



Illinois State Board of Education

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Weekly Message

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 State Superintendent (Interim)

February 5, 2007

Message from Interim State Superintendent Christopher Koch

Hope everyone is recovering from yesterday’s game.

I wanted to make you aware of a number of legislative initiatives that ISBE is spearheading. ISBE has listed 28 legislative initiatives which are listed on the Legislation page of our web site at: http://www.isbe.net/gov_relations/isbe_legis_proposals.xls. Many of these are designed to address unintended consequences of current legislation and/or are responsive to concerns expressed by the field. For example, one proposal would change the General State Aid Payment schedule from 24 payments (received from August to July) to 22 payments (August to June) and another proposal would allow all school districts to claim a full day of attendance in instances where the district must dismiss one or more school buildings due to a conditions which is beyond its control (such as a boiler malfunctioning).

Proposals listed as “priority 1” are most necessary to address this session. Please make sure your legislators know which of these you would like to see passed.

The College Board has released its third annual *Advanced Placement Report to the Nation* which indicated that more Illinois high school students than ever are succeeding on college-level Advanced Placement Program® (AP) Exams. In 2006, a record number of Illinois high school students – more than 43,700 – took AP Exams, compared to just over 17,600 students in 1996. Since 2001, the number of students participating in AP has steadily increased by 17,034 or 63.7 percent.

The *Report* shows that more low-income, African-American, and Hispanic or Latino students are taking AP Exams. The increase is due, in part to a \$1.5 million grant awarded in FY2006 that allowed 28 districts to expand their AP classes and programs. Illinois has also been awarded Federal dollars as part of No Child Left Behind to help promote AP classes to low-income students.

The *Report* uses data from all schools – both public and non-public – that participate in AP to identify schools that are leading the way in AP performance worldwide. Six of Illinois’s public and non-public schools were recognized:

- Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Chicago
- Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Aurora
- Keith Country Day School, Rockford
- Northside College Preparatory High School, Chicago
- Saint Ignatius College Preparatory, Chicago
- University of Chicago Lab High School, Chicago

Congratulations to all those districts and schools promoting advanced placement course offerings to students!

I wish you a productive week and be sure to stay warm!

Chris Koch

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Upcoming Deadlines

- **Breakfast Survey** – February 9, 2007 – <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition>
- **Verification of Per Capita Tuition Charge (PCTC), Operating Expense Per Pupil (OEPP), Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) and Profile Reports** - February 15, 2007
- **CTE Educator Scholarships, EIU** – February 23
- **Illinois Fatherhood Initiative Essay Contest** – March 9, 2007
- **Amber Alert Poster Contest** – March 13, 2007
- **Illinois Textbook Loan Program School Order, Grades 9 through 12** - March 15, 2007
- **ECBG for Birth to Age 3 Years: Prevention Initiative RFP** – March 15, 2007
- **21st Community Learning Center RFP** – March 16, 2007
- **Non-Certified Staff Salary Study** - March 31, 2007
- **American Stars of Teaching** – April 1, 2007
- **Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Young Scholars Program** – May 7, 2007

Student Assessment

Printed 2006 ISAT Reports

The 2006 printed Individual Student Reports are being delivered to schools starting Monday, February 5 through February 15, 2007.

The Educators' printed reports - District and School summaries - will follow soon. We will let you know when to expect them.

These reports are being delivered to the local District offices (sorted by schools) and all Chicago Public Schools. It is the responsibility of the local schools and districts to distribute the reports to families.

The new reports aim to present the breadth of available ISAT scores in a clear and informative way. We have included explanatory text to help families understand what the scores mean. We welcome your feedback as we plan for the 2007 reports.

If you have questions, please email rmccabe@isbe.net or jcraig@isbe.net.

Our deepest apologies for the lateness of these reports. Students and families have been waiting several months longer than usual and I know many of you have had to answer numerous questions about the delay. Thank you for all you do and for your patience through this process.

