



Weekly Message

Feb. 9, 2015

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This week the Illinois State Board of Education will meet in Springfield for its regularly scheduled February meeting. Originally, this meeting was to be held as a video conference; however, since it's the first meeting with the newly reconstituted Board, it will be held Wednesday in Springfield to serve as an orientation so that all members are able to meet face to face.

Last month a new chairman, James Meeks, took over and just last week four new members were appointed to the State Board. The new members who are joining the Board include:

Lula Ford – Ford brings 34 years of experience as a teacher, principal and assistant superintendent to the Board. She also served as a commissioner on the Illinois Commerce Commission and as the assistant director of Illinois Central Management Services.

Ford began her career as an elementary school teacher in Chicago Public Schools. Throughout her three decades at CPS, she was also a counselor and principal. Ford earned the Principal of Excellence Award from 1992-94. She also served as an assistant superintendent and the chief instruction officer.

Most recently, Ford was a commissioner on the Illinois Commerce Commission. She served on that board for 10 years until 2013. Before that, she was the assistant director of Central Management Services.

Ford earned her bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. She also holds two master's degrees – one in inner city studies from Northeastern Illinois University and the other in vocational counseling from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Craig Lindvahl – Lindvahl brings more than 35 years of experience in education and business to the Board. Lindvahl is an award-winning educator who has earned the Milken National Educator Award. He has twice been a finalist for Illinois Teacher of the Year.

Lindvahl is currently the executive director of the Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship, which is a company that educates future business leaders. He oversees the Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) program and speaks across the country about CEO and millennial and economic development. Lindvahl spent 34 years in Teutopolis District 50 schools. He taught music, band, television production and entrepreneurship programs. Some of the accomplishments during his tenure include tripling the size of

Table of Contents

Student Health Issues	3
Standards and Assessments	4
Rules and Waivers.....	5
Nutrition and Wellness Programs	6
School Safety.....	6
Student Opportunities.....	7
Early Childhood	7
Illinois Learning Standards	8
Those Who Excel.....	9
In Brief	9

the district band program and the creation of a television production program. He also led a group of students to the Marshall Islands to produce a student-led documentary about the country and culture. The product was distributed to 5,000 schools through the Peace Corps.

Lindvahl is also an award-winning filmmaker, having earned 12 Mid-America Emmy Awards and 11 Telly Awards for his writing, producing, camera work and editing. Projects have taken him all over the world and given him the opportunity to work with students from more than 25 countries. He currently owns Callan Films Corp., which produces documentaries and corporate projects.

Roberta Parks – Parks brings more than 35 years of experience to the position. She is the vice president for UnityPoint Health Methodist|Proctor Foundation, overseeing the \$27 million organization, which benefits two hospitals and doctors in the system, along with Methodist College. This also includes fund development; donor relations; and communications regarding major gifts, planned giving and special events.

Prior to joining UnityPoint in 2013 Parks worked for 25 years for the Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce, including four years as president. She was responsible for all operations of the 1,100-member organization. Parks was directly responsible for government affairs, education, transportation and community development programs. She has also worked for the City of Peoria as the intergovernmental coordinator. She worked in tandem with the mayor and City Council to serve the people of Peoria. Parks is a graduate of Bradley University, with a bachelor's degree in business management.

Eligio Cerda Pimentel – Pimentel has a demonstrated track record of supporting education in underprivileged communities. He brings nearly 20 years of professional experience, both as an attorney and engineer, to the Board.

Currently, Pimentel is an attorney and board member at McAndrews, Held & Malloy, Ltd. He joined the firm as an associate in 1996, working his way up to become a member of the board. Pimentel is a patent attorney focusing on litigation and he maintains a transactional practice focusing on intellectual property rights.

Pimentel is an avid supporter of providing educational opportunities to economically disadvantaged children. He is currently on the Board of Directors of Cristo Rey High School, serving students on Chicago's southwest side who could not otherwise afford a private college-prep education. Pimentel also served on the Board of Directors of the Mary Crane Center, which promotes early-childhood education on Chicago's west and northwest sides.

Pimentel is the son of migrant farm workers from California's Central Valley. He went on to Stanford University, earning a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. He worked for three years as an engineer at the Bechtel Corp. and then decided to go to law school, earning his Juris Doctorate from the University of Minnesota.

