



Illinois State Board of Education

Weekly Message

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Feb. 11, 2014

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

We are moving forward with the Fiscal Year 2015 budget-making process and preparing to defend the Board’s request before the legislative appropriation committees. Our initial House Elementary and Secondary Appropriation appearance will be on Tuesday, Feb. 18, and we are slated to appear before the Senate Appropriation committee that deals with education on Feb. 27.

Members of the Board and I will be appearing before the committees to advocate on behalf of the Board’s recommendation, which calls for fully funding the General State Aid Foundation Level of \$6,119 and other increases that total approximately \$1 billion. This will not be easy as lawmakers, while supportive of education, are going to be very concerned about any increases to areas of the budget. Last year, one of the first questions that was directed at us was, “Where should we begin additional cuts to schools?”

Through your assistance and advocacy, we were able to realize an increase of about \$140 million for K-12 education last year. Please, consider involving yourself in the legislative process early and often. We must work together to make the collective voice of education heard in Illinois and make a difference in funding for FY15.

Part of the Board’s budget request includes a \$450 million capital request to support districts as they upgrade their technology infrastructure. This funding is targeted toward improving broadband access to schools and local network infrastructure improvements. It does not include money for devices.

Last week, the U.S. Department of Education released guidance to districts on ways to use existing federal funds to improve their digital learning capabilities. The letter outlines several ways to use federal funds currently available to purchase devices for teachers and students, content, professional development and to increase collaboration and communication. You may access the letter at <http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/technology/files/2013/06/Federal-Funds-Tech-DC-.pdf>.

The AP Report to the Nation is being released today and shows that we are making some great strides closing gaps for Latino and low-income students. Illinois, along with Florida, is emerging as a national leader in providing access to AP exams for students. Latino students represented 18.4 percent of Illinois’ Class of 2013 but they represented 19.8 percent of graduates who took at least one AP exam during high school. Furthermore, the number of Latino graduates taking AP courses has more

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than quadrupled in the last decade with 8,661 in 2013 compared to 1,994 in 2003. The percent of Latino students scoring a 3 or higher is also showing gains with 16.1 percent of those Latino test takers earning a 3 or higher in 2013, compared to 14.6 percent in 2012 and 8.1 percent in 2003.

In addition to opening more access for Latino students, we are also providing more opportunities for students from low-income families. Such students comprised 29.3 percent of graduates who took AP exams in 2013, compared to only 19 percent in 2008 and 12.1 percent in 2003. Meanwhile, the number of low-income graduates scoring a 3 or higher nearly tripled in the last five years from 1,969 or 9.7 percent in 2008 to 5,758 or 19.8 percent in 2013. Research shows that minority and low-income students who earn at least a 3 on an AP exam are more likely than their peers to earn higher degrees in college and a college degree within five years of enrolling.

Finally, due to the extraordinary weather conditions we have experienced statewide this winter, we will be offering the option for districts to test during the regular ISAT testing window of March 3 - March 14 or during a modified regular testing window, March 10 - March 21. Testing during the modified window is entirely optional and does not require any special request as it is still considered to be a part of the regular testing window.

All materials for both the regular and modified regular schedule must be ready for pick up by Tuesday, March 25. Early pickup of material may be scheduled.

More guidance related to the modified testing window and pick up options will be made available on the Assessment home page and via the assessment listserv later this week. In addition, we are extending the ACCESS administration window for one week. More information is available later in this message.

Thanks and have a great week!
Chris

Upcoming ISBE Dates and Deadlines

Please note this is not a complete list of events, meetings and deadlines. For questions, call the Illinois State Board of Education at (866) 262-6663 or (217) 782-4321 or visit the agency's official website at <http://www.isbe.net>.