School Business and Support

Verification and approval of financial reports due February 15



This notice is to remind all District Superintendents that it is imperative to verify and approve the reports for the Operating Expense Per Pupil (OEPP)/Per Capita Tuition Charge (PCTC), Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) and School District Profile Score through the IWAS system <https://sec1.isbe.net/iwas/asp/login.asp?js=true> by February 15, 2007.

Instructions, deadlines, and other information are online at: <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/verification.htm>. If you delegate this task to a financial business official please forward this message on to them. If you have already verified and approved the reports, please disregard this reminder. Any questions may be directed to School Business and Support Services Division at 217-785-8779.

Special Education

Clarification of reporting requirements for Indicator 11 on Illinois State Performance Plan

Indicator 11 of the Illinois State Performance Plan measures the percent of children with initial parental consent to evaluate, who were evaluated and had initial eligibility determined within 60 (calendar) days for this school year. Previously, the Illinois State Board of Education received directive from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) that this data should be collected on both initial evaluations and reevaluations.

ISBE has recently received clarification from OSEP indicating only **initial** eligibility determinations are necessary for Indicator 11 data reporting, not reevaluations. Districts are not required to retroactively correct or delete any reevaluation dates already entered through iePoint>. However, only **initial** parental consent and eligibility determination dates should be reported in the future. Please direct any further questions concerning Indicator 11 data reporting to **Scott Beever** at 217-782-5589.

Curriculum and Instruction

Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) now available

The Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) is now available directly from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). PECAT will help school districts conduct a clear, complete, and consistent analysis of written physical education curricula, based upon national physical education standards. The PECAT is customizable to include local standards. The results from the analysis can help school districts enhance existing curricula, develop their own curricula, or select a published curriculum, for the delivery of quality physical education in schools. You can download or order print copies of the PECAT at: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/PECAT/>.

Those Who Excel

Illinois 2006-2007 Teacher of the Year available for speaking

Joe Fatheree, the 2006-2007 Illinois Teacher of the Year, is currently scheduling speaking engagements. Joe is Technology Director at Effingham High School and has done some incredible things both in and outside of the traditional classroom. If you are seeking a motivational, inspirational speaker for your next workshop, conference, assembly, or meeting, you want Joe as a presenter! Please call **Susie Cisna** at 217-540-1100 for scheduling information.

2007-2008 Those Who Excel nominations now available

Nomination forms for the 2007-08 Those Who Excel program are now available online at http://www.isbe.net/those_who_excel.htm. The deadline for submission is May 7. If you prefer a hard copy of the form please contact **Ann Muraro** or **Urlonda Briggs** at 217-782-4648.

Resources

Third Grade Cabbage Plant Program

Bonnie Plant Farms supply free cabbage plants to third grade students along with directions on how to transplant this starter in a small two foot by two foot garden outside of their house and how to water and take care of it.



Then when the cabbage is mature, and ready to be harvested the student takes a picture of the plant and sends the picture to Bonnie Plant Farms. Every student entering a picture of his or her cabbage has his or her name put in for a drawing for a \$1000 check to be used, without restriction, for their college education ten years later.

For more information, visit

<http://www.bonnieplants.com/Home/tabid/36/ctl/Terms/3rdGradeCabbageProgram/tabid/58/Default.aspx> or contact **Craig Schlosser** at bugs@invet.com.

Note: Reference to commercial entities, products or trade names within information provided by the Illinois State Board of Education does not constitute an endorsement by ISBE and does not imply discrimination against other similar products.

Student Opportunities

Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholarship for Academically Talented 7th Graders

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation is offering students the opportunity to apply for their Young Scholars Program. The Foundation provides exceptional students with individualized educational guidance and educational services, which could include tutors, summer programs, on-line classes, computers, and tuition throughout high school.