Finally, as you are likely aware, five infants and one adult in Cook County were diagnosed last week with measles. I encourage you to review the requirements for notification that we've provided elsewhere in this newsletter. Statewide, 98.32 percent of all reported public and (recognized) nonpublic schoolchildren in

Illinois have had the measles vaccine, according to ISBE's 2013-14 immunization data. The media has been very focused on this issue and hopefully that is increasing awareness.

Thanks,
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>)
- **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
- **Deadline to complete survey to participate in the PARCC Diagnostic Field Test** – Feb. 20 (www.cvent.com/Surveys/Welcome.aspx?s=a732f8c1-066f-4a65-a80f-43faaf52cc9c)
- **Illinois Social Science Standards Revision Task Force meeting** – March 6
- **Deadline for 2015 Illinois Fatherhood Initiative (IFI) Chicago White Sox Fatherhood Essay Contest** – March 6
- **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
- **PARCC Diagnostic Field Test** – April 6-17
- **Eighth annual Illinois School Wellness Conference** – April 23
- **Spring 2015 PARCC ELA/L Field Test Administration** – May 4-June 5
- **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.)

Student Health Issues

Required School Action Following Measles Case in the School

As of Feb. 5, five infants and one adult in Cook County have been diagnosed with measles. In other

states, widespread outbreaks of measles have been documented in school-age children with more than 100 cases confirmed in the United States. Measles is a highly contagious viral disease spread airborne by coughing and sneezing and can cause respiratory, immune system and skin complications. Although no deaths have been reported in the United States this

year, more than 96,000 deaths were reported worldwide in 2013.

Upon the onset of a measles case by a single student or staff member, the school is required to exclude all susceptible students (students who have not presented proof of immunity or vaccination) until acceptable proof of immunity is received by the school or until 21 days after the onset of the last reported measles case. Students with a written statement from a physician may be eligible for homebound instruction during the period of isolation per 23 Il. Adm. Code 1.520 and 23 Il. Adm. Code 226.300.

The Illinois Control of Communicable Disease Code, Section 690.520, spells out the requirement for unvaccinated students to be isolated during the period of potential transmission – “A notice shall be sent home with each student who has not presented proof of immunity (against measles), explaining that the student is to be excluded, effective the following morning, until acceptable proof of immunity is received by the school or until 21 days after the onset of the last reported measles case (in the school).” (<http://ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/077/077006900D05200R.html>)

Acceptable proof of immunity shall consist of:

- A written record from the student's physician or a health professional that indicates dates of vaccination and type of vaccine administered; or
- A statement from a physician indicating the date when the student had measles; or
- A laboratory report indicating that the student has a protective measles antibody titer as measured by a test with demonstrable reliability.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that students who are being taken for a measles vaccine or booster also receive the current vaccine against influenza. Both diseases are spread by the same route and affect the respiratory system.

Sexual Health Education Course Available for Health Teachers and Registered Nurses

ISBE has a limited number of slots available for a free web-based course, “ABC’s – Abstinence, Birth Control and Condoms,” which will help health

teachers meet state law requirements specifying content in sexual health education courses for students in grades 6-12.

Registered nurses who work in Illinois public schools grades 6-12 and could be called upon to be a resource to the health teacher or answer student questions are also invited to enroll in this internet-delivered course.

Participants are asked to send the following information to Jackie Ruenzi at jruenzi@isbe.net no later than March 1:

- Name of the staff person who will be taking the training (Limited to licensed health teacher or registered nurse who provides some classroom instruction on sex education.)
- Email address and district name (Home email is permissible if you plan to complete this course on a personal email account.)
- ZIP code (For purposes of tracking the trainings geographically.)
- Requested starting date to begin the training (Training must be scheduled to start between Feb. 6 and June 26.)

Participants will have 30 days from their start date to complete the training. Sign-in information will be sent to participants via email.

Six hours of continuing education credit are available upon course completion. For more information on the course content, please contact Jessica Gerdes at JGerdes@isbe.net or (312) 814-8252.

Standards and Assessments

Still Time to Apply for the PARCC Diagnostic Field Test April 6-17

Illinois schools can still apply to participate in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Diagnostic Field Test (for reading comprehension and/or math comprehension). The field test will be administered April 6-17.

