



Jan. 6, 2015

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Happy New Year and welcome back! I hope you were able to enjoy some time with family and friends during this holiday season and are ready to get back to school.

There have been a number of questions about the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments, which we are implementing this academic year.

We have already provided significant flexibility for districts in taking the test, allowing for high schools to choose which levels students should be tested at this year. We are also being as flexible as possible when it comes to how the assessments are to be administered, whether online or pencil and paper, or even a blended implementation with some schools or classes taking the test online while the remainder of the district or schools take pencil and paper.

We did have some inquiries about “taking a year off” from testing or allowing districts to choose other assessments than the PARCC to administer. I asked the U.S. Department of Education to weigh in on these requests to ensure that we were interpreting federal law correctly. We received the department’s response just prior to the holidays and I want to share it with you.

The department agreed with our interpretation that the annual assessments are required of all districts and that there is no waiver available. Additionally, the department confirmed that the same assessment must be used for all students, with some limited exceptions such as an alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

The department spelled out expectations for both state and local education agencies in addition to outlining the possible penalties that could be imposed upon each. If you would like to review the letter in its entirety, it is posted at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/USED-ESEA-asmt-clarification-1214.pdf>.

Thanks and have a great week.
Chris

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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>.

- **PARCC Infrastructure Trial Week** – Jan. 12-16
(<http://parcc.pearson.com/resources/PARCC%20Infrastructure%20Readiness%20Guide.pdf>)
- **Third annual Illinois 5Essentials survey administration** – Jan.12-March 13(<http://illinois.5-essentials.org>)
- **Deadline to submit written opt-out petition to regional superintendent of schools for Summer Food Service Program mandate (Public Act 096-0734)** – Jan. 15
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in spring 2015** – Friday, Jan. 16, 2015 (See <http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm> for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- **ISBE offices closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day** – Jan. 19
- **Employment Information System (EIS) open for data submissions** – Jan. 26
- **Deadline to submit District Preschool Plans to the Division of English Language Learning** – Jan. 30
(www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/preschool-ells.htm)
- **TECH 2015 application deadline** – Feb. 3 (www.iceberg.org/tech_2015)
- **ISBE offices closed for Lincoln's Birthday** – Feb. 12
- **ISBE offices closed for Presidents' Day** – Feb. 16
- **Part 25 (Educator Licensure), Part 33 (Programs for the Preparation of Superintendents in Illinois), Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant) and Part 252 (Driver Education)** – Public comment period ends Feb. 17
- **Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) testing window** – March 23-May 1
- **2015 Illinois Arts Education Week** – March 16-22
- **Eighth annual Illinois School Wellness Conference** – April 23
- **TECH 2015 student showcase** – May 7
- **ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day** – May 25
- **Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data –Vision system** - June 30
- **ISBE offices closed for Independence Day** – July 3

Illinois 5Essentials

Third Annual 5Essentials Survey Set For Jan. 12 through March 13

From Jan. 12 through March 13, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will conduct its third annual survey of learning conditions, the Illinois 5Essentials Survey. The 5Essentials Survey, a diagnostic tool developed by researchers at the University of Chicago, provides schools with fine-grained data on five leading indicators for school improvement: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Involved Families, Supportive Environment and Ambitious Instruction.

Twenty years of University of Chicago research has shown that schools that were strong on at least three of the 5Essentials were 10 times more likely to make substantial gains in reading and math.

All district schools, including alternative schools that fall under the district's domain, are required by legislation to participate in the survey at least every other year. In 2015, only districts participating in Race to the Top and those that did not participate in the survey last year will be required to participate by ISBE. Chicago District 299 will also require its schools to participate. All districts will have the option to participate and are strongly encouraged to do so.

Survey results will be released in May to principals and superintendents. A summary of the 5Essential

results will be reported publicly on the State School Report Card website at <http://illinoisreportcard.com>. Detailed survey reports will also be publicly released. Survey results for 2014 and beyond will be normed using the 2013 statewide results so that all schools can demonstrate progress over time on the survey measures.

Several projects are underway to further improve the implementation of the Illinois 5Essentials Survey. These include a pilot in 62 districts to enhance survey security through use of teacher rosters. This year all 6-12 students throughout the state whose districts are registered for the 2015 administration of the 5Essentials will be rostered.

