



Feb. 18, 2014

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

The U.S. Department of Education (USED) approved our double testing waiver last week. The waiver will allow us to provide flexibility for some schools as they field test the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) this spring. This is a one-year waiver for selected schools that are field testing the full assessments in mathematics or English Language Arts for the PARCC assessment and an alternate assessment, which is being developed by Dynamic Learning Maps for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

This specific waiver allows schools to field test the full PARCC assessments in one content area, either ELA or math, without having to also test students in that same content area with the ISAT. In addition, it will allow us to freeze the AYP status of those schools where the full assessment is being administered in at least one grade. You may access the letter on our website at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/parcc/field-test/parcc-ft-flexibility-approval-letter.pdf>.

We resubmitted our waiver request for flexibility from some requirements of No Child Left Behind but have not received a response from the USED. The sticking point remains our 2016-17 timeline for including student growth in teacher evaluations statewide. Illinois committed this timeline into state law, and we will not accelerate simply to appease the federal government.

This week, we will meet with members of the General Assembly during our first legislative budget hearing for Fiscal Year 2015, and the State Board will convene for its February meeting tomorrow. I will testify with several Board members later today in front of the House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee. We'll stress the need to fully fund GSA and restore many of the cuts we've seen since Fiscal Year 2009. Last week, I met with several members of the legislature to begin laying the groundwork and while they seem receptive to our request, it is certainly going to be a challenge.

On Wednesday, the State Board of Education will meet via videoconference from our offices in Springfield and Chicago. The Board will receive a presentation on the edTPA. The edTPA, developed by Stanford University, is an evidence-based assessment of a teacher candidate's ability to plan, deliver and assess instruction. Colleges and universities are currently piloting the edTPA and it will be required for licensure beginning Sept. 1, 2015. The edTPA is the only product on the market that assesses a teacher candidate's ability to plan, deliver and evaluate student learning and has been field tested for reliability and validity. The meeting will be audiocast live on the internet at our website www.isbe.net.

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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>.

- **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
- **International School Meals Day** – March 6
- **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.)

Assessment

Modified ISAT Testing Window Provided Due to Severe Weather Conditions

Due to the extraordinary weather conditions experienced across the state this winter, ISBE is offering the option for districts to test during the regular ISAT testing window of March 3-14 or during a modified regular testing window, March 10-21.

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 pickup by Tuesday, March 25. Early pickup of material may be scheduled.

More guidance related to the modified testing window and pickup options will be available on the Assessment home page at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/default.htm>.

Additionally, ISBE has also extended the current ACCESS 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. ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS materials should be returned 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.

Data Analysis and Accountability

Webinar on Employment Information System Reopening Scheduled for Feb. 25

The Illinois State Board of Education has completed making enhancements to improve the process for collecting data pertaining to teachers, administrators and other school personnel. As such, the target date for reopening the Employment Information System (EIS) is the first week of March.

Districts should begin completing and/or correcting their 2013 reporting of data for teachers, administrators and other employees. In addition, districts will be able to submit their data for the current school year (SY2013-2014).

A webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 25, from 9:30 to 11 a.m. This webinar will explain the enhancements made and how they will impact the districts entering data. To register, go to <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/661038192>.

Special Education Services

Public Act Changes State-Level Special Education Complaint Process

Effective Aug. 16, 2013, additional regulatory language has been incorporated into the Illinois Compiled Statutes, which impacts the formal state-level special education complaint process (see 105 ILCS, 5/14-8.02e), as follows:

A school district or other public entity shall be required to submit a written response to a complaint within the time prescribed by the State Board of Education following receipt of the complaint. A copy of the response and all documentation submitted by the respondent to the State Board of Education must be simultaneously provided by the respondent to the complainant or to the attorney for the complainant. If the complaint was filed by an individual other than a parent of a child who is the subject of the complaint (or the child if the child has reached majority or is emancipated and has assumed responsibility for his or her own educational decisions) and the complaint is about a specific identifiable child or children, then appropriate written signed releases must be obtained prior to the release of any documentation or

information to the complainant or the attorney representing the complainant.