Schools must complete the following survey to start the participation process: www.cvent.com/Surveys/Welcome.aspx?s=a732f8c1-066f-4a65-a80f-43faaf52cc9c. The survey must be completed by **Feb. 20**.

For questions regarding the administration of the diagnostic assessment field test, please contact Pearson's PARCC Diagnostic Help Center at (888) 493-9888, option #2 (open Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.) or email parccdiagnostic@support.pearson.com.

More information about the Diagnostic Assessments is available online at <https://pearsononline.webex.com/pearsononline/ldr.php?RCID=9a6d17467f0d1f8f49d07962fe6d8a44>.

Participants Sought for PARCC ELA/L Field Test This Spring

PARCC seeks participants for a spring 2015 field test of the English language arts/literacy (ELA/L) Performance-Based Assessments in grades 3-11.

This field test will examine the quality of newly developed tasks for inclusion in the 2015-16 assessment. These ELA/L items are being field-tested separately because they require longer, written responses. Each participating student will respond to one task that could be either literary analysis, research simulation or narrative writing.

The field test administration may occur any time between May 4 and June 5. Interested schools and districts should complete this interest survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PARCC_ELA_FT. ISBE will contact those interested with additional details.

Please contact (866) 317-6034 with any questions.

Resources Available to Assist Computer-Based PARCC Exam Administration

Two documents are now available for schools administering the computer-based PARCC assessments this spring.

The PARCC Map to Technology Guides (see <http://www.isbe.net/ed-technology/pdf/parcc-map-tech-guides.pdf>) provide a map to essential information regarding PearsonAccess Next, TestNav and technology-related tasks for the PARCC assessments.

The Infrastructure Trial - Hot Topics Quick Guide (see <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ed-technology/pdf/parcc-infrastructure-trial.pdf>) provides a summary of the PARCC Infrastructure Trial information, themes and recommendations.

PARCC Test Administrator Walkthrough Webinar Scheduled for Feb. 10

A webinar is scheduled for Feb. 10 to provide information for PARCC test administrators and proctors, with an emphasis on online administration.

ISBE staff will walk through several aspects of the test administration manual, discuss the use of PearsonAccess Next and TestNav 8 and answer questions from participants. This webinar is intended as a supplement to local test administration trainings.

The webinar is intended for test administrators, proctors and test coordinators, particularly those administering the online version of the test.

After registering, participants will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

- **Title:** Test Administrator and Proctor Webinar
- **Date:** Feb. 10
- **Time:** 3:30 p.m.
- **Register:** <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5190891515418412034>

Rules and Waivers

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that two sets of amendments recently adopted by ISBE are now in effect. Changes have been posted at www.isbe.net/rules/archive/default.htm. Please choose "Rules Currently in Effect" and scroll to the Part number.

Part 425 (Voluntary Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Schools): Requires nonpublic schools to submit proof of nonprofit status when registering with the State Board; aligns the rules to Section 27-3 regarding recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and to the Illinois Department of Public Health's rules for

tuberculosis control; and in response to P.A. 98-663, effective June 23, 2014, requires recognized nonpublic schools to review their emergency and crisis response plans, as per the School Safety Drill Act [105 ILCS 128].

Affected Sections: 425.20 and 425.30

Effective Date: Jan. 22, 2015

Part 5001 (Access to Information of the State Board of Education under the Freedom of Information Act): Responds to P.A. 98-1129, effective December 3, 2014, regarding requests under FOIA that are considered to be “voluminous” and requests for records that are posted online.

Affected Sections: 5001.210, 5001.300 and 5001.510

Effective Date: Jan. 21, 2015

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Rise & Shine Illinois Breakfast Grant Opportunity Available for Schools

Rise & Shine Illinois is offering grants of up to \$5,000 to help schools cover the costs of providing free breakfast to students in need.

Under the School Breakfast Program (SBP), federal reimbursements are available to all public schools for breakfasts served to low-income children yet only 45 percent of eligible students actually receive breakfast.

Participation is often low because breakfast is either served in isolation before the start of the school day or there is a stigma surrounding students needing free or reduced-price meals.