Be on the lookout for further information on this year's 5Essentials survey from ISBE and the University of Chicago. If you have any immediate questions, please visit <http://illinois.5-essentials.org> or contact us via email at 5essentials@uchicago.edu or by phone at (866) 440-1874.

Early Childhood

Update on KIDS: Illinois' Statewide Observational Assessment for Kindergarten

Illinois is in the process of rolling out implementation of the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS). The survey is an important statewide initiative that will provide Illinois with new information about school readiness.

In 2010, ISBE convened a group of educators, advocates and experts to participate in a planning initiative for a statewide kindergarten readiness assessment process. After hearing from national experts and administrators in other states and engaging in much research and discussion, the Kindergarten Readiness Stakeholder Committee recommended the Illinois KIDS process. (See the full 2011 report at www.isbe.net/KIDS/pdf/KIDS_report.pdf)

The survey is an observational assessment process aimed at understanding children's abilities and learning across multiple developmental domains through frequent teacher observation and documentation. KIDS is not a test. Observations are conducted during instruction, so children are not

pulled out to be assessed. Done well, KIDS will have major benefits for students, teachers, families, districts and the state:

- Families can share documentation with teachers to help build a shared understanding of the child's skills, culture, language or ethnicity.
- Teachers can use the assessment information to guide their instructional planning and report to parents.
- Districts will have concise classroom, school and district-level reports about where their kindergartners are across domains. As part of a comprehensive, balanced assessment system, KIDS can inform professional development, curriculum development, instructional strategies, resource allocation and continuous improvement.
- State education leaders will have uniform statewide data to better design educational pathways for children.

Illinois is now in its third year of implementing KIDS, preceded by two pilot years. Teacher and administrator feedback from the pilot has been utilized to customize, restructure and simplify the KIDS instrument, training and implementation process. This fall, 1,243 kindergarten teachers from 441 schools and 210 districts used the developmentally appropriate KIDS assessment to enter data on 26,544 children. At least 2,303 teachers, administrators and support staff have been trained to date. As outlined in the Illinois Administrative Code 1.420, each school district in Illinois is currently scheduled to administer KIDS beginning in the 2015-16 school year.

To guide the state with recommendations, ISBE established a KIDS Advisory Committee in 2011. At the committee's Dec. 2, 2014, meeting, discussion included feedback from teachers, administrators and local school districts. With less than a year until statewide implementation, there is concern that many districts are not fully prepared. The committee encouraged ISBE to have flexibility with the timeline to plan professional development that allows districts to train administrators and teachers and put supports in place to effectively use KIDS. Districts also need time to inventory existing assessments in relation to KIDS, eliminate those that are duplicative and crosswalk those that complement and inform KIDS.

The state superintendent has heard this feedback and is currently working with stakeholders and implementing districts to revise the state’s KIDS Implementation Plan to allow additional time to support districts in building their capacity. A new plan is expected this month. Updated information will be provided on the website and through this bulletin.

As districts prepare to implement KIDS, there are a range of resources – including half-day administrator trainings, tutorials and webinars, and an administrator implementation checklist – at www.illinoiskids.org/content/kids-administrators-checklist. Teacher trainings continue throughout the school year and summer around the state. Additional guidance on aligning assessments to KIDS and how KIDS reports could be used as report cards will also be forthcoming.

Registration for trainings, downloadable versions of the KIDS instrument, a range of resources and a new FAQ can be accessed at www.illinoiskids.org.

Coaching, local training and other supports are also available. Please contact the WestEd Lombard office at (630) 652-7400 or email at kids@wested.org for any support you need in this process.

Standards and Assessments

PARCC Infrastructure Trial Week Scheduled for Jan. 12-16

Districts participating in the online Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test are highly encouraged to conduct an infrastructure trial.

This “dry run” will test the school’s network as well as provide practice for every group involved in testing (test coordinators, test administrators, technology coordinators and students) by creating a practice environment (complete with practice tests) that is as real as possible. The infrastructure trial can be done at any time prior to testing, but Illinois is putting special emphasis on the week of Jan. 12-16 as a way to stress Pearson’s system and identify any potential problems in advance of testing.

