



Weekly Message

January 13, 2009

Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

I know it may seem like state Report Cards were just released yesterday and actual testing was just a few days ago, but it's time to start providing you with some reminders about this year's state testing, which begins in less than two months time.

The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) are scheduled for regular testing in March and April, respectively. I know students and staff are busy preparing for the tests, so I wanted to take a few moments to provide you some of the highlights.

ISAT

- Regular testing window is March 2-13.
- On-line sample tests are up and running.
- Additional ISAT specific information can be found at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/isat.htm>.

PSAE

- Regular testing window is April 22-23.
- The make-up sessions are May 6-7.
- Additional PSAE specific information can be found at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm>.

IAA

- Testing will be March 9-27.
- Regional trainings are January 26 through February 6.
- Additional IAA information can be accessed at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/iaa.htm>.

ACCESS

- Listening, reading and writing will be January 12-30.
- Kindergarten and speaking will be January 12 through February 20.
- Additional ACCESS information can be found at <http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/access.htm>.

In addition, there have been some changes in the accommodations we will be offering to our English language learners. You can find examples of the ISAT Linguistically-Modified forms as well as guidelines and eligibility requirements for ISAT accommodations at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/default.htm>.

Spanish translations will be available for PSAE math and science this year. You must make any requests to use this accommodation to ACT no later than March 6. You can access more information about the Spanish-translated audio for PSAE

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math and science at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/2009/PSAE-SpDVD.pdf>.

It should be noted that students using the translated version of the PSAE will not receive a college reportable score, and those students using the linguistically-modified ISAT will not receive a SAT-10 score.

On January 26 and 27, the State Board will meet in Chicago to discuss the FY 2010 budget. Even as we prepare the agency's budget proposal for next year, we continue to deal with concerns in the current budget. I have been in contact with a number of legislators expressing concerns about actions that could be taken during FY 2009 that would negatively affect our budget. In addition, I will be sending a letter to each member of the new General Assembly who will be sworn in tomorrow expressing those same concerns about any possible reduction in the FY 2009 education budget. I have posted the letter at http://www.isbe.net/pdf/sup_ltr_ga_jan09.pdf. Feel free to use any part of it in your communications with state legislators.

Finally, the Lieutenant Governor's Office will be hosting The 2009 Sustainable Schools Symposium on Friday, February 27, in Joliet. There will be a number of speakers and workshops to assist you in making your school and districts more "green." You can get more information about and register for the conference at http://www.standingupforillinois.org/green/school_symposium.php.

Have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

- **The 2010 school year annual commodity order period** – January 2 – February 1
- **Textbook Loan Program requests entered online** – January 6 – March 16
- **Immigrant Education Program Student Report** – January 15
- **Petition to opt out of the summer mandate (Public Act 095-0155)** – January 15
- **Estimated Best Three Months Average Daily Attendance** – January 15
- **National School Lunch Program Verification Summary Report** – January 16
- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 25 (Certification):** Public comment ends – January 20
- **Deadline to Enter PSAE Orders on PSAE TestSites Online Website** – January 30
- **Receipt Deadline for Schools to Submit PSAE Day 1 ACT-Approved Accommodations Requests to ACT** – February 2
- **Deadline for Home School Districts to Submit Pre-ID Label Information for PSAE on SIS Website** – February 19
- **School Breakfast Survey** – February 6
- **Looking for Your Lincoln Hero submissions** – March 1
- **History Teacher of the Year Award first round nominations** – March 2
- **Receipt Deadline for Schools to Submit PSAE Day 1 State-Allowed Accommodations Applications to ACT** – March 6

Department of Public Health

MRSA Information

The Illinois Department of Public Health has released guidance on how schools can fight against the spread

of Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, commonly known as "MRSA."

The guidance includes sample letters to parents and infection control checklists, including information on issues related to policy, infection control, and education/increased awareness. The guidance

documents can be found on the ISBE website at www.isbe.net/esd.

For additional questions related to MRSA or other staphylococcal infections in schools, contact **Judy Conway**, R.N., CIC, Infection Control Administrator at judith.conway@illinois.gov, or **Craig Conover**, M.D., Medical Director, Office of Health Protection, at craig.conover@illinois.gov.

Whooping Cough Cases on Increase

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) reports that Illinois has seen an increase in whooping cough (pertussis) cases this winter. Lake, Cook, McHenry, Stephenson, Whiteside, Winnebago and Macon counties, and the City of Chicago have reported clusters of pertussis in school-aged children.

Pertussis is highly contagious and is easily spread from person-to-person through coughing and sneezing. An infected person is contagious from just before the onset of symptoms and up to three weeks after symptoms start.