Rise & Shine Illinois works with schools to reduce these barriers to participation by implementing alternative breakfast models such as Breakfast in the Classroom and Grab N Go.

While the cost of food for the SBP is reimbursed, schools need equipment and supplies, such as insulated bags, point-of-service terminals, Grab N Go carts and trash cans to make this program work. Rise & Shine Illinois offers grants to cover these extra expenses.

Rise & Shine Illinois has awarded \$200,000 total to schools throughout the state since 2013, helping to increase breakfast participation in some districts by more than 200 percent.

Grants for 2015 are available for up to \$5,000 each. The next application deadline is Feb. 15. Contact schoolbreakfast@gcfd.org to apply.

School Nutrition Industry Conference Coming to Springfield & Lisle

ISBE, the Illinois School Nutrition Association (ILSNA) and the Illinois Industry Advisory Board invite school staff to attend the upcoming 2015 School Nutrition Industry Conference (SNIC), which will be held at two locations this year.

This program is a professional development opportunity offered jointly by ILSNA and ISBE. The theme for the 2015 SNIC will be “Back to Basics,” and the event will include new food products and technology to simplify the food service operation as well as food service equipment.

SNIC 2015 will first be held on Feb. 24 at the Crowne Plaza Springfield and then on Feb. 25 at the Hilton Lisle/Naperville.

Participants should complete their registration information for one of the event locations online at <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07eaatexq0e883f451&llr=te5dkreab>.

Attendees will receive four continuing education units (CEU). There is no charge for ILSNA members, and the non-member registration fee is \$25.

Contact the ILSNA office at (217) 529-6578 or info@ilsna.net for more information.

School Safety

Administrators Invited to Participate in Short School Climate Survey

Prevent School Violence Illinois (PSVI), in partnership with the National School Climate Center (NSCC), requests administrator participation in a short school climate survey.

PSVI is a statewide coalition working with school stakeholders to transform schools by addressing bullying and creating optimal conditions for effective learning and healthy development. Jonathan Cohen, president and founder of NSCC, has developed a short,

online survey asking district superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals and assistant principals to share opinions about the importance of climate to the academic, social and emotional successes of students. The survey should take five to eight minutes to complete.

The survey can be accessed at <https://ethn.io/57139>.

Please place the letters ‘Illi’ in the box on the first page if you would like to be identified as an Illinois educator. If you have questions about the survey, please contact Jonathan Cohen at jonathancohen@schoolclimate.org. For questions about PSVI, please contact Sarah Schriber, director, at sarah@psvillinois.org.

Student Opportunities

2015 Illinois Fatherhood Initiative Chicago White Sox Fatherhood Essay Contest

The 2015 Illinois Fatherhood Initiative (IFI) Chicago White Sox Fatherhood Essay Contest is now open to all school-aged children in the state. This year’s theme is “What My Father Means to Me.” More than 400,000 students have participated in past years.

Twelve student participants will each receive a \$100 BrightStart college scholarship.



All students submitting an essay through their school will receive a certificate of participation and gifts from IFI’s sponsor partners. One hundred and fifty-six finalists will be recognized on May 9 at the IFI Faces of Fatherhood Celebration and then treated to a Chicago White Sox baseball game. Twelve finalists will be invited to the June 10 IFI Fatherhood Dinner Celebration at the Union League Club of Chicago, and four of these 12 finalists will be treated to a Chicago White Sox baseball game and be able to throw the pre-game ceremonial first pitch.

The top 100 participating schools will each receive a starter kit of fathering resources. All fathers who provide a “dad’s response” to their child’s essay will become charter members in the new IFI 21st Century Dads Club.

The deadline for submissions is March 6. For more information and entry materials, visit <https://mlsdc01-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/67b2c58a001/68a91065-953b-4df7-b04f-287dadfe844.pdf>.

For additional information please email information@4fathers.org or call (800) 996-DADS.

National Youth Science Camp Accepting Applications for Summer 2015 Experience

The National Youth Science Camp is accepting applications from Illinois graduating seniors for an all-expense paid summer 2015 camp experience in West Virginia.

This camp is a residential science education program where students from around the country are challenged academically in exciting lectures and hands-on activities and have opportunities to participate in outdoor adventure programs. The goal of the camp is to gain a deep appreciation for the great outdoors and establish friendships that last a lifetime.

