



Illinois State Board of Education

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Weekly Message

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State Superintendent

February 25, 2008

Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

While it's not quite spring yet, it is time for March Madness. Girls high school basketball took center stage in Normal this weekend at Redbird Arena in the 1A and 2A finals, with more great action to come. Hopefully, I'll be able to get out to catch some of the tournament action in the coming weeks.

Last week was a very busy one in Springfield as Governor Blagojevich unveiled his Fiscal Year 2009 budget, and the Board met Wednesday and Thursday. The budget process begins in earnest for schools next week; in fact, I will be testifying before the House Appropriations Committee on Tuesday afternoon.

The Governor's proposed budget for education is very similar to the one approved by the Board in January. It includes a \$300 million increase in elementary and secondary education. If approved, it will allow us to fully fund mandated categoricals and increase the Foundation Level by \$125. We would also be able to increase funding for a second year in a row for special education reimbursement, and we will continue the Preschool for All expansion by providing an additional \$45 million for early childhood education.

This is a good budget for our schools, especially in light of the economic realities that the state is facing. Education, public safety and healthcare were the only areas of state government that did not see a decrease.

The Board had a packed agenda last week, with a great deal of public participation and input from legislators, parents and educators. The Board robustly discussed the development of new assessments for our English Language Learner (ELL) population.

We brought in national experts to provide guidance and share their thoughts on the direction they thought Illinois should take in developing accurate and valid content area assessments for ELL students. We heard about what other states are doing. For example, Texas and New Mexico have developed native language assessments (e.g., an assessment in Spanish) which parallel the standard assessments administered to other students in those states, and 10 other states, while not developing a separate native language assessment, have translated their standard assessments into other languages for their ELLs.

We essentially have three options: modifying our standard English assessment to, among other things, remove any biases (i.e., the assessment would still be administered in English); translating the standard assessment into one or more other languages; and developing a parallel native language assessment. My staff and I will be studying these options and I will make a recommendation to the Board next month to pursue one or more of these approaches.

Finally, while for months the speculation has been that reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act would be delayed

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until a new administration, there have recently been a number of rumors that the U.S. Senate may release a bill in March. We will, of course, keep our eyes and ears open and let you know of any developments.

Thanks and have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Deadlines

- **Non-Certified Staff Salary Study survey** – February 29, 2008
- **Submit a Letter of Intent for the Move and Crunch Challenge for Principals**, www.kidseatwell.org – February 29, 2008
- **Technology Integration Plan** – March 1, 2008
- **Illinois Textbook Loan Program Orders Due** – March 15, 2008
- **Charter Planning Grant applications & Charter Implementation Grant applications** – April 30, 2008
- **Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year Nominations** – May 16, 2008
- **Deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2008** – Friday, August 8, 2008

Student Assessment

English Language Learners Guidance Materials

Guidance materials for assessment accommodations for English Language Learners during the 2008 administration of the Illinois Standards Achievement Test and the Prairie State Achievement Exam may be found on the Illinois State Board of Education website at the following address:

http://isbe.state.il.us/assessment/pdfs/guidance_for_ell.pdf

ELL Accommodations: Word Glossaries and ISAT Directions

Word glossaries for each of the ISAT content areas and the ISAT directions have been translated into ten (10) different languages and can be found at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/translations.htm>. Please share this information with those individuals who will be administering the ISAT to ELLs.

ACT Online Prep

We are pleased to announce that the Illinois State Board of Education has entered into an agreement with ACT to provide ACT Online Prep to public high schools in

Illinois through May 31, 2009, at no cost to the school or district. The order form to begin receiving ACT Online Prep is available online at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/protocol.htm>.

This order form should only be used by sites that currently do not have an active ACT Online Prep license.

If a school currently has an ACT Online Prep license, your licenses will be renewed automatically by ACT and will be valid through May 31, 2009. ACT will not issue an invoice for this renewal and you do not need to submit an order form.

ACT Online Prep is an excellent tool for your students and we are excited to provide this service. Please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions list also available online at http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/Online_Prep_FAQs.pdf or contact **ACT Customer Services** at 800-498-6065 with questions.

Educator Preparation & Recertification

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

We are pleased to announce that the Illinois State Board of Education awarded two contracts for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Program for 2007-2008.

The two contractors are the National Board Resource Center at Illinois State University (NBRC) directed by Dr. Lynn Gaddis, NBCT and the Iroquois/Kankakee Regional Office of Education (I-KAN) directed by Vicki Hensley, Assistant Regional Superintendent.

The work of both partners is aligned to deliver services to support National Board Certified Teachers and candidates in targeted schools.