Given these requirements, a district and/or special education cooperative will now be required to provide a copy of the written complaint response and supportive documentation to the complainant simultaneously with the submission of those materials to the State Board of Education. In the event of a complaint filed by an individual other than a parent/guardian, the district/cooperative must secure an appropriate written and signed release prior to the issue of any child-specific documentation.

Districts/cooperatives are encouraged to review the referenced citation in order to ensure full compliance.

System of Support & District Intervention

ISBE Invites Comments on FY 2015 School Improvement Grant Application

The Illinois State Board of Education invites comments on its FY15 School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003(g) application to the U.S. Department of Education.

An SEA that will make new SIG 1003(g) awards through a competitive process is required to submit a “New Awards Application.” A new award is defined as an award of SIG 1003(g) funds to an LEA for a school that the LEA was not previously approved to serve with SIG funds in the school year for which the funds are being awarded – in this case, the 2014-2015 school year. Illinois may make new awards with the remaining funds not already committed to grants made in earlier competitions.

The Statewide System of Support and District Intervention Division invites comments on the SIG 1003(g) application, which is on the Innovation and Improvement website at http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/sip_1003.htm.

All comments will be included with the Illinois submission to the U.S. Department of Education. Please send comments to Heidi Lowery at hlowery@isbe.net no later than Friday, Feb. 28.

If you have any questions about this request, the Illinois application to the Department of Education or

any aspect of the FY15 SIG award cycle, please contact Heidi Lowery by phone at (217) 524-4832.

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>.

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

USDA Issues Letter on National School Lunch Program Unpaid Meal Charges

USDA Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services (FNS) Kevin Concannon recently sent a letter to each State Superintendent regarding student debt and unpaid meal charges in the National School Lunch Program. A copy of this letter is available for review at

<http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/PDF/usda-unpaid-meal-charges-letter.pdf>.

The letter reinforces FNS' belief that such issues must be handled in a way that first and foremost respects and maintains student dignity. The letter also details positive steps that states and local educational agencies (LEAs) can take to prevent potential issues.

Complete USDA Guidance is available in the ISBE Administrative Handbook, Benefit Issuance, Meal Counting and Claiming Section posted at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/sbn_handbook/benefit.pdf.

ISBE staff in the Nutrition and Wellness Programs division may be reached at (800) 545-7892 or via email at cnp@isbe.net for assistance.

Special Events in March Highlight Importance of School Nutrition

The Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division encourages school districts to participate in several special events focused on the importance of school nutrition during the month of March:

- **National Nutrition Month** is hosted each March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Resources reflecting this year's theme, "Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right," are available at <http://www.eatright.org/nnm/>.
- **National School Breakfast Week** is March 3-7, and this year's theme is "Take Time for School Breakfast." Visit the School Nutrition Association's website for a press release, menu, proclamation, web banners, presentations for foodservice staff, presentations for stakeholders and more at http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Level2_NSBW2014.aspx?id=18805.
- **International School Meals Day** will be celebrated on Thursday, March 6. For more information and resources, visit <http://www.internationalschoolmealsday.com/>.

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. 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/cilsummit227>.
- **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.

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.

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-eln_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.

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.

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.

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/ckedito r/files/TEAMS%202014%20Request%20for%20 Applications.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>.

Classroom Opportunities

- Applications for **Earth Day in the Parks** events from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will be accepted through Feb. 28. Visit <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/EDITP instruct.htm> to download the application form and see the list of participating state parks.

Professional Development

- Registration is now open for the new **ENTICE (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) workshop** schedule for July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015. The workshops offer training on Illinois-specific topics and supply tools to implement topics into curriculum immediately. Continuing Professional Development Units are available at all ENTICE workshops. Register at the following link: <https://www.enticeworkshops.com>.
- 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://occr.illinois.edu/projects/pathways/scaling-up-2014/>.

Student Opportunities

- Running Start’s **8th Annual Young Women's Political Leadership Program** will be held from

July 7-13 at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. The program teaches high school-aged girls the skills needed to run for office, such as public speaking, networking, fundraising, on-camera media training and advocacy. Applications are due on Feb. 21 and students will be notified of their selection by March 3. To apply, go to <http://runningstartonline.org/programs/young-womens-political-leadership>.

- 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>.