Students may apply online at <http://apply.nysc.org>. Please contact Tara Bell at tbell@isbe.net with any questions.

Early Childhood

State Superintendent Koch Announces New KIDS Implementation Plan

Kindergarten is a critical link between a child’s first five years, when 90 percent of brain development occurs, and the beginning of the K-12 educational journey toward college and career readiness. Studies have shown that by kindergarten, the achievement gap is already present and often widens over time. The state’s early childhood system seeks to target and tailor services to close achievement gaps early and implement birth-to-grade 3 alignment strategies that will maintain early gains. As we continue to develop an aligned, data-driven educational pipeline that will support each and every child in achieving college and career readiness, it is important for the state to have data across the continuum to track the progress of children and respond accordingly.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has been working with piloting school districts and education stakeholders to review, analyze and develop a strategy regarding implementation of the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS). The purpose of this initiative is to capture statewide data on the school readiness of kindergartners, a milestone toward college and career readiness. KIDS data is a tool for parents, districts, local communities and the state to develop responsive policies to support school readiness. The data can also be integrated into existing instruction, assessment and reporting systems to inform instruction and meet other local purposes.

As we have worked with stakeholders and the piloting districts, concerns have been raised with the initial implementation plan for the KIDS assessment. In response, we have modified the implementation plan. ISBE will partner with education partners this spring to raise awareness and provide support to local districts. The state will move toward collecting and reporting school readiness data for all kindergartners over the next three school years.

- Year One: Awareness, Planning and Training (2015-16)
 - Raise awareness with parents, teachers and administrators
 - Begin planning with instructional teams to review existing assessments and reports and plan for training
 - Teacher, administrator and coach training
 - Districts may choose to begin partial implementation with some teachers
- Year Two: Partial Implementation (2016-17)
 - Administration of the instrument utilizing flexibility options:
 - Using only a subset of core domains, reducing the number of measures
 - Implementing with a subset of students
 - Districts may choose to begin full implementation
- Year Three: Full Implementation (2017-18)
 - Collecting and reporting school readiness data for all kindergartners

- Training new teachers and supporting existing teachers
- Allowing school districts to report school readiness data utilizing approved alternative kindergarten readiness assessments

Through close collaboration with our partners at WestEd, we have used the pilot years to learn more about meeting the needs of schools and districts. In response, there have been improvements to the instrument, modifications to the administration requirements and a new project to show clear alignment to attainment of state standards. This new implementation plan is the next step in tailoring KIDS to meet the needs of our state. The KIDS instrument is provided to the field as a developmentally appropriate school readiness instrument with no direct per-child cost. In response to feedback from school districts, ISBE will work with education stakeholders to explore additional school readiness instruments, including PARCC K-2 assessments, which meet state goals. This spring, ISBE will provide all school districts with a KIDS Implementation Toolkit and begin engaging each in the planning process.

For more information, please visit www.illinoiskids.org or email kids@isbe.net.

Illinois Learning Standards

New Physical Development and Health Standards to be Implemented in 2015-16

The revised Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health are ready for implementation during the 2015-16 school year.

We know that healthy minds and bodies are basic to academic success and later in life enhance the ability to contribute to a productive work environment. In order to increase physical education's return on investment for learning and health, [Public Act 97-1102](#) created the [Enhance P.E. Task Force](#) (EPETF). Co-chaired by State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch and Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, director of the Department of Public Health, the task force convened [more than 30 school, physical education and health experts and stakeholders](#) from across the state.

Per its charge, the task force proposed [revisions to Goals 19-24](#) of the Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health, [moving from traditional P.E. to enhanced P.E.](#), including the addition of two new standards that incorporate the latest research and best practices for achieving optimal student health and academic achievement. One proposed new standard covers advocating for the health of individuals, families and communities and another calls for explaining the structures and functions of the brain and how they are affected by different physical activities and fitness levels. In addition to the task force's expertise, the revisions were reviewed by more than a dozen experts across Illinois. Learning standards are set at the state level while districts then write curricula to meet the standards.

During the 2014-15 school year, districts are planning for and phasing in implementation of the new standards to be ready for full implementation of the standards in the 2015-16 academic year.

