” webinar at 1-3 p.m. on Dec. 15.

To participate, register at <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/uj2cg9zr8lx9&eom>.

To explore the Web-Based Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals, please visit [www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/web-based-prototype-application](http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/web-based-prototype-application).

### **Organization Aims to Recognize Efforts to Promote Fruits and Veggies**

Each year, the Produce for Better Health Foundation recognizes educators and health professionals for work in their communities and schools that help increase fruit and vegetable consumption.

To be recognized for your efforts, view the [Public Health or School Foodservice Role Model/Champion Criteria](#).

Send applications to [imarolemodel@pbhfoundation.org](mailto:imarolemodel@pbhfoundation.org). The deadline is Jan. 5.

### **EPA Offers Dec. 13 Webinar on Preventing Cockroaches**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency plans a webinar on “Cockroaches in Your School” 1-2 p.m. on Dec. 13. [Learn more and sign up by clicking here.](#)

Cockroach saliva, feces, and body parts can trigger asthma and allergies. This is a serious health concern in schools, especially for students and staff with asthma.

Presenters will address monitoring, sanitation, maintenance, and exclusion – actions that, when performed regularly, will result in a healthier school environment and a less likely place for cockroaches to call home.

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## **Charter Schools**

### **Charter Schools Program Quality School Options Grant**

In September 2015, the Illinois State Board of Education was awarded a federal Charter Schools Program Quality

School Options Grant in the amount of \$42 million for a five-year term. These funds are intended to provide financial assistance to new charter schools for allowable activities during the program design phase and start-up costs in the first two years of operation. This competitive grant will be awarded through multi-cohort competitions throughout the term of the grant. The second cohort Request for Proposal will be released in January 2017. High-quality applications may be awarded up to \$950,000 for up to three years for the design and implementation of a new charter school.

Charter schools can provide a necessary choice for schoolchildren and their parents across the entire state. Often it is a lack of funding that impedes the best-designed plans, and these funds could provide a crucial source of funding for the start-up of a new school.

District administrators, teachers, parents, community members, and local leaders are encouraged to have a conversation as to whether a charter school would provide a valued option for schoolchildren in their community.

Districts interested in providing school choice through a new charter school should refer to the Charter Schools Program grant information at [www.isbe.net/charter](http://www.isbe.net/charter). For additional information, you may contact Charter Schools at (312) 814-2220.

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## **Illinois Classroom Connectivity Initiative**

### **Register for December Webinars: Bandwidth for Your Budget**

EducationSuperHighway, a key partner of the Illinois Classroom Connectivity Initiative, recently released the full version of [Compare & Connect K-12](#). We encourage you to check out the tool's powerful new features and explore opportunities to get more bandwidth for your broadband budget.

Compare & Connect K-12 uses public E-rate application data to allow you to:

- Find out what other districts are buying to support digital learning.
- See what service providers are offering to nearby districts.

- Compare broadband options in Illinois or across the country.
- View a summary of 2016 E-rate filing.

EducationSuperHighway is offering district leaders in Illinois the opportunity to come together virtually to view your own and other districts' broadband data on Compare & Connect K-12 and discuss strategies to get more bandwidth for your budget this E-rate cycle. Please encourage your district's technology staff person to RSVP for one of the upcoming webinars in December. Space is limited.

#### **Registration:**

- Wednesday, Dec. 7, at 12 p.m. - [register](#)
- Wednesday, Dec. 14, at 1:30 p.m. - [register](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Christine Bediones from EducationSuperHighway at [christine@educationsuperhighway.org](mailto:christine@educationsuperhighway.org).

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### **Illinois Report Card**

#### **MyIRC Train the Trainer Events**

Attend the next in the ongoing series of Train the Trainer events, "What's New at MyIRC – Spotlight: PARCC," and learn how to facilitate use of data available on the Illinois Report Card and MyIRC, including the PARCC individual student data for the past two years.

MyIRC is free to all public schools in Illinois. Participants will receive training, facilitators guide, presentation materials, and technical support to be able to redeliver training to local communities, schools, or districts.

The professional development events are from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. and are free.

- Dec. 8 at ROE #47, 1001 West 23<sup>rd</sup> St., Sterling. To register, go to <https://sites.google.com/a/roe47.org/roe-47-professional-development/>.
- Dec. 13 at ROE #47, 1001 West 23<sup>rd</sup> St., Sterling. To register, go to <http://www.roe8.com/professional-development.html>.

- Dec. 16 at ROE #26, 130 S. Lafayette, Suite 200, Macomb. To register, go to <http://www.roepd.net/?action=workshop&recid=337&from=calendar>.

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### **In Brief**

#### **Student Opportunities**

- Artwork submissions are being accepted for the **2017 Law Day Art Contest** from now through Mar. 31. The contest is being hosted by the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division for students in grades 9-12. Students may compete as individuals or in groups. The theme for Law Day 2017 is "The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment: Transforming American Democracy." For more information, go to [www.ambar.org/lawday](http://www.ambar.org/lawday).

#### **Professional Development**

- The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is offering **Environmental and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education (ENTICE)** professional development workshops for educators. ENTICE workshops provide background information, networking opportunities, hands-on lessons, and PD hours. For more information visit [www.enticeworkshops.com](http://www.enticeworkshops.com).

#### **School Recognition**

- Congrats to the **Prospect High School's Marching Knights** for being selected to be part of the opening number in the recent Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade!
- Congrats to **Huntley Community School District 158's Huntley High School**. The school's news magazine and [website](#), The Voice, were named Crown Award finalists in the high school hybrid category by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association!

#### **Employment Opportunities**

- Watch for vacancy lists and find instructions for applying on ISBE's Human Resources webpage at [www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm).