



Illinois State Board of Education

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Weekly Message

Jesse H. Ruiz, Chairman
Dr. Christopher J. Ward, Vice Chair
Dr. Vinni M. Hall, Secretary
Dr. Andrea S. Brown
Dean E. Clark
Dr. David L. Fields
Edward J. Geppert, Jr.
Brenda J. Holmes
Joyce E. Karon

Dr. Randy J. Dunn, State Superintendent

February 6, 2006

Weekly Message from State Superintendent Randy Dunn

Good afternoon.

Without a new and burning issue I feel compelled to address today, let me instead follow up with some additional comments on what I wrote about last week.

It's been quite awhile since I've had as much email feedback as I had from last Monday's opener about my take on *The World is Flat*. Who figured? I thought most would be getting somewhat weary of it by now. I have been somewhat myself—you can't go to a meeting or conference anymore where it doesn't come up in some fashion.

Anyway...probably the most clever subject line I saw in the set of responses I received after last week was this one: "The World is Flat' and so is our funding of the gifted." The writer appropriately talked about our responsibility at the State level as well to extend the learning of our brightest students in math and science through summer academies, after-school and Saturday programs, mentors, and the like.

Another thread of electronic correspondence centered around the fact that our preparation of elementary- and intermediate-level teachers in math and science may be insufficient in terms of both content and pedagogy; yet, these grades are where the opportunity is richest to foster students' love of math and science. This once again renewed the personal guilt I carry about my own dismal efforts at doing science instruction as a fourth-grade teacher at the start of my career. Unfortunately, my *science* lessons often were much closer to *reading* lessons once you got right down to it. I do sense that today's elementary and intermediate teachers are coming out of their college and university programs with a much better math/science knowledge base and skill set than I had from my teacher preparation program in the late 1970s.

Still another line of messages cautioned that we can't allow the arts and humanities to take a back seat to science and mathematics if we are to fulfill our responsibility to nurture creative thinkers. A great submission from one person in this vein: "We need to create adults who can *contribute* as much as they *compete* in the global world, not only because they have skills, but because they understand the connected nature of living organisms—human beings included." So true.

Probably most of you are aware of President Bush's call for training in math and science Advanced Placement coursework for some 70,000 high school teachers nationally. One thing that we will all want to monitor carefully is that this initiative is not allowed to be done on the cheap or by otherwise weakening the rigors of the AP experience; taking a demanding, college-level course, such as an AP course, provides one of the best indicators of whether a high school student will successfully complete a bachelor's degree.

On Tuesday, The College Board will be releasing its information on Advanced Placement participation and performance here in Illinois over the past year. We've had some success of late, with growth in the number of students participating, the number of exams taken, and the percentage of students scoring 3+ on the exam. (AP tests are scored from 1 to 5, with a 3 typically being necessary for post-secondary credit to be awarded.) You will want to look at the Illinois data when it is released.

Table of Contents

Upcoming Deadlines.....	2
Honoring Coretta Scott King.....	2
United States Department of Ed .	2
NCLB	2
Nutrition	3
Accountability.....	3
English Language Learning	3
Rules.....	4
External Assurance.....	4
Special Education	5
Grants.....	5
Professional Development	5
Research	6
Employment Opportunities	6
In the News	6

As a final note—some of your colleagues in some random parts of the state may have had trouble getting the *Weekly Message*, due to problems from our end that we are fast trying to remedy. Remind them that they can always access the *Weekly* from the ISBE homepage.

I'll continue to see many readers as I travel the state helping to build support for school construction funding as part of Governor Blagojevich's jobs bill. The need is so great for this in so many schools of this state...

Have a great week. Just a reminder, the *Weekly* will come to you on Tuesday next week, as the Lincoln Birthday holiday is on Monday.

Randy Dunn

Upcoming Deadlines

- Illinois Alternate Assessment materials ordering deadline – **February 10, 2006**
- National Youth Science Camp Applications – **February 17, 2006**
- Rulemaking Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Deadline for Public Comment - **February 20, 2006**
- Rulemaking Part 25 (Certification), Deadline for Public Comment - **February 20, 2006**
- Rulemaking Part 305 (School Food Service), Deadline for Public Comment - **February 20, 2006**
- National Center for Urban School Transformation Awards – **February 27, 2006**
- Grow Your Own Teacher Grants – **March 1, 2006**
- Fordham University National School Changes Awards applications – **March 3, 2006**
- 21st Century Community Learning Center Proposals – **March 15, 2006**
- Automated External Defibrillator Grant Applications – **March 30, 2006**
- American Stars of Teaching Award nominations – **April 15, 2006**
- Public Comment on Special Education Rulemaking – **August 10, 2006**

Honoring Coretta Scott King

Flags at State buildings to fly at half staff on February 7

Governor Rod Blagojevich has ordered flags at all State facilities lowered to half staff on Tuesday, February 7, in honor of civil rights leader **Coretta Scott King**.