- **ISBE offices closed for Lincoln's Birthday** – Feb. 12
- **ISBE offices closed for Presidents' Day** – Feb. 17
- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 25 (Educator Licensure) and Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois)** – Public comment period ends Feb. 18
- **Deadline to complete Learning Standards Implementation Survey** – Feb. 25
(<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZLW2XG9>)
- **Deadline to submit 2014 School Maintenance Project Grant (Round 2) application** – Feb. 28
(http://www.isbe.net/sbss/smp_grants.htm)
- **Deadline to complete 2013-14 District Technology Plan on IIRC** – Feb. 28 (http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/elearning/html/tech_plan.htm)
- **National School Breakfast Week** – March 3-7
- **ISAT Testing Window and Modified Regular Testing Window** – March 3-14, March 10-21
- **Illinois 5Essentials Survey** – To be conducted March 17 through April 25
- **School Nutrition Employee Week** – May 5-9

- **Applications for the Exception to the 1.0 Percent Cap due** – May 16
- **ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day** – May 26
- **Student Health Data – Vision system report deadline** – June 30
- **ISBE offices closed for Independence Day** – July 4
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Fall 2014** – Friday, August 15, 2014 (See <http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm> for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)

Illinois Learning Standards

Teacher Feedback Requested for Learning Standards Implementation Survey

The Illinois State Board of Education is asking teachers to participate in a learning standards implementation survey.

The purpose of the survey is to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' needs and their progress as they implement the Illinois Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.

The survey will remain open until Feb. 25. Please click here to access the survey:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZLW2XG9>.

Assessment

Severe Weather Extends Testing Schedule for ACCESS for ELLs

Due to the severe weather conditions that many districts have experienced during the current ACCESS administration, ISBE is extending the administration window for one week.

Testing and return shipping deadlines are now seven calendar days later than those in your currently approved schedule. Use of this extra time is optional, not required. Please return your ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS materials for scoring as soon as possible to minimize any delay in processing by MetriTech. Contact UPS to arrange your material pickup at (800) 823-7459.

For questions about testing or the time extension, contact ISBE at (866) 317-6034. Questions about materials and shipping should be directed to MetriTech at (800) 747-4868.

'A Look Into the PARCC Sample Items' Webinar Scheduled for Feb. 18

A live webinar titled "A Look Into the PARCC Sample Items" is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 18, from 11 a.m. to noon.

This webinar will engage participants in the PARCC sample items that are posted on the technology platform. Participants will also be able to view the technology enhancements for these innovative items and examine the accessibility features of the test. A question-and-answer period will follow the presentation.

Space is limited, so reserve your webinar seat now at <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/520890929>.

After registration, participants will receive a confirmation email containing information about how to join the webinar.

- **Title:** A look into the PARCC sample items
- **Date:** Tuesday, Feb. 18
- **Time:** 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. CST
- **System Requirements:** Windows 8, 7, Vista, XP or 2003 Server for PC-based attendees; Mac OS X 10.6 or newer for Mac-based attendees; iPhone, iPad, Android phone or Android tablet for mobile attendees.

Input Sought for IAA Standards Setting

ISBE's Assessment Division is currently undertaking a standards setting process to assist in determining the appropriate performance standard cut scores for the 2013-2014 Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA), which is now aligned to the Common Core Essential Elements (CCEEs).

Teachers that administer the IAA now have the opportunity to provide input on the performance level of their current students based on their professional

observations of student achievement during the instructional process prior to testing. This feedback will then be compared to the actual performance of students once IAA scores are finalized and will be used to help advise policy makers regarding the most appropriate placements of cut scores.

At no time will any data be reported or identified by individual student, teacher, class, grade, school or district. All data and results will be analyzed and reported for the state at large. The anonymity and confidentiality of all data is assured.

Testing coordinators for the IAA and Special Education directors should receive the information to share with teachers this week via email.

School Health Issues

Shortage of Tdap Vaccine is Declared Over by State Health Officials

All students in grades 6 and above should now be compliant with the requirement for the Tdap vaccine, a booster shot for continued protection against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis, commonly referred to as whooping cough.

A temporary shortage of that vaccine occurred over the summer and fall when many states, including Illinois, instituted the additional requirement for that vaccine.