The Young Scholars Program is highly competitive and attracts outstanding applicants from across the United States. The specific criteria for consideration are:

- Current 7th grade students
- Strong academic record, awards/honors, teacher recommendation
- Financial need
- Motivation, Leadership
- An appreciation for the arts, music, literature, or similar fields

Application materials will be available on the Foundation's website at

www.jackkentcookefoundation.org along with more information about the Foundation itself in early February.

Candidates must submit their completed application, with all materials specified in the program guidelines, by the receipt deadline of May 7, 2007.

Professional Development

Lexile Conference

The 2007 Lexile National Reading Conference will focus on what educators can do today to eliminate reading achievement gaps and promote educational equality for all students. Educators will learn how The Lexile Framework for Reading makes students™ test scores actionable, enabling them to use Lexile measures to inform instruction and improve the development of literacy skills across the curriculum, in the library and at home. The conference will provide a collaborative forum for educational practitioners, literacy experts and Lexile users to learn about and share best practices for using Lexiles to prepare students for post-secondary success by Reading Beyond the Classroom.

The conference is geared toward:

- K-12 classroom and special educators
- Post-secondary educators
- Reading and literacy specialists
- Library and media specialists
- Curriculum and instruction specialists
- State, district and school administrators
- Education industry professionals
- Researchers

For more information, visit:

<http://www.lexile.com/DesktopDefault.aspx?view=ed&tabindex=4&tabid=88>

Nutrition

Storage of Commodities over summer break

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) policy does not allow “over summer” storage of prior year commodities at the Lanter warehouse. For example, we are currently in school year 2007; at the end of the 2007 school year, we will not allow school year (SY) 2006 commodities to be held in the warehouse. This policy is an attempt to reduce/eliminate out-of-date commodities being shipped in the subsequent school year. If you have 2006 commodities you know you are not going to use, please

contact the Food Distribution Program as soon as possible so we can unallocate these items from you and allocate them to schools that can use them before the expiration date. You can find what 2006 commodities you have been allocated by looking at your most recent Monthly Commodity Bulletin on the Illinois Commodity System.

Again, we need to hear from you quickly. If we do not receive notice to unallocate commodities, we will deliver these commodities to schools with the April 2007 delivery unless you have taken delivery prior to then. We also request that if you are going to hold any 2007 items over the summer break, you take delivery of those items within the first two delivery periods in SY2008. You can call Food Distribution Program staff at 800-545-7892 or email jflentje@isbe.net. Please contact the Food Distribution Program soon so we can avoid unwanted commodities being delivered to your school.

Department of Defense fresh fruit and vegetables

For the current school year, the Department of Defense (DOD) allowed participation in the program to all schools that requested to participate subject to a \$500 allocation floor. The Illinois State Board of Education allocated the money we could spend with DOD amongst all schools that selected *yes* under *Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Participation* on the *Annual Order Forms* menu option on the Illinois Commodity System (ICS). Recent reports from DOD indicate many schools that have money allocated to them have yet to place any orders for fresh fruits or vegetables. Schools can see how much money has been allocated to them by selecting *Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Participation* on the *Annual Order Forms* menu option on ICS. Those schools that have not spent any of the money allocated to them are advised to contact DOD at 800-795-3544 to begin placing orders.

Don't Delay! Last Chance to Register for Illinois Schools Can! Regional Workshops

Illinois Schools Can! Putting School Wellness Policies into Action is a regional workshop for K-12 school staff implementing school wellness initiatives. The workshop is sponsored by the Illinois Soybean Association and presented by the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents and the Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program.

Registration is \$20 per person for five CPDU credits. By sending a team to the workshop, elementary schools can

earn extra credit towards a competitive mini-grant designed to assist schools to prepare and apply for the HealthierUS School Challenge. Don't delay; registration deadlines begin February 7, 2007 for the six regional workshops.

For additional conference information, please visit the Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program website at <http://www.kidseatwell.org/> or call 800-466-7998.

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/2007/newsclips/070202.htm>

