



Weekly Message

Jan. 20, 2015

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Gov. Bruce Rauner was inaugurated last week and he has named James Meeks to chair the Illinois State Board of Education. Meeks is a former state senator, who will bring a wealth of experience to the position. He replaces the outgoing chairman, Gery Chico, who had guided the Board since June 2011.

This week the Board meets in Springfield. The primary focus will be on its fiscal year 2016 budget recommendation to the Governor and members of the General Assembly. I will be making a recommendation to the Board that includes funding General State Aid at the statutory Foundation Level of \$6,119. This will require a significant increase over the current level of funding; however, the Board has made GSA a focus of its budget requests and has expressed a desire to eliminate proration. In addition, I'll recommend other increases to specific line items, including early childhood education, regular/vocational transportation, bilingual and other areas. I am also recommending that we seek capital funding to meet district technology infrastructure needs.

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The Board meeting will begin at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 21, and will be audiocast via the agency website at www.isbe.net. This was originally to be a two-day meeting, but because of scheduling conflicts it has been changed to a one-day meeting.

Finally, we want to help you engage your school communities and provide you with some additional tools to assist educators, students and parents as they prepare for the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments. Our staff has developed resources aimed at familiarizing all participants with the test and packaged these resources for schools in a turnkey event called the "PARCC Primer." The PARCC Primer is designed to be informal and fun and should create a welcoming environment for families to learn more about this spring's assessment and current teaching and learning strategies in English language arts and math. Participants will get a chance to take some sample PARCC test items.

In order to make planning this event easy, all necessary instructions and documents for hosting and conducting a PARCC Primer are available at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/parcc-primer.htm>. Materials are divided into two tabs, "Documents for Educators" and "Documents for Parents."

Thanks and have a great week.
Chris

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>.

- **Third annual Illinois 5Essentials survey administration** – Jan.12-March 13(<http://illinois.5-essentials.org>)
- **Employment Information System (EIS) open for data submissions** – Jan. 26
- **“Integrated Math: Lesson Examples and Student Samples from the 9-12 Classroom” webinar** – Jan. 26 (<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6058025758912380673>)
- **Deadline to submit District Preschool Plans to the Division of English Language Learning** – Jan. 30 (www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/preschool-ells.htm)
- **IDEA Excess Cost Worksheets timeline for emailing completed worksheets to IDEA grant coordinators** – Jan. 30
- **TECH 2015 application deadline** – Feb. 3 (www.iceberg.org/tech_2015)
- **Annual No Child Left Behind Conference** – Feb. 3-5 (www.thecenterweb.org/nclb/)
- **School district annual financial report review process deadline** – Feb. 6 (www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/verification.htm)
- **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 nomination forms for the 2016 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year program** – June 8 (www.isbe.net/those-who-excel/pdfs/those-who-excel-app.pdf)
- **Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data –Vision system** - June 30
- **ISBE offices closed for Independence Day** – July 3
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in fall 2015** – Friday, Aug. 14, 2015 (See www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)

School Business Services

School District Annual Financial Report Review Process Notification

All district superintendents should have received an email broadcast asking them to review their preliminary Financial Profile Report and verify the Operating Expense Per Pupil (OEPP)/Per Capita Tuition Charge (PCTC) by no later than Feb. 6.

District administrators may submit comments regarding their district's finances that will be published along with their Financial Profile Report (500 characters maximum). The comments must be submitted no later than Feb. 6.

The email included links to the memorandum, instructions and definitions to assist with the review process. These documents are also available in [IWAS](#)

and on the [School District Financial Profile Score & OEPP/PCTC Verification Information webpage](#).

The email broadcast and the Superintendent’s Weekly Message will be the only notices sent to the district. If you have not received the email, please contact ISBE at (217) 785-8779. If you have given another person authority to review these reports, please forward the email to them. Since the financial profile designation will be approved and publicly released by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), it is crucial that districts review their financial profile data and score. Any district that wishes to include comments that support the Financial Profile Report may do so directly in IWAS beneath the report. Although comments are optional, they are encouraged; this is an opportunity for districts to explain significant financial circumstances.

The deadlines and instructions are important in completing the OEPP/PCTC verification process because once the deadline passes, changes to the 2014 Annual Financial Report (AFR) data are not permitted.

The financial profile will be adjusted to incorporate the deduction of last year’s mandated categorical aid payments due to school districts that were not paid by June 30, 2013; all payments were made by June 30, 2014.