This shortage is now over, and there is sufficient supply of the vaccine at local health departments and physician offices.

School and district monitoring of student health records for compliance with health requirements for attendance at school (23 Ill Admin. Code 1.20) includes verifying proof of vaccination with Tdap or a valid medical or religious waiver.

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Proposed Rule For Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs Personnel

A proposed rule entitled, “Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010,” was published in the Federal Register on Feb. 4, 2014.

The USDA will accept public comments to these proposed rules through April 7, 2014, so please take time to review and provide feedback to the USDA. The complete proposed rule is available online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-02-04/pdf/2014-02278.pdf>.

This proposed rule would establish minimum professional standards for school nutrition personnel who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The proposed rule would also institute hiring standards for the selection of state and local school nutrition program directors and require all personnel in these programs to complete annual continuing education/training.

This proposed rule is expected to provide consistent, national standards for school nutrition professionals and staff. The principal benefit of this proposed rule is to ensure that key school nutrition personnel are meeting minimum professional standards in order to adequately perform the duties and responsibilities of their positions.

Staff with ISBE’s Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division will present a webinar to provide an overview of this proposed rule on Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2014 at 10 a.m. To register, click on the following link: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/235012929>.

For those unable to attend the webinar, it will be recorded and available on our website approximately one week after the live webinar date.

If you have any questions, please contact our division staff at (800) 545-7892 or via email at cnp@isbe.net.

School Breakfast Summits To Promote Benefits of Healthy Morning Meals

The Illinois Hunger Coalition and Illinois No Kid Hungry are holding a series of School Breakfast Summits on the following dates:

- **Feb. 12 - Tinley Park - 10:30 a.m. -2 p.m.**
Hilton Garden Inn, 18335 S. LaGrange Road, Tinley Park, IL 60487. Register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3V8CHYG>.

- **Feb. 21 - Arlington Heights - 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.** Arlington Lakes Golf Club, 1211 S. New Wilke Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005. Register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3V8CHYG>.
- **Feb. 27 - Springfield – 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.** Erin’s Pavilion, 4965 S. Second St, Springfield, IL 62703. Register at <http://www.bit.ly/cilsubmit227>.
- **March – TBD - Champaign**

The summits will focus on how a healthy breakfast can dramatically improve a child’s overall well-being, health and academic future. Participants will learn ways to implement and fund programs through grants, ensuring all kids eat a healthy morning meal.

Innovation and Improvement

Online Professional Development Available for All Illinois Administrators

The Illinois State Board of Education is partnering with the Illinois Principals Association to provide high quality, online professional development for all Illinois administrators.

Administrators are being provided a subscription to the Ed Leaders Network (ELN) and are invited to find out more about this tool by visiting the ELN website at www.edleadersnetwork.org or by exploring the following infographic created to highlight the features of this powerful professional development tool: https://magic.piktochart.com/output/1166587-el_n_2-copy-isbe.

Administrators will receive an email from admin@edleadersnetwork.org that will contain login information.

Over the course of the next couple months, administrators will have several opportunities to learn more about how ELN will enhance educational leadership.

The activities and timeline are as follows:

- Feb 10-14: Administrators receive ELN login credentials

- Feb 19: NCLB Presentation - Flip PD with the Ed Leaders Network
- Feb 24: Live Webinar - Ed Leaders Network Orientation

College and Career Readiness

Applicants Sought for ISBE Science Integrated Curriculum Project

ISBE is seeking applications from interested 6-12 science teachers to participate in writing model science curriculum. The curriculum will focus on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Framework for K-12 Science Education.

The curriculum will be based on the conceptual progression model in Appendix K of NGSS. This work will coincide with the ISBE Mathematics Curriculum Model Units, an integrated K-12 mathematics curriculum developed by a team of educators this past year.

Detailed information about the science curriculum writing team is available online at <http://www.isbe.net/ngss/pdf/ngss-curriculum-writing-letter.pdf>.