For more information, view the [Overview of new Learning Standards for Physical Education Requirement webinar](#) and/or [Tips for Implementing the New Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health webinar](#). The Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (IAPHERD) also has a [comprehensive website](#) to assist with implementation of the new learning standards for enhance P.E.

IL Social Science Standards Revision Task Force Meeting March 6 in Normal

Social studies teachers, department chairs, district-wide curriculum directors and related educational organizational representatives are invited to attend the Illinois Social Science Standards Revision Task Force meeting on March 6 at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott in Normal.

The meeting is scheduled for 1 to 4 p.m. Participants will provide their feedback on the task force's draft standards.

Please contact Tara Bell at tbell@isbe.net for additional information and to RSVP your attendance.

Those Who Excel

Illinois Teacher of the Year Steve Elza Available for Speaking Engagements

If you are looking for a dynamic, inspiring speaker, consider Steve Elza, the 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year.

Steve is an Applied Technology teacher at William Fremd High School in Township High School District 211. He didn't follow the conventional path to becoming a teacher and his experiences of being mentored, and being a mentor, are valuable stories for teachers and students considering teaching as a profession. Steve is a career technical educator and can provide excellent insight into preparing students for rewarding careers.

To request Steve for your next event, please visit <http://adc.d211.org/teacher-of-the-year-steve-elza/> and complete the speaker request form.

In Brief

Grant Opportunities

- The Illinois School Library Media Association/Library Book Selection Service Endowment Fund announces its **2015-16 Readers' Choice Grant**. All Illinois libraries registered in any of the Illinois Readers' Choice programs are eligible to apply. More information is available online at www.lbssfund.org. The online application form will be available starting March 15. All grant applications must be submitted by midnight April 30. Applicants must also be registered for the appropriate 2015-16 Readers' Choice program by April 30 (a separate process). Call (309) 341-1099 or email SLMAexsec@gmail.com with questions.
- The Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color has launched its 2015 **COSEBOC School Awards** program which identifies, recognizes and rewards schools that have a proven track record of success in education boys of color in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. Award recipients will receive a \$10,000 cash grant. For details, visit <http://coseboc.org/school-awards>. Interested schools must submit their application by Feb. 23.

Student Contests

- The **National Liberty Museum** is holding a speech and essay contest to coincide with the release of the film “Selma.” The contest is open to U.S. high school students ages 14 to 18. After viewing “Selma,” a Paramount Pictures film about Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement, contestants will respond to the contest topic with an original 500- to 700-word essay and videotaped speech reading of their essay. Contest prizes include one \$5,000 grand prize. For more details and contest rules, go to <http://libertymuseumselmacontest.org>. The deadline to enter is Feb. 15.
- The National WWII Museum seeks submissions for its **National 2015 High School Essay Contest** and **2015 Middle School Essay Contest**. This year’s essay prompt was inspired by a quote from Ira Hayes, one of the flag-raisers at Iwo Jima, and asks students, “How do you define a hero?” Submissions are due March 31. Winning essays will receive a cash prize. Full contest guidelines and rules are available online at <http://www.nationalww2museum.org/learn/education/for-students/essay-contests/>.
- The **Illinois Heart Rescue Project** invites Illinois high school students to write, edit, produce and upload to YouTube their own 90-second sudden cardiac arrest public service announcement (PSA). The purpose of this competition is to have students create fun and contemporary compression-only CPR videos. The videos will be judged on a local, regional and state level, and the top three will be posted on YouTube for the entire state to vote on the winner. The top video will be played at major sporting events in the Chicago area. Contest details are available at <http://illinoisheartrescue.com/news/illinois-heart-rescue-sponsors-statewide-high-school-video-public-service-announcement-psa-competition/>. The deadline for video submissions is April 15.

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, please visit

www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org or call (888) 454-1341. Upcoming presenters include:

- Doug Fisher: Collaborative Conversations and the Speaking and Listening Standards on March 17.
- Matt Copeland: Facilitating Student Discussion with Socratic Circles on April 15.

Upcoming Events

- The **Illinois Network of Charter Schools 2015 Job Fair** is scheduled for Feb. 28 at UNO Veterans Memorial Campus in Chicago. For more information and to register, visit www.incschools.org/event/2015-incs-teacher-job-fair.

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>.