Symptoms are similar to those of a cold, including runny nose, sneezing, low-grade fever and a cough that gradually worsens. If the disease is diagnosed in a student, household contacts and other close contacts are considered at high risk for contracting the disease. Infants under 1 year and other immunocompromised persons are at high risk for contracting severe disease. They may be offered appropriate antibiotics as prophylaxis.

Immunizations are the single most protective factor against pertussis. There are four combination vaccines used to prevent diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis: DTaP, Tdap, DT, and Td. Two of these (DTaP and DT) are given to children younger than 7 years, and two (Tdap and Td) are given to older children and adults.

Children should get five doses of DTaP. One dose at each of the following ages: 2, 4, 6, and 15-18 months and 4-6 years. DT does not contain pertussis and is used as a substitute for DTaP for children who cannot tolerate pertussis vaccine.

Td is a tetanus-diphtheria vaccine given to adolescents and adults as a booster shot every 10 years, or after an exposure to tetanus under some circumstances. Tdap is similar to Td but also containing protection against

pertussis. A single dose of Tdap is recommended for adolescents 11 or 12 years of age, or in place of one Td booster in older adolescents and adults age 19 – 64.

For additional information on whooping cough, call IDPH at 800-526-4372.

No Child Left Behind

Title VI and Public School Choice

The Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education issued the attached guidance in order to provide state education agencies and local education agencies with information to ensure the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This guidance is in regard to access to, participation in, and administration of, public school choice being implemented in a nondiscriminatory manner that is consistent with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations.

We encourage you to share the information in this letter with your staff.

The “Dear Colleague Letter on Title VI and Public School Choice” is available for viewing at: <http://www.edpubs.org/lyris/DearColleagueLetter1-8-09.pdf>.

Funding & Disbursements

New Census Estimates Released for FY10 Title I Low Income

The U.S. Department of Education has released the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for income year 2007. These estimates will be used to calculate FY10 Title I Allocations. A file of 2007 Poverty Data, by Local Education Agency (LEA) is provided in an alphabetical listing of LEAs, Poverty Count, 5-17 Population, Poverty Percentage and Total Population online at [Illinois Census 2007 with Poverty %](http://www.edpubs.org/lyris/IL_Census_2007_Poverty_Data.pdf).

With this data, LEAs can determine their potential eligibility for Basic, Concentration, Targeted and Education Finance Incentive Grants (EFIG).

Basic Grant eligibility: an LEA must have at least 10 poverty children and the number of poverty children must be greater than 2 percent of the LEA population of children ages 5-17.

Concentration Grant eligibility: an LEA must have at least 6,500 poverty children or the number of those children exceeds 15% of the total 5-17 population.

Targeted and EFIG grant qualifications: an LEA must have at least 10 poverty children and that number must be at least 5 percent of the 5-17 population.

The following link to the Census Bureau, www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/index.html, provides various aspects of the SAIFE count. We will be using the 2007 data to calculate SY 2009-10 Title I, Part A allocations because they are the most recent available data. Note that with the 2007 data the Census Bureau has made the LEA data more current by reducing the lag time to two years between the time of the data and when they become available for use in calculating Title I allocations.

Superintendents, business managers, and Title I directors should carefully examine the data for their LEA as this will be the first indication as to whether your LEA may be gaining or losing in eligibility for Title I funds in FY10. ISBE neither controls nor generates the data.

Note that this preliminary data does not include other non-census information, such as foster, neglected, or delinquent counts that may be used to calculate Title I allocations.

Also, FY09 nationwide Title I allocations were revised in October, and Illinois received an additional \$169,748. Due to final allocations already provided to our LEAs at the time of the release of additional funds, we will provide the additional portion of this FY09 allocation with the final FY10 allocations this fall. As we stated in our October 14th *Weekly Message*, many LEAs will not be affected by this small increase and for those who are, the increase will be minimal.

For questions, contact **Sally Cray** or **Kim Lewis** in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

Final FY 2009 Mandated Categorical Prorations

Final prorations have been calculated for all 2007-08 school year categorical claims that will be reimbursed in FY 2009. For questions regarding this information, contact the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

- Special Education Personnel 96.6 percent
- Special Education Private Facility 96.6 percent
- Special Education Funding for Children Requiring Special Education Services 100 percent
- Special Education Summer School 100 percent
- Special Education Orphanage 100 percent
- Special Education Transportation 96.9 percent
- Regular/Vocational Transportation 100 percent

State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures Update

Revisions to the [State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures](#) have been made to incorporate several changes/updates. A summary of the major changes are listed below.