Eligible applicants must submit required documents and complete an application, which is posted online at <http://www.isbe.net/ngss/pdf/ngss-curriculum-writing-app.pdf>. The deadline to apply is Friday, Feb. 21.

Illinois Youth Survey

Survey Shows Trends in Substance Abuse, Violence, Other Student Risk Conditions

ISBE encourages district and school administrators to take advantage of the 2014 Illinois Youth Survey, a valuable resource that allows them to track physical, social and mental health indicators for students.

The IYS survey is funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services and is free to all Illinois schools for grades 6, 8, 10 and 12. Participating school administrators receive local IYS reports that document trends in substance abuse, violence and other risk conditions that often impede a conducive and productive learning environment for students. This comprehensive data can be used to support school, district and community-wide planning as well as to

develop grant applications for needed resources to promote a healthy learning environment.

In addition to grounding local assessment needs, school participation in the IYS assures that Illinois can continue to report state and community-level performance measures to federal funders of both block grants and discretionary grants to our state that benefit students, families and schools.

The survey is administered through online or paper format and is available in English and Spanish. Schools may also include up to 30 questions of their choice. A survey date may be selected any time from January to May 2014, at the convenience of each school.

Detailed information about the survey is available on the IYS website at <http://iys.cprd.illinois.edu>, via email at cprd-iys@mx.uillinois.edu or by calling the IYS contractor, the Center for Prevention Research and Development at the University of Illinois, toll free at (888) 333-5612.

School Business Services

Funds Available for Round 2 of the 2014 School Maintenance Project Grant

As the 2014 School Maintenance Grant (SMG) Round 1 is nearing the end of the review and approval process of more than 600 applications, ISBE will release the remainder of funds for another round of grant awards.

The 2014 SMG (Round 2) application will open in ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) on Monday, Feb. 3, 2014 and close on Friday, Feb. 28, 2014. All applications and required paper work must be submitted no later than the Feb. 28 deadline, **no exceptions**. All Health Life Safety (H/LS) Amendments required for the H/LS priority level B must be submitted no later than Feb. 28, **no exceptions**.

All grant awards will be awarded to Emergency and H/LS priority first, then to the other priority levels as funding allows. All applications will be ranked and awarded first by their priority level. Within the priority level, where it is estimated that the funding will be less than the application requests, applications

will be ranked and awarded by in accordance to each district's calculated need index within that priority level.

The 2014 SMG (Round 2) is a dollar for dollar state matching grant program providing awards up to \$50,000 for the maintenance or upkeep of buildings or structures. There is approximately \$18 million available for this round. As this round will have a shorter turnaround application period, some requirements have changed. See the following website for the requirements and further details: http://www.isbe.net/sbss/smp_grants.htm.

Contacts for the program are Kimberly Beachy and Debbie Hemberger in the School Business Services Division. Both may be reached by phone at (217) 785-8779 or email at kbeachy@isbe.net and dhemberg@isbe.net.

2014 School Energy Efficiency Project Grant Program Awards 95 Applicants

ISBE has completed the application review process for the 2014 School Energy Efficiency Project Grant (SEEG), (Round 1) and awarded 95 applicants out of 405. Notification was sent to all awarded grant applicants on Friday, Jan. 24, 2014 via email.

Applications were ranked in accordance with the calculated needs index and approved accordingly to obligate the \$20 million in released funds. For the list of applicant rankings and further information, please see the following link: http://www.isbe.net/sbss/ee_grants.htm.

Contacts for the program are Debbie Hemberger and Kimberly Beachy in the School Business Services Divisions. Both may be reached by phone at (217) 785-8779 or email at dhemberg@isbe.net and kbeachy@isbe.net.

Resource Offers Tips for How to Prepare for Severe Winter Weather Conditions

Extreme cold, ice, sleet and snow are not only dangerous for students and faculty but can also wreck havoc on school buildings and property. ISBE's School Business Services Division has put together a list of tips to help school districts prepare for the hazards of severe winter weather.