For more information, visit the NBRC at ISU website at <http://www.coe.ilstu.edu/ilnbpts> and the I-KAN ROE website at <http://www.ilnbpts.org>. Also visit ISBE's web page at <http://www.isbe.net/profprep/nbpts.htm>

English Language Learning

Migrant Summer School Programs

In March, the Illinois State Board of Education will release an application for funding of migrant summer school programs in districts with qualifying migrant students under Title I, Part C of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001.

Students eligible for the program are children ages 0-21 who

- have not graduated from high school;
- have moved within the past three years across state or school district lines;
- live with a parent or guardian or on their own;
- obtain temporary or seasonal work in agricultural production, fishing or food processing industries.

A certified recruiter must document that children qualify as migrant students. ISBE can assist districts with this process. To request assistance in identifying eligible migrant children, districts may complete the survey found at

http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/migrant_survey.pdf

For more information, contact **Beth Robinson**, English Language Learning, at 312- 814-3850 or by e-mail at berobins@isbe.net.

Rules & Waivers

Green Cleaning Schools Act

The Green Cleaning Schools Act requires the use of environmentally sensitive cleaning and maintenance products in all Illinois public and non-public elementary and secondary schools with 50 or more students.

Passed into law on August 13, 2007, the Green Cleaning Schools Act will protect Illinois students, teachers and school staff from polluted indoor air that may be five to 100 times more polluted than outdoor air. This pollution is due in part to the chemicals found in everyday cleaning supplies.

The proposed rules and emergency rules for the Green Cleaning Schools Act (P.A. 95-0084) are published in the February 1 issue of the Illinois Register, available online at <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/index/register/home.html>.

This publication marks the beginning of the first 45-day notice period. During this time, the public (including Green Cleaning Schools Committee participants) may comment in writing according to the instructions published with the proposed rules. Any interested parties may submit comments, data, views or arguments concerning this proposed rulemaking. All comments must be in writing and should be addressed to:

Kate Tomford
Office of Lt. Governor Pat Quinn
100 W. Randolph, Suite 15-200
Chicago IL 60601
Phone: 312/814-5220
Fax: 312/814-4862

The guidelines and specifications for the act were created by the Illinois Green Governments Coordinating Council in coordination with the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Regional Offices of Education, Illinois State Board of Education and a panel of interested stakeholders.

Please refer to the Green Cleaning Schools Act web page for links to copies of the emergency and proposed rules, the full text of the guidelines and specifications (requirements and recommendations), related forms and a list of qualified products.

The web page is:

http://www.standingupforillinois.org/green/school_cleaning.php.

Accountability

FY08 Supplemental General State Aid (SGSA) Plan

Attention School Districts maintaining average daily attendance of more than 1000 students. The ISBE IWAS system is now open to file the required *FY08 Supplemental General State Aid (SGSA) Plan*.

With the passage of and approval of the BIMP bill, the amounts of SGSA payments for each district is now set. SGSA is included within the General State Aid payments. It is generated by the number and percentage of disadvantaged, low income, students and is calculated as part three of the districts general state aid claim. Previous to the BIMP bill's passage, the exact amounts of SGSA being distributed to the schools was unknown and the IWAS system could not accept SGSA plans prior to the due date of October 30th.

The filing of a SGSA expenditure plan for FY08 is required by the School Code for districts exceeding 1000 average daily attendance. Simply log into the ISBE IWAS system and go to SGSA Plan.

A brief narrative explaining how the SGSA expenditures will assist the district's disadvantaged students to succeed academically is required along with a SGSA expenditure budget. Please file the SGSA plans by **Sunday, March 30**.

If you have question please contact **Richard Loman**, Accountability Division, at 217-782-2948 or rloman@isbe.net.

Release of the Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) Request for Proposal (RFP)

The TAOEP RFP is available at www.isbe.net/accountability/html/.htm. Click FY 2009 Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) RFP. Two Bidders' Conferences will be held one on February 29 and the other March 5, 2008. Locations and times of the Bidders' Conference are in the

RFP. The deadline for submission of the RFP is April 14, 2008. If you have questions about the TAOEP RFP please contact **Sally Veach**, Accountability Division, at 217-782-2948 or sveach@isbe.net.

Nutrition

USDA Recall information

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently changed the *hold* status on Westland Meat Company products to a **RECALL**. The recall covers two commodity products, A608 Fine Ground Beef and A594 Coarse Ground Beef. We are advising all schools of this recall.

For more information regarding this recall, please reference the Illinois State Board of Education's web site at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/default.htm>.

For a question and answer document issued by the USDA, please reference their web site at <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome>.

If you have any questions relating to this RECALL, please call Food Distribution staff of the Illinois State Board of Education at 1-800-545-7892.