Any questions regarding the verification process should be directed to a School Business Services consultant at (217) 785-8779. Any questions regarding IWAS should be directed to the Call Center at (217) 558-3600.

U.S. Department of Education

Guidance on Equitable Educational Access for English Learner Students

The U.S. Departments of Education and Justice have released [joint guidance](#) reminding states, school districts and schools of their obligations under federal law to ensure that English learner students have equal access to a high-quality education and the opportunity to achieve their full academic potential.

The departments have also released additional tools and resources to help schools in serving English

learner students and parents with limited English proficiency:

- A fact sheet in [English](#) and in [other languages](#) about schools’ obligations under federal law to ensure that English learner students can participate meaningfully and equally in school.
- A fact sheet in [English](#) and in [other languages](#) about schools’ obligations under federal law to communicate information to limited English proficient parents in a language they can understand.
- A [toolkit](#), prepared by the Education Department’s Office of English Language Acquisition, to help school districts identify English learner students. This is the first chapter in a series of chapters to help state education agencies and school districts meet their obligations to English learner students.

This is the first time that a single piece of guidance has addressed the array of federal laws that govern schools’ obligations to English learners. The guidance recognizes the recent milestone 40th anniversaries of Lau v. Nichols and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA), as well as the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act. The EEOA, similar to Lau, requires public schools to take appropriate action to help English learner students overcome language barriers and ensure their ability to participate equally in school.

The guidance explains schools’ obligations to:

- identify English learner students in a timely, valid and reliable manner;
- offer all English learner students an educationally sound language assistance program;
- provide qualified staff and sufficient resources for instructing English learner students;
- ensure English learner students have equitable access to school programs and activities;
- avoid unnecessary segregation of English learner students from other students;
- monitor students’ progress in learning English and doing grade-level class work;
- remedy any academic deficits English learner students incurred while in a language assistance program;
- move students out of language assistance programs when they are proficient in English

and monitor those students to ensure they were not prematurely removed;

- evaluate the effectiveness of English learner programs; and
- provide limited English proficient parents with information about school programs, services and activities in a language they understand.

ISBE would also like to remind schools and districts that [state rules pertaining to serving English Language Learners](#), as well as additional guidance, are available at www.isbe.net/bilingual.

Illinois Learning Standards

Model Math Curriculum Webinar Scheduled for Jan. 26

The first in a series of five model math curriculum webinars is scheduled for 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 26. To register, go to <https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/6058025758912380673>.

The title is “Integrated Math: Lesson Examples and Student Samples from the 9-12 Classroom,” and the focus is on the practical application of integrated mathematics in a high school setting.

Anita Reid, a Math 1 instructor from Lewistown High School in Lewistown, will present. Anita is an experienced curriculum writer, having served on the Model Math Curriculum Team for two years. She is also a director on the Illinois Council Teachers of Mathematics board and an experienced conference presenter. She will share observations based on actual experience using integrated math and will relate how students’ attitudes toward mathematics have led to greater achievement in mathematics.

Participants are requested to download a handout prior to the presentation and to have access to the Internet during the presentation. The webinar will be facilitated by Roxanne Filson and Linda Brissenden of the Illinois State Board of Education. After registering, participants will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

- **What:** “Integrated Math: Lesson Examples and Student Samples from the 9-12 Classroom” webinar

- **Date:** Jan. 26
- **Time:** 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- **Register:**
<https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/6058025758912380673>

Nutrition and Wellness

Smart Snack and USDA Foods Technical Assistance Workshops Scheduled

Four workshops are scheduled across the state to go over Smart Snack requirements and provide USDA Foods technical assistance.

Each workshop will provide information about implementing the USDA Smart Snack Regulations for the first two hours of the session time. During the remaining time, USDA Foods staff will be available to provide one-on-one technical assistance so school personnel can submit USDA Foods order for the 2015-16 school year. Please bring a computer, if you have one available, so that staff can help you complete the online USDA Foods order.

Dates and Locations:

- Jan. 22 – Peoria (morning session)
- Jan. 29 – Edwardsville (morning session)
- Feb. 3 – Palatine (afternoon session)
- Feb. 4 – Kankakee (morning session)

Space is limited, so please register today at <http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnscheduler/asp/eventlist.asp>. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our staff at (800) 545-7892 or via email at cnp@isbe.net.

Schedule for 2015 Regional Farm to School Networking Conferences

ISBE is partnering with Southern Illinois University, the Illinois Farmers Market Association and the University of Illinois Extension to host three regional Farm to School conferences in 2015.