Helpful precautions include having licensed professionals inspect and perform routine maintenance on all heating units prior to and during the cold season, sprinkler pipes/lines, roof structures, roof drains, gutters, downspouts, storm sewers, generators, electrical lines and panels. Districts should also stay up-to-date on routine maintenance such as the caulking of windows, doors, roof connections, masonry gaps and expansion joints, etc, to help save energy and prevent water from entering the building and causing more damage, especially during extreme weather conditions.

Districts are also urged to educate all staff on the location of all emergency shut-off valves/switches and to have a plan in place for faculty/staff to routinely maintain and check school buildings. Districts should also review, exercise and update their School Emergency and Crisis Response Plan.

For the full list of “Extreme Weather Preparedness Tips for Schools,” go to http://www.isbe.net/construction/health_safety/pdfs/hls-emergency-winter-planning.pdf.

School Safety

IEMA’s School Security Grant Program Provides \$25 Million for Enhanced Safety

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) has announced the availability of \$25 million in funds for eligible public elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools to make designated safety improvements through the competitive Illinois School Security Grant Program.

The program aims to establish a baseline security level at each eligible public elementary, secondary and post-secondary school in the state.

Last month, IEMA emailed information about the grant program to the chief official for each eligible public K-12 school district, inter-district special education cooperative, community college and university system in Illinois. The emails contained secure access information so school officials can develop and submit their grant application. Only one application from the eligible entity will be accepted.

Based on a review of national crisis situations and consultation with key security experts, Illinois has prioritized protective measures, such as installing reinforced doors, shatter-resistance glass and physical locks for the primary public entrance at schools, to protect students and staff. Schools that have achieved this baseline capability will be able to implement other security measures for public elementary and secondary school districts.

The deadline to apply is Friday, March 14. Applications will be evaluated on a number of criteria, including known hazards, threats and risks; ability of the project to enhance student safety; existence of a current Emergency Operations Plan at the facility where the project is planned; ability to complete the project within the grant period; and more.

More information about the Illinois School Security Grant Program is available at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.

U.S. Senate Youth Program

High School Students From Elmhurst and Sherman Selected to Represent Illinois

Mary-Margaret Koch of Elmhurst and Austin Tuttle of Sherman were selected as delegates to the 52nd annual U.S. Senate Youth Program. They will represent Illinois for a weeklong educational visit to Washington, D.C., in March.

Mary-Margaret Koch attends York Community High School in Elmhurst Community Unit School District 205, where she is the student body president. Mary-Margaret also serves as president of Model United Nations and co-captain of Science Olympiad. In addition, she is an active community volunteer and is the recipient of her school’s Citizenship Award.

Austin Tuttle, a junior at Williamsville High School in Williamsville-Sherman Community Unit School District 15, serves as the treasurer for his Youth and Government delegation and is co-editor of the Youth and Government newspaper. Tuttle is a member of National Honor Society and his school’s scholastic bowl and golf teams. He is also a recipient of his school’s Citizenship Award and volunteers in his community.

Alexander Feltes of Oswego High School in Oswego Community Unit School District 308 was chosen as an alternate to the 2014 program. Vinay Basti of Willowbrook, a Hinsdale Central High School student, was originally chosen as a delegate but was unable to attend.

The U.S. Senate Youth Program was created in 1962. The Hearst Foundations fund the program and provide state delegates with a \$5,000 undergraduate college scholarship and encourage them to continue coursework in government, history and public affairs.

Upcoming Events

Registration Under Way for Annual Statewide ESEA/NCLB Conference

Register now for the annual Statewide ESEA/NCLB Conference, “Preserving Our Learning Space: Creative Teaching Within the Common Core,” which is set for Feb. 18-20 at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers.

This year's program puts emphasis on comprehensive school improvement, including evidence of school turnarounds and transformations, implementation of Common Core standards in Math and English Language Arts, Early Childhood Education, Homeless Education, the integration of assessment into teaching strategies, and much more.