Summer Food Service Program

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is designed to provide nutritious meals during summer months to children from areas where at least 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals during the school year through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Does your area meet this criterion? If so, consider becoming a sponsor to help bridge the gap for children in your community. All sponsors are required to submit the program application and monthly Claims for Reimbursement via the Internet.

Congress expanded the simplified cost procedures nationwide which will reduce paperwork for sponsors and ensures all sponsors receive the maximum federal reimbursements.

If the responsibilities of sponsorship in the SFSP are not possible, you can still participate in the program by operating as a site under a different sponsor, being a vendor, or volunteering your time. Visit our website at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/summer.htm> to learn more about this vital program and how you can help.

Training Workshops

Training workshops for the Summer Food Service Program will be held at the locations listed below for organizations interested in sponsoring the SFSP during the summer of 2008. To register for the workshops, visit our website at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition>.

Summer Food Service Program Training Workshop Schedule

- **Wednesday, March 5**—Fairview Heights
- **Wednesday, March 19**—Alsip
- **Tuesday, March 25**—Moline
- **Wednesday, March 26**—Morton
- **Wednesday, April 2**—Marion
- **Wednesday, April 9**—Schaumburg
- **Monday, May 19**—Springfield

The training sessions are designed to provide a complete overview of the SFSP including the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE's) Internet-based program application and claim system. All new sponsors are required to attend training before they can be approved to serve meals.

For additional information, contact **Amy Bianco**, Nutrition Division, at 1-800-545-7892 or e-mail cnp@isbe.net.

Curriculum & Instruction

Illinois Schools Named 2008 NASPE Star Schools

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) has announced the newest recipients of its STARS recognition for exemplary school physical education programs. Three Illinois schools, out of a total of thirteen schools nationally, have achieved this honor. The criteria for STARS recognition are based on the essential elements necessary for a quality physical education program – content based on the National Standards for Physical Education, educationally and developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and teaching skills, adequate facilities and equipment that are safe and appropriate for the age and abilities of the students and that enable students to participate in maximum amount of active time on task, and classes taught by certified physical educators.

Having gone through a rigorous evaluation process, the following schools are models for other schools to emulate and will receive local, state and national recognition for their accomplishments: Congratulations to the following Illinois NASPE Star Schools and their staff!

- **Carpenter Elementary School** (2008-2013)
300 N. Hamlin
Park Ridge
- **Eugene Field Elementary School** (2008-2013)
707 N. Wisner Avenue
Park Ridge
- **Emerson Middle School** (2008-2013)
8101 N. Cumberland
Niles

The STARS physical education teachers and their principals will be honored at the NASPE Hall of Fame Banquet in Ft. Worth, Texas, April 11, during the national convention of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD). The NASPE STARS program recognizes a school's total physical education program as all teachers in the department demonstrate how their program and teaching meet national standards and guidelines. STARS schools receive a STARS banner, teacher certificates, and complimentary products from FlagHouse and Socc Sport.

School Business & Support Services

School District Annual Financial Report (ISBE Form 50-35) Verification Process

District Superintendents received an email broadcast asking the district to verify the Operating Expense Per Pupil (OEPP), Per Capita Tuition Charge (PCTC), and the Financial Profile Report on February 5, 2008. The broadcast included links to cover letters, instructions, and definitions to assist with the verification process. These documents are also available on the IWAS website.

The email broadcast and this notice in the Superintendent's bulletin are the only notices provided to districts. If you have not received the broadcast, please contact ISBE at the number below. If you give authority

to another person verifying these reports, please forward the email broadcast to them. It is important that they have the instructions and deadlines to assist them in completing the verification in a timely manner. Once the deadline passes, changes cannot be made to the 2007 Annual Financial Report data.

Since the financial profile designation will be approved and publicly released by ISBE, it is of the utmost importance that you review your financial profile data and score. Any district comments that you want included with your final financial profile report may be entered in the comment box. Although comments are optional, this is an opportunity for districts to explain financial circumstances. For further information see the following website:

<http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/OEPPPCTCICRCoverLetter.pdf>

Any questions regarding this notification or verification process should be directed to School Business Services at 217-785-8779. Any questions regarding IWAS should be directed to the Call Center at 217-558-3600.

Fiscal and Procurement

Illinois Textbook Loan Program

There are less than three weeks left in the 2008 ITLP ordering period. The deadline for ordering is March 15, 2008. To date, only 20% of eligible participants have initiated orders in the 2008 ITLP system. In comparison, by this same time in the 2006 ITLP ordering system, approximately 40% of eligible participants had entered orders. It is suggested that schools and districts expedite their ordering to allow **sufficient time for technical assistance if needed.**

This year, material orders are limited to grades K-6 and access to the ITLP order entry system is through IWAS (ISBE Web Application Security). You can access IWAS by clicking on the IWAS link at the top of the ISBE homepage. For those of you new to IWAS, you can create an IWAS account by clicking on the 'Sign Up Now' link on the IWAS homepage.

