



Weekly Message

Jan. 26, 2015

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week State Board members approved a fiscal year 2016 budget recommendation that includes fully funding General State Aid. While Board members acknowledged decreasing state revenues and increased spending pressures in other areas of state government, the recommendation includes an increase of \$730 million from the current year (FY 2015) spending levels.

The Board’s FY 2016 recommendation seeks an additional \$566 million for GSA, providing a total of \$5.089 billion to fully fund claims at the \$6,119 per pupil Foundation Level. This fiscal year is the fourth consecutive year that the state is only paying a percentage of the amount owed to each district, with the current significant proration rate of 89 percent.

In addition to the general funds request, the Board’s recommendation includes \$126.4 million in capital funding for technology needs. This figure includes the approximately \$100 million needed to provide broadband delivery to underserved schools and \$8.9 million to provide electronic devices districts need for 21st-century instruction and to comply with Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) online testing requirements.

Other proposed FY 2016 increases or expenses include:

- \$50 million increase for early childhood education, which has lost \$80 million in funding since FY 2009. The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Illinois an \$80 million preschool expansion grant; an annual increase in state funding for the Early Childhood Block Grant of \$50 million over the next five years was part of the grant proposal.
- \$48.7 million increase to the Regular/Vocational Transportation line to begin restoring this line to previous levels. The Regular/Vocational line item has not been fully funded since FY 2010. An increase of \$48.7 million will result in an estimated proration level of 80 percent.
- \$12 million, or an 18.8 percent increase, in the Bilingual Education program to help districts meet the needs of the growing bilingual population, which accounts for about 10.4 percent of all students. Since FY 2011, this population has increased by 16.6 percent.
- \$5 million increase for state assessments based upon the cost of administering two additional PARCC exams in high school, bringing the total to three annual exams in high school, a federally

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required science assessment, PARCC in grades 3-8, PARCC diagnostic testing for grades 2-8 and a college entrance exam for grade 11 that will not include a writing assessment due to the fact that writing is assessed by PARCC.

- \$2.4 million for further development and maintenance of the Illinois Longitudinal Data System.
- \$5 million for an Extended Learning Time program.
- \$5 million for the state’s lowest-performing schools.

We will provide the Board’s FY 2016 budget recommendation to the Governor and General Assembly for consideration as part of the overall state budget, which they will develop during the spring legislative session. The Board’s budget proposal will be posted at www.isbe.net/budget.

The Board also recognized Dave Dickson of Grant Park CUSD 6 with a resolution. Dickson, who was named the 2014 recipient of the Thomas Lay Burroughs Award, has served five years as president of his local school board and more than eight years on the board.

The Burroughs award honors school board presidents, recognizing extraordinary educational leadership at the local level. Dickson previously accepted the Burroughs award during the fall annual conference in Chicago of school board members, administrators and business officials.

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>)
- **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
- **Annual “Estimated Best Three Months Average Daily Attendance” due to ISBE** – Feb. 13
- **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

- **2015 Illinois Arts Education Week** – March 16-22
- **Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) testing window** – March 23-May 1
- **Part 650 (Charter Schools) and Part 1105 (Procurement by the State Board of Education)** – Public comment period ends March 23
- **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.)

State Funding and Forecasting

Estimated Best Three Months Average Daily Attendance in IWAS for GSA Claim

The annual “Estimated Best Three Months Average Daily Attendance” application is now available on IWAS. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) requests that you provide an estimate of the daily attendance figure for your district to ISBE by Friday, Feb. 13. The daily attendance figure is your estimate of the best three months of attendance for the 2014-15 school year. You may use actual attendance data to date to calculate an estimate or develop your own estimate figure based on historical attendance patterns.

The estimate you provide will be used by policymakers to determine the General State Aid (GSA) appropriation level for the 2014-15 claim payable in fiscal year 2016. Please note these estimates are only used for projection purposes and will not be used in calculating your district’s final GSA claim and payment.

Thank you for your time and attention to this data request. If you have questions about this request, please contact Ethelene Ferdinand at eferdina@isbe.net or (217) 782-0249.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Two 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 650 (Charter Schools): Addresses changes necessitated by recently enacted legislation (P.A. 98-783 and P.A. 98-1048) concerning school closures and material revisions, respectively.

Public comment period ends March 23, 2015.

Part 1105 (Procurement by the State Board of Education): Repeals Part 1105 due to statutory changes that place the State Board of Education under the Chief Procurement Officer for General Services for purposes of procurement.

Public comment period ends March 23, 2015.

English Language Learning

Free Workshop for Educators of English Learners March 10-11 in Normal

A free workshop for educators of English learners, titled “ELD Standards in Action: Unit Planning,” is scheduled for March 10-11 in Normal.

Participants will utilize resources from the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework to plan units of instruction that integrate content and language standards. In school teams, participants will engage in identifying the academic language demands embedded in state content standards, planning and designing a custom unit of instruction, identifying ways to support and

differentiate for language development, and planning and designing methods for formative language assessment. Teams will have ample opportunities for developing materials. Therefore, participants are encouraged to bring curriculum materials and student ACCESS for ELLs scores.

Participants will be able to:

- Discuss how to identify the academic language demands of content standards, such as the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.
- Explain how to integrate content standards and the WIDA ELD Standards when planning instruction and assessment.
- Formulate a plan for instruction that includes learning goals for both content and language.
- Formulate a plan for assessment for content learning and language development.

Please email Sonia Serrano at DELLregistration@isbe.net to register or ask questions about this workshop.

Student Opportunities

School Bus Safety Poster Contest

The Illinois Association for Pupil Transportation and the Office of the Secretary of State invite you and your students to participate in the annual School Bus Safety Poster Contest.

The goal of this poster contest is to increase student awareness of school bus safety issues. The contest is open to all students in grades kindergarten through 8 and has four grade divisions.

Winners of the state contest will be awarded cash prizes in denominations of \$75 for first place, \$35 for second place and \$25 for third place.

The state winners will be honored at an awards ceremony hosted by the sponsors in Springfield during National School Bus Safety Week in October.

For contest rules and student guidelines for submitting entries, please visit www.isbe.net/funding/html/bus-safety-contest.htm.

Student Recognition

USS Illinois Submarine Art Contest Winner and Finalists Announced

Christopher M. Durdle of Monmouth Roseville High School in Monmouth submitted the winning design for the crest of the USS Illinois submarine.



Last fall, Illinois high school students were invited to participate in the USS Illinois Contest to design the crest of the state's namesake ship as a symbol of the state, the distinguished crew of this state-of-the-art submarine and Illinois' thousands of dedicated service members and veterans.

The contest's selection committee reviewed 149 entries and had the difficult task of selecting five finalists. The USS Illinois crew viewed and voted on the five finalist entries, and Durdle's submission was the top pick. The other four finalists are:

- Angela M. Anderson, Batavia High School in Batavia
- Hanna J. Frazier, Batavia High School in Batavia
- Jessi M. Karlic, Lincoln-Way West High School in New Lenox
- Cyrena R. Rangel, Danville High School in Danville

The members of the teen class at the Illinois Center for Autism received an honorable mention for their contest entry due to their special capabilities.

A recognition lunch for the five finalists will be held at the Union League Club of Chicago on April 2, and the Commanding Officer of the USS Illinois will present awards to these students.

The USS Illinois Commissioning Committee and the ship itself extend their sincere thanks for the hard work and creativity that all entrants put into their designs.

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.

Nutrition and Wellness

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.

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.

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>.