Outstanding keynote speakers, including Ruby Payne, Linda Gojak, Tyler DeWitt, Samuel Betances and others will focus on topics such as understanding poverty and diversity in relation to classroom strategy, national trends in math instruction, best practices in teaching STEM subjects, and the strengthening of creativity and professionalism among teachers. More than 200 highly informative breakout sessions will also be offered.

Information about registration can be found at http://www.thecenterweb.org/jrc/pages/f_events-nclb.html.

In Brief

District Opportunities

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) seeks participants for the third cohort of the **Enhancing**

School Health Services through Training, Education, Assistance, Mentorship, and Support (TEAMS) project. Through the TEAMS project, the AAP provides customized training, resources and technical assistance to school districts that are interested in strengthening policies, practices and infrastructure related to school health services. All public school districts that provide health services (nursing services) for students, excluding charter districts, are eligible to apply. The deadline is Friday, March 14. For more information, go to <https://schoolhealthteams.aap.org/uploads/ckeditor/files/TEAMS%202014%20Request%20for%20Applications.pdf>.

- Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRFC) and Mikva Challenge have released a version of their **Suffrage at 17** voter education curriculum for use in all Illinois high schools. Thanks to the “Suffrage at 17” legislation passed in Illinois last year, 17-year-old students who will be 18 by the Nov. 4, 2014 general election are now eligible to vote in the primary elections. Suffrage at 17 aligns to the Common Core State Standards and utilizes hands-on activities to help students understand the importance of voting. Teachers can download the curriculum for free at <http://www.crfc.org/teaching-materials/suffrage-17-voter-education-curriculum-illinois-edition>.

Professional Development

- The Office of Community College Research and Leadership and the Pathways Resource Center of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign will hold a conference for all K-20 leaders called **Scaling Up Pathways to Results 2014** on Wednesday, March 5, in Champaign. The cost is \$80, which will be waived for educators from Race to the Top districts. For more information and to register, visit <http://ocerl.illinois.edu/projects/pathways/scaling-up-2014/>.

In the News

- Rebecca Wattleworth, a math and science teacher at Warrensburg-Latham High School in Warrensburg, has been selected as a **Hope Street Group 2014 National Teacher Fellow**. She is one of only 13 educators nationwide to be invited to

participate in this fellowship program and is this year's representative from Illinois. To read more, go to <http://www.hopestreetgroup.org/news/releases/hope-street-group-announces-2014-class-national-teacher-fellows>.

Student Opportunities

- The Illinois Liquor Control Commission is holding a **Teen Video Contest** as part of its spring YOUR ACTIONS MATTER! statewide educational campaign. All youth ages 18 years and under can participate in the contest, with the winning spot(s) airing on TV stations throughout the state. The deadline to apply is Tuesday, April 8. For more information, visit www.YourActionsMatter.org. Judges are also needed to review the 30-second video submissions. To serve on the panel, contact Ted Penesis at (312) 814-4802 or ted.penesis@illinois.gov.
- The American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division is sponsoring the **2014 Law Day Art Contest** for students in grades 9-12. Group and individual entries are welcome. This year's theme is "American Democracy and the Rule of the Law: Why Every Vote Matters." The deadline to enter is March 7. For details, visit www.ambar.org/lawday.

Grant Opportunities

- The **Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation** is offering grants to promote the installation of 1 kW photovoltaic (PV) systems at educational institutions serving grades K-12 throughout Illinois. Schools must meet certain criteria in order to be considered. More information, including the application, is available at <http://www.illinoiscleanenergy.org/hta-k-12-solar-schools/>. The deadline to apply is Feb. 20.
- Video Insight, a developer of enterprise IP video surveillance software, will donate more than \$250,000 in video surveillance software and hardware to schools and colleges nationwide in 2014 via a new **Video Insight School Security Grant**. For each month throughout the year, a school or college will be selected to receive the software and equipment. To apply, visit <http://www.video-insight.com/schoolgrant.php> or call (713) 621-9779.

Employment Opportunities

- An **External Vacancy List for ISBE** is available at <http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm>.