The Infrastructure Trial Guide can be found at <http://parcc.pearson.com/resources/PARCC%20Infrastructure%20Readiness%20Guide.pdf>.

Assessment Inventory

The Assessment and Accountability Division of the Illinois State Board of Education is seeking to partner with school districts that are currently using, or would like to use, the *Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts*. The *Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts* is a tool district teams can use to take stock of their assessments and assessment strategy from a student perspective. The tool supports a process by which districts evaluate assessments students are currently taking; determine the minimum amount of assessment information necessary for essential diagnostic, instructional and accountability purposes; and work to ensure that every assessment is of high quality and is supported by structures and routines that ensure assessment results are used to benefit students. The *Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts* can be accessed at www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/htmls/balanced-asmt.htm.

If your school district is currently using or interested in using this tool and would like additional professional development or support, please contact Dr. Diana Zaleski at dzaleski@isbe.net.

New Version of PARCC Technology Bulletin Now Available Online

A new version of the PARCC Technology Bulletin is now available [here](#). This communication was developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) to help districts and schools prepare for and administer the PARCC assessments by highlighting important technology updates and key information.

In this edition, you will find information regarding the following:

- Upcoming Release Dates
- CRITICAL: Google to Disable NPAPI for Chrome Browser
- Technical Guidelines Update
- Infrastructure Trials
- Reminder – PearsonAccessnext
- Reminder – Computer-Based Assessments Guide

- Reminder - New Proctor Cache Tool
- Reminder – PARCC URLs
- Technology Bulletin
- PARCC Support Center

English Language Learning

District Preschool Program Plan For Serving English Learners

A recent amendment to administrative rules provides districts with additional time – until July 1, 2016 – to ensure that individuals assigned to provide instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL) and/or instruction in a student’s home language in a preschool setting to meet the applicable requirements for bilingual education teachers and ESL teachers (23 Ill. Adm. Code 228.35 (a) & (b)).

Staffing is one significant component of establishing Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) or Transitional Programs of Instruction (TPI) to serve preschool English learners, as required under part 228 since July 2010.

In order to ensure that preschool English learners are receiving language support services and districts are making progress toward development of their TBE/TPI preschool programs, districts that have any attendance centers that offer preschool programs and currently do not meet the staffing requirements under 228.35 (a) & (b) have to submit a plan to ISBE’s Division of English Language Learning (DELL), pursuant to 228.35(c)(3).

The District Preschool Plan is available on the DELL website at www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/preschool-ells.htm. As part of the plan, district must address various required components. Districts are encouraged to use the “Service and Staff Template” to satisfy this requirement, which is also available on the DELL website. Plans should be developed and completed in collaboration with the preschool administrator.

This plan, including all required components, must be submitted electronically to DELL by **Jan. 30, 2015**. Completed plans can be submitted to dell@isbe.net.

Please note that the updated “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Serving English Language Learners in Preschool Programs in Illinois Public School

Districts 23 Ill. Adm. Code Part 228” is also available on the DELL website at www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/preschool-ells.htm.

Please contact DELL at (312) 814-3850 with questions.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Four sets of proposed amendments recently reviewed by ISBE are available for public comment. The proposals have been posted on the agency’s website at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

Part 25 (Educator Licensure): Addresses changes necessitated by recently enacted legislation (P.A. 98-751, P.A. 98-872 and P.A. 98-917) concerning requirements for the educator license with stipulations endorsed for career and technical educator, the superintendent endorsement and the principal endorsement, respectively.

Public comment period ends Feb. 17, 2015

Part 33 (Programs for the Preparation of Superintendents in Illinois): Makes a technical correction in Section 33.70 to reference the “superintendent” preparation program rather than the “principal” preparation program.

Public comment period ends Feb. 17, 2015

Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant): Incorporates requirements specific to the ExceleRate Illinois quality rating and improvement system, and proposes standards for programs serving children from birth to age 3.

Public comment period ends Feb. 17, 2015

Part 252 (Driver Education): Makes a technical change to update a web address in Section 252.20(e).