- Policies #8, #9 and #10 have been clarified (pages 3 and 4);
- A new section on “Supporting Documentation for Salaries and Wages” has been added (page 20);
- Function and Object descriptors have been updated based on changes to the Illinois Program Accounting Manual (pages 23 and 24); and
- Return of Grant Funds section has been updated (page 25).

Please use these policies/requirements/procedures to ensure sound accounting practices in the administration of grants through ISBE. Specific questions should be referred to the appropriate program area for guidance.

English Language Learning

Immigrant Education Program Student Report Due January 15

Illinois school districts are reminded to complete and submit the Immigrant Education Program Student Report by **Thursday, January 15**.

Authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110), local school districts are asked to identify immigrant students enrolled in both public and nonpublic schools within their attendance boundaries. The immigrant student count submitted in this report will be used to determine FY10 Immigrant Education Program funding eligibility.

To access the memo, report form, directions for submitting the report and other critical details, see http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/92-05_immigrant.pdf.

For additional information, contact **Angel Quiñones-Cuadrado** at 312-814-3850 or by e-mail at aquinone@isbe.net.

E-Bulletins

Set-Aside Requirements for Students who are Homeless

This E-Bulletin addresses the set-aside requirements for children and youth who are homeless. These children are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services whether or not they reside in a Title I attendance area or meet the academic standards required of other children for eligibility. According to Title I, Part A, LEAs must reserve (or set-aside) such funds as are necessary to provide comparable services to homeless children who are not attending Title I schools.

Supplement vs. Supplant Provisions

This E-Bulletin serves as a brief reminder of the supplement not supplant provision that requires federal funds be used to augment the regular educational program. No Child Left Behind requires that state and local educational agencies (SEAs and LEAs) use federal funds received under Title I only to supplement the amount of funds available from non-federal sources for the education of students participating in Title I services.

To access these E-Bulletins and previous editions, go to ISBE's website at <http://www.isbe.net/e-bulletins/default.htm>.

If you have a suggestion for an E-Bulletin topic, e-mail it to NCLB@isbe.net.

Grants & Programs

FY 2010 21st Century Community Learning Centers RFP

The FY 2010 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program Request for Proposals (RFP) will be released on **Friday, January 16**. It can be accessed at www.isbe.net/21cclc.

The FY 2010 grant will provide approximately \$17.8 million in funding for quality, out-of-school programs for Illinois students attending low performing, high poverty schools. These centers provide students with academic enrichment, as well as artistic, cultural, and recreational activities to complement their regular academic programs.

Eligible applicants include local education agencies, charter schools and area vocational centers; community based organizations, including faith-based organizations; or other public and private entities. ROEs/ISCs may apply for funds to coordinate and carry out activities for LEAs, participating organizations, or a consortium of eligible applicants.

Proposals are due March 16 by 5:00 p.m.

Current grantees may apply for new funds if the funds will be used to expand or enhance current activities, e.g., to serve additional grade levels or establish programs in schools that are not now participating in the program. All previously funded grantees, including those from the FY 05 cohort in their fifth year of funding, may apply for funds under the same RFP with differing criteria. Potential applicants should review the RFP for details. An additional competitive priority has been established under USDE guidance for applicants proposing services to middle and/or high schools.

Technical assistance conferences will be held from 9 a.m. until noon on:

- **Thursday, January 22:** Holiday Inn Select, Tinley Park
- **Friday, January 23:** Hilton Garden Inn, Chicago
- **Monday, February 2:** Hilton Garden Inn, Springfield.

For additional information regarding this RFP, contact Gail Meisner at 217-524-4832.

Homeless Education Disaster Assistance Grant

The application period for the Homeless Education Disaster Assistance grant administered by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) is open through **Monday, February 9, at 4:30 p.m. EST.**

Eligible applicants are local education agencies (LEAs) (school districts or school attendance centers) or consortia of LEAs that had 50 or more students age 0 – 18 or IDEA age limits made homeless by a federally-declared natural disaster in 2008. The Homeless Education Disaster Assistance covers only the following FEMA disasters in Illinois: 3/7/08 Disaster Number 1747; 6/24/08 Disaster Number 1771; and 10/3/08 Disaster Number 1800.

The Federal Register notice inviting applications was published on **Friday, January 9**, and is located at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/> by searching for CFDA No. 84.383A. Applications must be submitted online via ED's e-application portal. The link to initiate an electronic application is: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>. New users must register before accessing or initiating an application.

USDE will provide technical assistance to prospective applicants. A webpage for the grant is expected to be launched at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/heda/index.html>.

USDE will host a conference call led by Gary Rutkin for prospective applicants on **Thursday, January 15**, from 2 to 3 p.m. EST for up to 200 participants. The participant pass code is GRUTKIN (4788546).