The conferences will speak to two key stakeholders in the Farm to School movement: farmers and school foodservice managers. Presented topics will include:

- Farm to School Snapshot of Illinois Schools
- A cooking demonstration

- Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs
- Information from Distributors
- Farm to School Safety
- Questions & Answers and time for networking

*Some locations will include a high tunnel tour.

Conference dates and locations are as follows:

- Feb. 9 – Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield
- Feb. 23 – Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
- March 9 – Joliet Junior College, Joliet

Registration is free, but you must pre-register to attend. (Space will be limited.) For more information and/or to register, please click [here](#).

Those Who Excel

Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year Applications Now Available Online

This year's Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year nomination form is available for completion online at www.isbe.net/those-who-excel/pdfs/those-who-excel-app.pdf. Hard copies are also available and will be mailed by Jan. 30.

Fill the form out using Internet Explorer, then print it out. Be sure to have your District Superintendent or Chief Administrator sign the form. Attach the other required information and mail it to:

Illinois State Board of Education
Public Information Division
100 N. First St., S-404
Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001

Nominations must be postmarked by June 8. Please call Public Information at (217) 782-4648 if you have questions.

Funding and Disbursements

Final FY 2015 Mandated Categorical Prorations Now Available

Final prorations and payments have been calculated for all 2013-14 school year categorical claims that will be vouchered in fiscal year 2015. If you have

questions regarding this information, contact the Division of Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

- Special Education Personnel – 100 percent
- Special Education Private Facility – 97 percent
- Special Education Funding for Children Requiring Special Education Services – 100 percent
- Special Education Summer School – 75 percent
- Special Education Orphanage – 100 percent
- Special Education Transportation – 97 percent
- Regular/Vocational Transportation – 72 percent
- Regular Education Orphanage – 100 percent

Final 2013-14 IDEA Room and Board Claim Payment Information

The 2013-14 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Room and Board program is now complete.

Final 2013-14 school year claims exceeded the amount of IDEA Room and Board funds available. Proration was calculated at 71 percent of the final claims. Claims reimbursed from federal IDEA Part B grant funds have been escalating at a rate beyond the set aside amounts the agency retains from our annual IDEA Part B award. The following link provides a graph demonstrating the increase of claims over the available IDEA Part B funds utilized for the Room and Board program in the past few years:
www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/sped-rb-history-graph.pdf

The final 2013-14 school year voucher was processed by ISBE on Dec. 22 and released by the Office of the Comptroller on Dec. 29.

2014-15 School Year: Due to the projected increase of claims and available IDEA funds for the 2014-15 school year, the estimated proration will be approximately 77 percent; therefore, to avoid potential overpayment, submitted monthly claims will be paid at 60 percent during the year. Once all claims are finalized in December 2015, final claims and proration will be calculated and paid at that time.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact Lisa Willhoit in the Funding and

Disbursement Division at (217) 782-5256 or lwillhoi@isbe.net.

Federal Interest Income – Quarterly Reminder

The Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34-Education, Part 80 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, Subpart C-Post Award Requirements, Section 80.21 Payment, requires grantees and subgrantees to promptly, but at least quarterly, remit interest earned on advances to the appropriate federal agency. The grantee or subgrantee may keep actual interest amounts up to \$100 per year gained on federal deposits per bank account, if applicable, for administrative purposes. Grant recipients have discretion to set up account(s) that are non-interest bearing to avoid returning interest.

To ensure compliance with federal administrative requirements, local education agency fiscal officials should develop internal controls and a sound methodology to calculate and return, at least quarterly, interest earned in excess of \$100 on federal program funds. Interest calculation methodologies must be based on actual, not estimated, interest earnings on federal funds. Further details as to how federal interest should be calculated and remitted can be found on Pages 10-12 of the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures, which is online at www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf.

Interest should be returned using the following guidelines:

- Checks for interest earned should be made payable to the Illinois State Board of Education.
- Checks should not include the return of unexpended disbursements from ISBE. Even though unexpended disbursements and interest payments are made payable to ISBE, separate checks should be issued for both.
- Checks should be accompanied by a statement identifying the program and the program year from which the interest was earned.

All checks must be mailed to: Illinois State Board of Education, Funding and Disbursements Services

Division (E-320), 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL 62777-0001.

