



Illinois State Board of Education

Weekly Message

Gery J. Chico, Chairman
 Steven R. Gilford, Vice Chair
 Dr. Vinnie M. Hall, Board Secretary
 James W. Baumann
 Curtis W. Bradshaw
 Dr. Andrea S. Brown
 Dr. David L. Fields
 Melinda A. LaBarre

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
 State Superintendent

Feb. 24, 2014

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This week, Board members and I will testify before the Senate Appropriations Committee with oversight of education to support the Board’s Fiscal Year 15 (FY15) budget request. This will be the second in a series of formal legislative hearings in which we will provide testimony in support of the Board’s budget request and work to educate legislators on various parts of the state’s complex funding formula.

Last week, we testified before the House Elementary and Secondary Education Appropriations Committee. While most legislators seemed supportive, we are just one of many interests vying for a portion of state spending. In fact, one legislator asked us to provide them with a list of areas to begin cutting the education budget. Our Chairman adeptly pushed back on this type of thinking, urging committee members to instead look at the long-term economic benefits of investing in education, urging members to continue making education a priority and to try and build on last year’s success of reinvestment rather than cuts from the previous years.

Table of Contents	
Assessment.....	2
Special Education Services	3
Funding and Disbursements.....	4
Those Who Excel	4
Nutrition & Wellness Programs	4
School Health Issues	5
Data Analysis & Accountability	6
System of Support & District Intervention..	6
In Brief.....	7

In addition to the formal hearings, Board members and I have had numerous one-on-one meetings with legislators and are encouraged by those who say they are willing to assist us in fighting for education and specific line items within the budget. I urge you to reach out to your local legislators and let them know about the needs within your district and the measures you have already taken in order to cope with a reduction in state spending.

Last week, the Board met in Springfield and Chicago. They approved use of the edTPA, a performance assessment developed by Stanford University, to assess a teacher candidate’s ability to plan, deliver and assess instruction. The edTPA will be required for licensure in Illinois beginning Sept. 1, 2015.

The Board also forwarded to the General Assembly the Spring Waiver report. The Board had an extended conversation about the waiver requests, in particular those seeking to waive the state’s daily physical education requirements. Board members, while very sympathetic that districts face funding deficits and facility issues in complying with the requirements for daily physical education, are equally concerned about the long-term detrimental effects a lack of physical education can have throughout one’s lifetime. They are quite concerned about P.E. waivers that reach down into elementary and middle grades where P.E. would be offered only once per week and also those that exempt students from P.E. if they are engaged in a non-athletic activity, like band or music. They are going to note these concerns

when they transmit the requests to the General Assembly and will likely take a more critical look at these in the future.

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>.

- **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 State Board of Education Meeting** – March 12-13
- **Illinois 5Essentials Survey** – To be conducted March 17 through April 25
- **Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) FY 2015 RFP and Continuation Application Deadline** – April 28
- **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.

Special Education Services

Information on Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program FY 15 RFP

The bidders' conferences for the Truants' Alternative and Optional Education program (TAOEP) Request for Proposal (RFP) will be 8:15-10:15 a.m. Friday, March 7, at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Redbird A, 201 Broadway St., in Normal and through a webinar from 1-3 p.m. on Thursday, March 20.

To register for the webinar, go to <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/326746681>.

The deadline for submitting the TAOEP RFP and continuation application is Monday, April 28, at 11:59 p.m. Eligible applicants can find the RFP and continuation application on IWAS beginning March 10. Late applications will not be accepted.

For additional information, contact Sally Veach or V. Sue Taylor in ISBE's Special Education Services Division at (217) 782-5589 and sveach@isbe.net or vtaylor@isbe.net.

Public Act Changes State-Level Special Education Mediation Process

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

(j) During the pendency of any administrative or judicial proceeding conducted pursuant to this Section, including mediation (if the school district or other public entity voluntarily agrees to participate in mediation), unless the school district and the parents or student (if at least 18 years of age or emancipated)

otherwise agree, the student shall remain in his or her present educational placement and continue in his or her present eligibility status and special education and related services, if any. If mediation fails to resolve the dispute between the parties, the parent (or student if 18 years of age or older or emancipated) shall have 10 days after the mediation concludes to file a request for a due process hearing in order to continue to invoke the "stay-put" provisions of this subsection (j). If applying for initial admission to the school district, the student shall, with the consent of the parents (if the student is not at least 18 years of age or emancipated), be placed in the school district program until all such proceedings have been completed. The costs for any special education and related services or placement incurred following 60 school days after the initial request for evaluation shall be borne by the school district if the services or placement is in accordance with the final determination as to the special education and related services or placement that must be provided to the child, provided that during that 60 day period there have been no delays caused by the child's parent.

Therefore, the following is now required:

- The agreement of the parties to mediate shall act as a "stay-put" on the child's placement during the pendency of the mediation. The "stay-put" placement shall be the last agreed-upon placement between the parties.
- If no agreement is reached between the parties concerning the placement, the "stay-put" placement shall remain in effect for a period of 10 calendar days following the mediation.
- If the party challenging the placement that led to the mediation request does not file a request for a due process hearing within 10 days following the unsuccessful mediation, the "stay-put" placement will expire.

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

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.

Funding and Disbursements

Estimated Best Three Months Average Daily Attendance in IWAS for GSA Claim

The annual "Estimated Best Three Months Average Daily Attendance" application is now available on IWAS. ISBE requests that you provide an estimate of the daily attendance figure for your district to ISBE by Friday, March 7.