This is provided as an information-only item to schools. The decision about flying school building flags at half staff is the determination of each district.

United States Department of Education (USED)

Evidence-based help desk

The What Works Clearinghouse, established by the United States Department of Education (USED) Institute of Education Sciences, recently launched an Evidence-Based Education Help Desk at <http://whatworkshelpdesk.ed.gov/>.

The Help Desk mission is to provide policymakers, practitioners and researchers with easy-to-use resources to advance evidence-based education. Specifically, the Help Desk offers resources to assist in conducting rigorous evaluations of education programs, sponsoring evaluations and identifying and implementing evidence-based programs.

Knowledgeable moderators are available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, by phone at 1-866-WWC-9799 or by email at info@whatworksed.gov.

NCLB

Defining a full academic year for assessment purposes

The Illinois State Board of Education has developed *Questions and Answers* on the change to May 1 enrollment date defining a full academic year for assessment purposes under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The *Questions and Answers* are posted online at:

http://www.isbe.net/nclb/pdfs/QA_May1_fullacademicyear.pdf.

Nutrition

Wellness Policy Toolkit



A model local wellness policy toolkit was mailed to superintendents late last week to provide information and resources needed to develop local wellness policy. The toolkit includes a step-by-step action plan. School principals were sent a model local wellness policy template.

Other new resources to assist schools include:

- *Nutrition Education That Works: An Integrated Approach* – a new online program to help educators meet nutrition education goals - This training program will provide Pre-K to Grade 5 teachers with information and skills needed to successfully integrate Team Nutrition lessons into core curriculum and link them to Illinois Learning Standards.
- *Building a Healthy a La Carte Program* - A new on-site training program for school food providers will be available in spring 2006 to assist school food service staff in shaping nutritionally and fiscally sound a la carte programs

Accountability

Homeless students – Title I funds

Illinois has recently received a response to its follow-up report on the spring 2005 Title I monitoring by the U. S. Department of Education. One of the areas the response asked us to ensure that all superintendents were aware of concerns the use of Title I funds and services to homeless students.

As a reminder on the use of Title I funds and services for homeless students, reservation of funds for homeless students in Title I funds for non-title I Schools - Section 1113 states “...(c)(3)(A) ”(3) *RESERVATION. A local educational agency shall reserve such funds as necessary under this part to provide services comparable to those provided to children in school funded under this part to serve—(A) homeless children who do not attend participating schools, including providing educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where children may live....”*

Please consider this provision as you complete any amendments for eGrants this year or for 2006-07.

If you have questions please call **Rich DeHart** at 217-782-2948.

English Language Learning

Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives and District Improvement Plans

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has posted the Fiscal Year 05 (FY05) Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) determinations for English language proficiency in response to the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Title III mandate. To view the FY05 determinations go to <http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/titleIII.htm> .

FY 05 is the second year that AMAO calculations were made in Illinois. For districts that did not meet the AMAO targets for the last two years, FY 06 is the first year that sanctions under Title III of *NCLB* come into effect. AMAO sanctions apply only to *districts* that receive Title III funds.

AMAO targets are based on the performance of cohorts of LEP students on locally-administered, State-approved English language proficiency assessments that measure student proficiency in English for listening, reading, speaking, writing and comprehension and performance on the State academic assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics. Districts must meet the targets established by the State for each of the following three criteria [English Language Proficiency, Progress toward English Language Proficiency, and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) of the LEP Subgroup] to achieve the AMAOs.

- **Criterion 1: English Language Proficiency:** The percentage of students who score within the “proficient” category must meet or exceed the State targets
- **Criterion 2: Progress toward English Language Proficiency:** 85 percent of LEP students enrolled in a school district that received Title III funds, and with valid English proficiency scores for two years on vertically equivalent test forms, must make progress on a State-approved English language proficiency assessment. Progress is defined as a gain of at least one score point in any of the domains: listening, reading, speaking, or writing. The calculation of AMAO-progress requires a minimum of 30 valid test scores.
- **Criterion 3: Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) of the LEP Subgroup:** The district must also make AYP for the LEP student subgroup.