If you require assistance with your IWAS account or in gaining access to the ITLP system, please contact the ISBE Call Center at 217-558-3600. If you have questions regarding the ordering process please contact the ITLP staff at 217-782-0734.

A Note to Local IWAS Administrators: For the ITLP system in IWAS, it is very important that you assign the correct access level to staff who sign up for the ITLP system to represent your organization. When assigning access rights in IWAS, Public School Districts (except for Chicago 299) should assign staff 'District Doc Author' access. All other organizations (including Chicago 299) should assign staff 'School Admin' access.

General information on the ITLP is located in the Textbook Loan Program website
<http://isbe.net/htmls/textbook.htm>.

Professional Development

19th Annual School Law Conference

The 19th annual school law conference will be held on Friday, March 7 at the University Union on the WIU-Macomb campus. "Contemporary Legal Issues in Illinois" will feature school attorneys and WIU educational leadership faculty will shed light on a variety of issues facing schools today.

The conference will provide the latest information and analysis of some of the most important issues facing public school leaders in Illinois.

Registration is \$75 for non-students and \$35 for students. Checks should be made payable to Western Illinois University School Law Conference. The fee includes all sessions, conference materials, breakfast and refreshments. Checks should be mailed to Robert Hall, Horrabin Hall 81, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455-1390. For more information, call 309/298-1070. The School Law Conference flier (PDF) is available at www.wiu.edu/adminroundtable.

First Midwest Regional Conference on Autism Spectrum Disorders

The First Midwest Regional Conference on Autism Spectrum Disorders and Inclusion is being sponsored by the Autism Society of the Quad Cities and supported by Augustana College. The conference will be held April 19, 2008 on the campus of Augustana College, in Rock Island, IL.

Several nationally and regionally recognized speakers will be presenting on topics ranging from early childhood to support at the high school and college level, and from

genetic research to classroom and community inclusion. Speakers include Dr. Temple Grandin, Dr. Paula Kluth, Dr. Tom Wassink, Mr. Dennis Debbaudt, and more!

For a full list of speakers, registration information, and more, see the website of the Autism Society of the Quad Cities at www.autismqc.org.

Illinois School Leadership Task Force – Final Report Is Now Available

In August, 2006, the Commission on School Leader Preparation in Illinois Colleges and Universities submitted to the Illinois Board of Higher Education an analysis and set of recommendations for improving pre-K-12 School Leader Preparation in Illinois. Like the national reports, the Illinois report argued that principal preparation is a key component in improving student learning in schools. Upon receiving the Commission's report, *School Leader Preparation: A Blueprint for Change*, the Illinois Board of Higher Education joined with the Illinois State Board of Education and the Governor's office to initiate a joint resolution in the Illinois General Assembly. This resolution created a task force charged with moving the *Blueprint* agenda forward.

The Illinois School Leader Task Force was formed in October 2007 to execute the following charge:

Prepare a report to the General Assembly, the Office of the Governor, the State Board of Education, and the Board of Higher Education that details an action plan for strategically improving school leadership preparation in Illinois, based on, but not limited to, the measures detailed in the report of the Commission on School Leader Preparation: *Blueprint for Change*.

The final report is now available and can be viewed at: http://www.isbe.net/gov_relations/.

Grant & Award Opportunities

Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Grants

The Foundation's seven indoor lighting programs have assisted **schools, libraries, child care centers, park districts, colleges & universities, county historic**

courthouses, and public safety facilities in hundreds of communities throughout Illinois embrace cleaner energy and lowered utility bills by the simple act of replacing old lights with high efficiency light bulbs and controls.

The Foundation's indoor lighting programs for K-12 Schools, Park Districts and Public Libraries ended in 2007. For 2008, the Foundation is launching new indoor lighting programs to upgrade lighting systems in public safety and historic county courthouses. The Foundation's only outdoor lighting program also ended in 2007. The LED Traffic Signal Programs provided municipalities higher quality, more energy efficient LED traffic signals at a lower cost to taxpayers.

Every Foundation dollar granted to support lighting upgrades has leveraged nearly another dollar of energy efficiency investment from other sources.

- Benefits of upgrading to efficient lighting systems:
- Improved lighting quality
- Reduced operating and maintenance expenses
- Saved energy, leading to less pollution in Illinois communities

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/2008/newsclips/080222.htm>