The daily attendance figure is your estimate of the best three months of attendance for the 2013-14 school year. You may use actual attendance data to date to calculate an estimate or develop your own estimate figure based on historical attendance patterns.

The estimate you provide will be used by policymakers to determine the General State Aid (GSA) appropriation level for the 2013-14 claim, payable in Fiscal Year 2015. Please note these estimates are only used for projection purposes and will not be used in calculating your district's final GSA claim and payment.

If you have questions about this request please contact Jim Mathes at jmathes@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256 or Jason Hall at jhall@isbe.net and (217) 782-0249.

Those Who Excel

Nomination Packets Available for 2014-2015 Those Who Excel/Teacher of the Year

Nomination packets for the 2014-2015 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year program are now available.

The program includes seven nomination categories: classroom teacher, school administrator/principal, student support personnel, educational service personnel, school board member/community volunteer, team and early career educator. Districts may nominate one candidate per category, except in Chicago Public School District 299, where multiple nominations are permitted.

Nominations must be postmarked by Monday, June 9. The 2014-2015 awards will be presented at the Those Who Excel banquet on Saturday, Oct. 25, at the Marriott Bloomington-Normal Conference Center.

Please visit http://www.isbe.net/those_who_excel.htm to print the application or contact ISBE's Public Information Division at (217) 782-4648 to have a copy mailed to you.

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Interagency Nutrition Council Seeks National Nutrition Month Honorees

The Interagency Nutrition Council (INC) will honor select schools during National Nutrition Month in March with the Robin A. Orr Community Partnership Award. The theme of this year's award is school wellness.

The council is looking for public or non-public schools that are doing amazing things with school wellness, such as those that are doing great things in the areas of nutrition, physical activity and wellness education.

If you are interested in applying, please submit one photograph of your program in action along with a short (no longer than one page) description of the wellness program and contact information, including the name of the school and contact person, to lblough@isbe.net by Feb. 28, 2014.

Location Change for School Breakfast Summit in Springfield on Feb. 27

The Illinois Hunger Coalition and Illinois No Kid Hungry are holding a series of School Breakfast Summits, including the following date in Springfield:

- **Feb. 27 - Springfield – 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.**
Central Illinois Food Bank, 1937 E. Cook St., Springfield, IL 62703. Register at <http://www.bit.ly/cilsummit227>.

The summit 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.

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/>.

School Health Issues

Illinois School Health Association Annual Conference Scheduled for April 11

The Illinois School Health Association (ISHA) will hold its annual conference on April 11 at the Crowne Plaza Glen Ellyn/Lombard, 1250 Roosevelt Road, in Glen Ellyn.

The ISHA is a membership group comprised primarily of licensed educators endorsed in health education or school nursing as well as educators in higher education and public health.

Jim Bondi of Hinsdale South High School will provide the keynote presentation, “It’s NOT ‘Just Health:’ Obstacles and Opportunities for the 21st Century Health Educator.” Breakout sessions will cover topics including lessons learned in heroin prevention education, trends in mental health issues, new sexuality education requirements in Illinois and the use of technology in teaching health.

More information about the conference presentations is available at

http://www.ishaweb.com/documents/2014_conference_program.pdf.

Conference rates and registration information are available at

<http://www.ishaweb.com/registration.html>. The early registration deadline is April 1.

Heartsaver Automated External Defibrillator Fund Grant Available

The General Assembly has appropriated \$100,000 for the Heartsaver Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Fund Grant.

The program provides matching funds to schools and other public agencies to pay for AEDs. The application is available on the Department of Public Health’s Electronic Grant Administration and Management System (EGrAMS) at www.idphgrants.com.

Applicants must demonstrate that they have the funds to pay 50 percent of the cost of the AED, as determined by the State Master Contract or the Department. The Heartsaver AED Fund Grant award for FY 2014 is \$450 or at 50 percent of the purchased AED price if less than \$900.

The deadline to apply is Monday, April 14. Grants will be limited to one unit per recipient and will be awarded in the order received until grant money is exhausted.

All AEDs purchased between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2014, will qualify for the grant.

For more information, contact Paula Atteberry at paula.atteberry@illinois.gov or at (217) 785-2083.

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>.

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.

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>.

Classroom Opportunities

- The National WWII Museum has launched a new **Digital Collections website** at <http://ww2online.org> to tell the story of the American experience during World War II. The resource contains 150 oral

history interviews and several thousand archival photographs that may be used in lesson plans.

- 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/EDITPinstruct.htm> to download the application form and see the list of participating state parks.

In the News

- South Elgin High School nurse Julia Olsta recently received **The Journal of School Nursing/SAGE First Publication Award by a School Nurse** for her publication entitled “Bringing Breakfast to Our Students: A Program to Increase School Breakfast Participation.” Olsta will be presented with the award at the National Association of School Nurses’ annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas, in June. To read more, go to <http://www.u-46.org/npps/story.cfm?nppage=1275>.

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://ocrl.illinois.edu/projects/pathways/scaling-up-2014/>.

Student Opportunities

- The National WWII Museum seeks submissions for its **National 2014 High School Essay Contest** and **2014 Middle School Essay Contest**. To

coincide with the 70th anniversary of D-Day, this year's contests ask students to think about a time in their lives when they had to make important plans for success in spite of uncertainty. Submissions are due March 28. Full contest guidelines and rules are available at <http://www.nationalww2museum.org/learn/education/for-students/essay-contests/>.

- 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.

Grant Opportunities

- 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>.