Calculations are based upon the same formula used for Title I Adequate Yearly Progress.

If ISBE determines a district did not meet AMAOs for two consecutive years, ISBE will require the district to develop a District Improvement Plan (DIP) that will ensure that the district meets such objectives. Districts that did not meet AMAOs must also notify parents of students participating in Title III funded programs of their not meeting AMAOs within 30 days of receipt of notification from ISBE.

If the State determines that the district did not meet AMAOs for four consecutive years, ISBE shall require the district to modify the curriculum, program, method of instruction; or make a determination whether the district shall continue to receive Title III funds and require the district to replace educational personnel relevant to the district's failure to reach the objectives.

With just one year of ACCESS for ELLs™ data, scores from the four local tests (LAS, IPT, LPTS, MAC II) will still be used in the computation of AMAo-progress for FY 06. Scores generated from these four tests in Spring 2005 will be converted to ACCESS scores to establish comparability. The use of these four tests however, will end completely in FY 07. Baseline data from the statewide implementation of the new English language proficiency test, ACCESS for ELLs™ in school year 2005-2006, will be used to establish new targets for AMAO-proficient in FY 06.

Accountability - Year II and District Improvement Plans

Districts that did not meet their AMAOs in FY 04 and FY 05 are required under *NCLB* to complete and keep on file a District Improvement Plan (DIP). Districts can use any format to complete a District Improvement Plan. However, in order to assist districts with this task, ISBE is in the process of including a Title III DIP template in the *Illinois e-Plans*. While districts have the flexibility to utilize any format, they are responsible for addressing the criteria contained in the *Illinois e-Plans* template. The Interactive Illinois School Improvement website is located at <http://iirc.niu.edu/>.

Districts that need to complete a DIP will be invited to an informational meeting. The FY 05 DIP must be completed by June 30, 2006 and

implemented as soon as possible, but no later than the beginning of the next school year.

For more information, please contact the Division of English Language Learning at 312-814-3850.

Rules

Invitation to Comment on Rules

An additional set of proposed rules recently reviewed by the State Board of Education is currently available for public comment. This item has been posted on the agency's web site at <http://www.isbe.net/rules/>; "Proposed Rules and Amendments". Please submit any comments or suggestions you may have to rules@isbe.net.

Part 226 (Special Education)

Deadline for Public Comment: August 10, 2006

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Two other rulemaking items recently adopted by the State Board of Education are now in effect. These sets of rules have been posted on the agency's web site at <http://www.isbe.net/rules/>; choose "Rules Currently in Effect" and scroll to the relevant Part number. (If you print only the affected Sections, remember to include the table of contents for the Part, which changes every time the Part is amended.)

Certification (Part 25)

Affected Sections: 25.105; 25.300; 25.365
Effective Date: January 26, 2006

Grow Your Own Teacher Education Initiative (Part 60)

Affected Sections: All
Effective Date: January 24, 2006

External Assurance

Supplemental Education Services

Districts required to offer supplementary educational services (SES) have additional responsibilities under Federal law in regard to communications with parents. One of those responsibilities is to ensure that parents are consulted in the process of developing an individual tutorial plan (ITP) for their child. It is typical to document that this consultation has occurred by the mechanism of having the parent

sign the ITP, but a district may wish to use alternative or additional mechanisms for confirming that consultation was done. ISBE is leaving it up to districts to work out the mechanism(s) with the SES providers at the time of signing provider contracts so long as the mechanism(s) chosen will be workable and reasonable for the local parents and providers and so long as the same approach is used with all providers within a district. A district's contract with a provider may require the provider to perform the actual work of consultation, but the district remains responsible for having in its records documentation that the consultation occurred.

For questions on any SES-related topic, please contact **Dr. Gary Greene** at 217-782-7970 or ggreene@isbe.net.

Special Education

Directors' Conference set – August 3 and 4, 2006

The Illinois State Board of Education, Department of Special Education Services has set the dates for the Special Education Directors' Conference for Thursday and Friday August 3 and 4, 2006. Updates will be posted at <http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/default.htm> and in future *Weekly Messages* from the State Superintendent.

Grants

Automated External Defibrillator grants available

The Illinois Department Public Health Center for Rural Health has received funds from the Federal government to purchase Automated External Defibrillators (AED) for rural schools. The grant applications are due March 30, 2006.