To join the January 15 conference call, dial: 1-888-913-9972.

Curriculum & Instruction

NEA Grant Programs

The National Education Association (NEA) Foundation supports a variety of efforts from all walks of the education community. The organization is accepting applications for the following grant programs:

Learning & Leadership Grant to fund individual participation in professional development such as

summer institutes and action research. The grant amount is \$2,000 for individuals and \$5,000 for groups.

Student Achievement Grants provide \$5,000 each to improve the academic achievement of students by engaging in critical thinking and problem solving. Proposals for work resulting in low-income and minority student success, advanced placement and other challenging curricula are encouraged.

The deadlines for both grants are: February 1; June 1; and October 15, 2009.

For complete grant program information, visit the NEA Foundation website at http://fconline.foundationcenter.org/pnd/15016125/nea_fdn.

Teacher Resources

Those Who Excel Nominations Available

The nomination forms for the 2009-2010 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year program are now available online at http://www.isbe.net/pdf/those_who_excel_enabled.pdf.

Paper copies will be available beginning **Tuesday, January 27**. Please call 217-782-4648 to request a paper copy or if you need additional information.

Nominations must be postmarked by **May 18, 2009**.

Illinois Teacher of the Year Available to Speak

Linda Smerge, a second grade teacher at Woodrow Wilson Elementary School in Cicero, was named the 2009 Illinois Teacher of the Year last October.

Linda has now left her classroom and is working on scheduling visits to other schools or organizations. She has a wide-range of experiences including being an attorney before becoming a teacher. Linda is also an accomplished artist, but it is teaching that truly inspires her.

If you are interested in having this versatile and fascinating teacher as a speaker for your event, please call **Linda Zakarian's** office at 708-863-4856.

Nutrition

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Call for Proposals

Those interested in applying for the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation must submit a brief proposal by **Tuesday, February 3**.

The goal is to provide 60 grants of up to \$360,000 over a 4-year period to local community partnerships nationally to increase opportunities for physical activity and improve access to affordable healthy foods for children.

For the online application and information regarding the two remaining applicant conference calls on **January 14 and January 22**, go to:
www.rwjf.org/applications/solicited/cfp.jsp?ID=20603

The full proposal is due **May 14**.

Verification Summary Report Due January 16

Verification is the confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Annually, each local education agency (LEA) participating in the NSLP and/or SBP must select and verify a sample of household applications approved for benefits. The LEAs must submit a Verification Summary Report (summarizing the results of verification efforts) electronically through ACES to ISBE by **Friday, January 16**.

As a reminder, LEAs are only to report the required sample size and should not include any verification done for cause in this report.

Instructions for accessing and completing the Verification Summary Report and a sample form are available at

<http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/instructions.htm>.

For questions on the verification process, visit
http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/forms_sbn.htm.

2009 National School Lunch Program Workshops Available

Registration is available for the following free workshops offered by the Nutrition Programs Division. For workshops descriptions, visit
<http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/workshops.htm>

- Basic Training—A Guide to School-Based Child Nutrition Programs
- Menu Planning and Dietary Guidelines Training
- Certification and Verification
- Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement/ Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs
- Developing a Food Safety Plan, Process Approach to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Principles (HACCP)

Phase 1 School Meals Report Released

The Institute of Medicine has described the approach proposed to make recommendations for revisions to the Nutrition Standards and Meal Requirements through its release of “Nutrition Standards and Meal Requirements for National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs: Phase I, Proposed Approaches for Recommending Revisions.”

The Phase 2 report, which is expected in October 2009, will include the recommendations for revisions to the Nutrition Standards and the Meal Requirements for the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program.

- Interested parties may participate in an open forum on **Wednesday, January 28**, in Washington, D.C.
- For details, visit www.iom.edu/fnb/schoolmeals.
- Public comments may be e-mailed until **Saturday, January 31**, to FNBSchoolMeals@nas.edu.
- The report may be downloaded at
<http://www.iom.edu/?ID=54064>.

Student Opportunities

SAT Video Contest

Illinois students are encouraged to compete in a nationwide contest where they create funny, inventive videos to teach SAT vocabulary.

MIT is awarding up to \$600 in prize money to the video that receives the most votes from viewers. For more details about the contest, go to www.BrainyFlix.com. This is also the site where contestants will submit videos.

For questions, e-mail **Jack Yu** at jack.yu.is@gmail.com.

Employment Opportunities

ISBE External Vacancy List

An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at:
<http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm>.

In the News

Weekly News Clips

ISBE has posted highlights from last week's education news clips at:
<http://www.isbe.net/news/2009/newsclips/090109.htm>