Public comment period ends Feb. 17, 2015

Educator Licensure

Application Fee for Licenses

Per 105 ILCS 5/21B-40, the application fee for a Professional Educator License, Educator License with Stipulations or Substitute License is now \$100.

Out-of-State application fees remain at \$150.

College and Career Readiness

Four Illinois Career Centers Nationally Recognized for Elite Hospitality Programs

Four Family and Consumer Sciences Culinary Arts programs in Illinois have been named to the 2014-15 Elite 50, an exclusive group of high schools and career and technical schools from across the country.

The state's honorees are:

- Capital Area Career Center, Springfield, Debbie Burtle
- West Aurora High School, Aurora, Linda Brennan
- Whiteside Area Career Center, Sterling, Joe Hunt
- Wilco Area Career Center, Romeoville, Debbie Bolger

The Elite 50 list is made up of high schools and technical centers that excel in the areas of culinary, baking and pastry arts and/or hospitality management. Some are state and national competition winners from Prostart, SkillsUSA and Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). Research was also conducted to establish schools with strong hospitality enrollment and influence in their community.

Additional criteria for those selected for the Elite 50 included: an original recipe with photos or a restaurant management design; two essays from students on the topic "Why I want to pursue a career in hospitality," and video, brochure and additional information about the school's program. Further considerations were given to schools that operate a restaurant or offer catering service, etc. as part of culinary/hospitality training.

Governmental Relations

Pregnancy Rights Notice Requirement

Public Act 98-1050 amends the Illinois Human Rights Act to make changes regarding pregnancy and pregnancy accommodations. It also requires employers in Illinois to post a notice about pregnancy in the

workplace and an employer's obligation to accommodate pregnancy.

The Department of Human Rights has a copy of the notice in both English and Spanish available on its website. More information on the requirement for posting the notice, as well as copies of both versions, can be found at

www2.illinois.gov/dhr/Publications/Pages/Pregnancy_Rights_Notice_Requirement.aspx.

Taiwan Ministry of Education

Chinese Language Recruitment Program Available to Illinois School Districts

Taiwan's Ministry of Education invites district superintendents in Illinois to participate in the 2015 Chinese Language Teacher Recruitment Program. Assistance is available for school districts and schools planning to recruit a Chinese teacher from Taiwan to select potential candidates with interviews.

The Ministry of Education will provide one round-trip ticket to the recruited teacher, and the hiring school will provide the salary and benefits to the recruited teacher as a full-time teacher in the school. The Ministry of Education will assist the recruited teacher to apply for the J-1 visa in Taiwan; however, the hiring school will need to provide the necessary hiring documents (e.g., contract, etc.) and share the processing fee for the DS-2019 document with the recruited teacher. The recruited teacher will follow the hiring school's calendars/regulations to give his/her instruction.

Those districts interested in participating should send a plan outline to hire a Chinese language teacher(s) from Taiwan. Please include information such as the name and contact information of superintendents and principals wishing to take part in the interview; how many teachers sought; what qualifications the district is looking for; the teaching load they will be expected to fulfill (e.g., number of courses, hours per week); and what salaries and benefits are provided commensurate with qualifications.

Please contact John Lin of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago at (312) 616-0805 or johnlin@edutw.org to express interest in participating

in the program and to request an outline form. The deadline is Feb. 16

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Two Illinois School Nutrition Directors to Receive Prestigious National Awards

The Illinois State Board of Education and Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division staff would like to acknowledge and congratulate Sandra Voss and Coletta Hines-Newell on the recent announcement of their national awards in the school nutrition industry.

The first award is the Foodservice Achievement Management Excellence (FAME) awards. The FAME awards are the most prestigious acknowledgement of success in the school nutrition industry. Each year the awards are presented to outstanding leaders, recognizing them for achievement, innovation and service.

The 2015 FAME Silver Special Achievement Award will be awarded to Sandra Voss, MS, RD, SNS, food and nutrition services director for Marquardt School District 15 in Glendale Heights. The award will be presented to Voss on Jan. 11 in Scottsdale, Ariz., in conjunction with the School Nutrition Association School Nutrition Industry Conference. Complete information about the FAME awards is available at <http://fameawards.net/>.