More information is available on the Illinois Rural Health Association (IRHA) web site at <http://www.ilruralhealth.org/default.asp?page=grants.htm>. For more information contact **Nathela Chatara** at IRHA at 800-500-1560.

Professional Development

Suicide Prevention Workshops

The Illinois Suicide Prevention Coalition and Suicide Prevention Services are sponsoring a series of free public workshops on suicide prevention.

January 12 - Latino Community and Suicide Prevention
Batavia, Illinois - 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Three CEUs

February 9 - Youth and Elderly Suicide Prevention
Belleville - St. Elizabeth's Hospital
8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Speaker: John McIntosh, Ph.D.
Six CEUs

March 3 – Youth and Elderly Suicide Prevention
Rockford - Swedish American Hospital
8:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Speakers: John McIntosh, Ph.D. and Peter Gutierrez, Ph.D.
Six CEUs

April 7 - Protecting Our Youth: Third Annual Symposium
Peoria
Speaker: Madelyn Gould, Ph.D.
For more information: 309-692-1766
Six CEUs

May 18 - Rural Suicide Prevention: New Dimensions
May 19, 2006-- Illinois Suicide Prevention Coalition Meeting
Carbondale - Details to be announced
Six CEUs

June - Men and Suicide: A Chronic Epidemic
Chicago
Details to be announced

All CEUs are for Social Workers, LCPCs and General Education. IAODAPCA CEUs can be applied for. To register call 630-482-9699.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum announces Spring Teacher Workshops

The Education Department of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum spring lineup of complimentary workshops for educators is a part of its *Teaching Teachers* initiative. Through this initiative ALPLM provides educators with strong content-based programs on a variety of topics relevant to the legacy of Abraham Lincoln and Illinois History.

These intense “history lessons” assist educators in developing a solid background on unfamiliar

topics or in mastering a discipline they already know and love. In addition, the hands-on classroom application programs provide ideas and methods for teaching historical content across the curriculum using digital resources, primary documents and material culture.

The series includes:

- *Teaching with Primary Sources* - Saturday, February 25 - 9 to 11 a.m.
Participants explore ways to bring primary sources into the classroom. Participants examine documents from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library collections, including Civil War letters and political cartoons. They will learn how to identify primary sources, determine their credibility as a source, and analyze their content. They will also become familiar with print and digital resources available through the ALPLM.
- *Teacher Orientation Workshop* – March 25, 9 to 11 a.m. or Wednesday March 29, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.
This two-hour workshop introduces educational resources available at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. Teachers learn how to schedule school tours, prepare their class for a museum visit and methods for making the most of a school trip to the Museum. In addition, educators will learn how to access digital resources from the library collections, utilize the library for research and other opportunities for professional development and classroom activities available through the ALPLM Education Department.
- *This Damned Old House, Abraham Lincoln in the White House* - Wednesday, April 12, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Covers the adjustments the Lincolns experienced in moving from Illinois to the White House and the impact of Washington's social scene on the family. The daily routine of President Lincoln is examined from the burdens of the Civil War, to dealing with office seekers, his lack of privacy and the responsibilities of the presidency. Participants also explore Mary Lincoln's renovations and how her endeavors were viewed by her contemporaries. Practical ideas and activities will be offered for incorporating the Lincoln's experience into the classroom curriculum.

All workshops are free and are held in the first floor classroom of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Two continuing professional

development units (CPDUs) are offered for each workshop. To register, contact **Carol Manning**, Education Coordinator, at 217-558-8929 or via email at Carol_Manning@IHPA.state.il.us. For additional information visit the museum website at <http://www.alplm.org>.

Research

America's Digital School Survey

The America's Digital School Survey is a new study designed to examine the use of 1:1 computing and digital learning in the U.S. Schools. The survey will help gather information on the status and future of our digital schools.

For districts that participate in this optional three-part survey responses can be provided by the superintendent or a designated representative, a member of the curriculum and instruction leadership team or a member of your instructional technology leadership team.

Survey respondents will receive a complimentary copy of the report to use for strategic planning; a copy of the Illinois results; and access to an online comparison tool. The survey is available at <http://ads2006.org/main/index.php>.

ISBE employment opportunities

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

Highlights from last week's education news clips are posted at: <http://www.isbe.net/news/2006/newsclips/060203.htm>.