New Census Estimates Released for Fiscal Year 2016 Title I Low Income

The U.S. Department of Education has released the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for income year 2013. These estimates will be used to calculate fiscal year 2016 Title I Allocations. A file of 2013 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 www.isbe.net/funding/excel/fy16preliminary-eligibility.xlsx.

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 percent of the total 5-17 population.

Targeted Grant and EFIG 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/did/www/saipe/index.html, provides various aspects of the SAIPE count, including the data sources and methodology used to prepare these data. We will be using the 2013 data to calculate school year 2015-16 Title I, Part A allocations because they are the most recent available data.

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 FY 2016. ISBE neither controls nor generates the data. The challenge period for the 2013

estimates ends March 17. Refer to the Census Bureau link at www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/contact/challenges.html, if interested.

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.

If you have questions, please contact Sally Cray (scray@isbe.net) in the Division of Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

Special Education Services

IDEA Excess Cost Worksheets due Jan. 30

IDEA excess cost worksheets are due to the IDEA grant coordinators on Friday, Jan. 30.

Resources are available on the IDEA grant webpage at www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/idea_part-b.htm, and the IDEA grant coordinators are available for specific questions regarding the process at (217) 782-5589 or dcamacho@isbe.net, tgreco@isbe.net and fmalloy@isbe.net.

No Child Left Behind

No Child Left Behind Conference Scheduled for Feb. 3-5 in Chicago

Please join ISBE and the Illinois Resource Center for the annual No Child Left Behind Conference at the Chicago Sheraton on Feb. 3-5. Attendees will hear from six excellent keynote speakers, select from more than 200 presentation and panels and participate in practical workshops.

The conference title – “Lead, Focus, Connect: Beyond NCLB” – was chosen because it indicates that we are in a time of educational change as we move forward with addressing the needs of all students in Illinois. Each day of the conference will address a particularly important approach to attaining college and career readiness for our students: high-impact instructional strategies, successful family and community engagement, and highly effective district and school-wide strategies.

To review the preliminary conference materials, get more information and register, please go to: www.thecenterweb.org/nclb/. The registration deadline is Jan. 23.

English Language Learning

Applications for Summer Migrant Education Services Funding Available

The Division of English Language Learning is accepting applications for fiscal year 2015 federal Migrant Education Program funding for summer school programs in districts with qualifying migrant children under Title I, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act. The application is available at www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/20-37A-migrant-summer-app.pdf. The application deadline is Friday, March 20.

Students who are 21 years old or younger and have not graduated from high school may be eligible if they have moved within the past three years across state or school district lines with a parent or guardian or on their own to seek or obtain temporary or seasonal work in agricultural production, fishing or food processing industries. A certified recruiter must document that children qualify as migrant students.

The State Board can assist districts in identifying eligible migrant children. To request assistance or more information, contact Beth Robinson at berobins@isbe.net or (312) 814-3850.

Department of Children & Family Services

DCFS Accepting Applications for 2015 Scholarship Program

The Department of Children and Family Services is currently accepting applications for the 2015 DCFS Scholarship Program.

The scholarship program provides a minimum of 53 scholarships each year, four of which are awarded to children of veterans. Those eligible to apply are youth who the department has court-ordered legal responsibility for, youth who aged out of the department’s care at age 18 or older, youth who the department had legal responsibility for prior to the youth’s adoption being finalized and youth who are in the Subsidized Guardianship or KinGap Program.

Scholarship recipients receive up to five consecutive years of tuition and academic fee waivers to be used at participating Illinois state community colleges and universities, a monthly grant and a medical card. Youth who graduated from high school in previous years or youth who are currently enrolled in college are eligible to apply for the department scholarship, as long as they will be under the age of 21 on March 31, 2015.

Scholarship recipients will be selected on the basis of their scholastic record and aptitude, community and extracurricular activities and interest in higher education. Note: Tuition and fee waivers are provided only to scholarship recipients that attend an Illinois state community college or university. Scholarship recipients that attend private Illinois or out-of-state colleges or universities do not receive tuition and fee waivers.

Scholarship applicants are required to submit their applications to the Office of Education and Transition Services (OETS) no later than March 31, 2015. Applications postmarked after that date will not be eligible for consideration. Incomplete applications will be ineligible for consideration and will be returned to the applicant. If time permits, the applicant can resubmit the complete application packet. Applications submitted by facsimile will be ineligible for consideration.

All questions or to request a scholarship application should be directed to either of the following OETS offices: Springfield at (217) 557-2689 or Chicago at (312) 814-5959.

In Brief

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.

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:
 - 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

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