



Illinois State Board of Education

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Weekly Message

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State Superintendent (Interim)

February 14, 2007

Message from Interim State Superintendent Christopher Koch

As the wind howled during blizzard conditions in central Illinois, we were notified of many cancellations. Among those, are hearings with the General Assembly including the budget hearing scheduled for today.

As school districts begin to have access to test scores and AYP determinations, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience and diligence with us over the past few months and to review with you what we have done to ensure this situation does not arise again. I also wanted to make a few summary comments about the reports you are receiving this year.

Keep in mind that we have worked diligently with our contractors to get this data to you as quickly as possible. While we are not satisfied with the outcomes-please understand that, as it relates to the upcoming assessment cycle, we are taking every possible precaution to ensure the timeliness of the process--from the delivery of test booklets to the calculation of AYP and issuance of school report cards. We have also asked the federal government to relieve Illinois school districts of the requirement to offer School Choice during this school year, as we certainly recognize that the delay in test results has made this impractical. We await final word on that outcome.

You may have noticed some changes with regard to reports. Starting with the 2006 ISAT tests, districts, schools and families have received more information regarding their students' performance. The student reports provide families with information about the meaning of the scores. The data disks have assisted many districts in their local board presentations. The item analysis report gives districts information about how students performed in relation to the Assessment Framework. These reports also show students' national percentile ranks as well as Lexile reading scores. For 2007, we will continue to offer this information to assist you in your work for teaching and learning.

Thank you for your continued leadership on behalf of Illinois students.

Chris Koch

Upcoming Deadlines

- **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, 2007
- **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

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- **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
- **Waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2007** – August 10, 2007

Rules

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Three new sets of rules recently adopted by the State Board of Education are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency's web site at www.isbe.net/rules; choose "Rules Currently in Effect" and scroll to the relevant Part number.

Part 227 (Gifted Education)

New rules to implement grant program should funding become available.

Affected Sections: All

Effective Date: January 16, 2007

Part 232 (Summer Bridges Program)

New rules setting forth requirements for the implementation of this program.

Affected Sections: All

Effective Date: January 16, 2007

Part 270 (Advanced Placement)

New rules for grants supporting teacher training and efforts to increase participation in AP courses and success on AP exams for those traditionally underrepresented.

Affected Sections: All

Effective Date: January 16, 2007

Fiscal Services

Illinois School Purchasing Network (ISPN)

The Department of Central Management Services has negotiated three master contracts (#4014060, #4014061, & #4014062) for the purchase of school buses. You can check these out on-line at www.purchase.state.il.us. Click on Master Contracts. The contracts are located under the agency, SWC – Statewide contract. You can also access these contracts through their T-Number, T1360 – Buses and Crossing Arms. The contract period

is 2/1/07 – 1/31/08. If you have any questions, please call Tamara Morris at 217-785-8777 or e-mail at tamorris@isbe.net.

Funding and Disbursement

FY07 Title 1 Adjustments Applied to FY08 Allocations

In the fall of 2006, the United States Department of Education (USDE) notified the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) of a nation-wide error made on the 2003 Census figures that would impact the 2007 Title I Final Allocation poverty counts and district allocations. Illinois opted to apply these minimal adjustments to the 2008 Title I allocations. Please access the 2006-07 Title I Basic Allocation Adjustment information at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/FY2007_titleI_adjustments.pdf. These financial adjustments will be applied to the FY 2008 Title I final allocations for each local education agency. If you have questions regarding this information please contact Sally Cray scray@isbe.net or phone (217) 782-5256.

Resources

Make the Choice: Tobacco or Health?

Make the Choice: Tobacco or Health? is an interactive CD – courtesy of the American Association of Chest Physicians and Governor Blagojevich – that aims to encourage women, teens and children not to smoke and help tobacco users to quit.

The comprehensive Speaker's Kit provides the tools to create and present effective tobacco prevention presentations in local schools and the community. The kit includes easy-to-use interactive slides on the history of tobacco, smoking cessation, public policy and more.

The smoking cessation CDs will soon be mailed out to all Illinois elementary schools.

Free Fitness Education Program for 3rd and 4th Graders—*Ready, Set, FIT!*

Ready, Set, FIT! is the American Academy of Family Physicians new curriculum for teaching balancing physical activity, healthy eating, and emotional well-being. *Ready, Set, FIT!* is most appropriate for 3rd and 4th graders and includes skills-based lessons and activities for the classroom, along with ways to involve family physicians, parents, and caregivers. Teachers, register your classroom to receive complete access to the free *Ready, Set, Fit!* lessons and activities at www.readysetfit.org.

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/070209.htm>