The second award is the School Nutrition Foundation's School Nutrition Hero Award, which was established in 2014 in conjunction with the foundation's 50th anniversary celebration. The SNF School Nutrition Hero Award is presented to five individuals nationally to recognize school nutrition professionals who are passionate about their nutrition operations and go above and beyond their daily job responsibilities in the service to children and their communities.

Coletta Hines-Newell, SNS, director of food services for Arlington Heights School District 25, will be one of the recipients. This award will be presented to Hines-Newell on March 2 in conjunction with SNA's Annual Legislative Action Conference in Washington, D.C. Complete information about the SNF School Nutrition Hero Award is available at <http://schoolnutrition.org/SNF/SpecialEvents/>.

Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission

Public Self-Insured Employers' Report Due

By law, every local public entity that is individually or jointly self-insured for workers' compensation must file with the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission a report indicating its election to self-insure.

This report is due within 30 days after Jan. 1 every year. To view the form, go to www.iwcc.il.gov/ic50eform.doc.

In Brief

In the News

- Through the Agricultural Education programs in Illinois schools, the **National FFA Organization** provides leadership, personal growth and career success training to more than 600,000 student members in grades 7 through 12 who belong to one of the 7,570-plus local FFA chapters throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Local Agricultural Education programs/FFA chapters and their students excelled at the recent National FFA Convention & Expo. Illinois boasts of several national winners and top 10 national rankings. Please click on the following links for the results:

[Career Development Event \(CDE\) Teams](#)
[American Degree Recipients](#)
[National Proficiency Results - All Finalists](#)
[National Chapter Award Programs/Chapters](#)

School Health Issues

- Registration is available for the **School Health Days regional conferences** taking place in five locations across Illinois in January. The conferences are for school nurses and other school health personnel. See "School Nurses Take Action" on the Illinois Public Health Association [website](#).

Grant Opportunities

- The Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV), University of Colorado Boulder, seeks schools containing grades 6-8 or 7-9 to receive funding to implement the evidence-

based **LifeSkills Training (LST) Program**, a middle school substance abuse and violence prevention program consistently proven to reduce alcohol, tobacco and drug use. CSPV subcontracts with the organization that developed the LST program to deliver expert training and technical assistance to teachers and to provide program sustainability training to administrators. The grant will allow CSPV to provide three years of training and technical assistance and program materials to eligible schools, districts and education agencies, beginning in fall 2016. More information and applications files are available at www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/lst_grant/.

- **Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant** funds are available through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Education and the Illinois Conservation Foundation. Teachers and home-schooling educators may receive up to \$500 each to take their students on a field trip to study Illinois' natural resources. Visit <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/grants.htm> for details and to access the application form. The application deadline is Jan. 31. A webinar about the grant is scheduled for 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Jan. 7. Go to <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/> for login instructions.

Professional Development

- Registration is open for **Wired Wednesday Webinars**, a unique collaboration that focuses on the Common Core State Standards in speaking and listening. The Illinois Reading Council has partnered with the Wisconsin State Reading Association to provide the webinars. All webinars begin at 7 p.m. For more information or to register, visit www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org or call (888) 454-1341. Upcoming presenters include:
 - Harvey Daniels: Teaching the Social Skills of Academic Interaction on Jan. 7.
 - Jeff Wilhelm: Reading Unbound on Jan. 28.
 - Doug Fisher: Collaborative Conversations and the Speaking and Listening Standards on March 17.
 - Matt Copeland: Facilitating Student Discussion with Socratic Circles on April 15.
- The **20th annual Illinois Association for Gifted Children Convention** will be held Feb. 8-10,

2015, in Naperville. Participants will have the opportunity to gather with classroom teachers, gifted coordinators, administrators, parents and exhibitors for a variety of sessions on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. For complete information – including the registration form, schedule and online hotel reservations – go to <http://www.iagcgifted.org/committees/twentieth-iagc-convention.html>. The event includes a session for pre-service teachers on Feb. 8 that will address the nature of the gifted child and how to address their needs in the classroom. For more information, click [here](#).

Employment Opportunities

- An **External Vacancy List for ISBE** is available at <http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm>.