

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



October 31, 2017



Hello,

This past Saturday evening, I had the pleasure of honoring 235 educators, educational leaders, and support personnel at the 43rd annual Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year banquet in Normal. It was exciting to be joined by almost a thousand people to celebrate exceptional leadership and the work of communities across the state to create safe and healthy high-quality schools. The Those Who Excel awards help us to elevate teachers and change the narrative around the teaching profession. Thank you to everyone who attended the banquet and shared photos and posts on social media with #ThoseWhoExcel to spread the word about these award recipients.

Our teachers are leaders and advocates for our students and communities. As 2017 Illinois Teacher of the Year Ricky Castro said in his speech prior to presenting the 2018 Teacher of the Year award, our educators “fight for democracy by preserving it from the inside out.” Educators work alongside families and communities to nurture “students that have the critical thinking skills and the social character to sustain our democracy.” Thank you to Ricky for inspiring and sharing his knowledge with educators around the state and for being a great advocate for Illinois students and communities as Teacher of the Year.

Congratulations to 2018 Illinois Teacher of the Year Lindsey Jensen! Lindsey teaches English, including Advanced Placement English, Shakespeare, American literature, drama, and composition, to 11th- and 12th-grade students at Dwight Township High School in Dwight Public Schools District 230. Lindsey is very energetic and passionate about teaching and the profession. She has an infectious positivity and high expectations for her students. Lindsey understands the importance of supporting the whole child; she is committed to her students’ academic success as well as their social and emotional well-being. Lindsay exemplifies teacher leadership by empowering her students to do their best and take ownership of their learning and their potential. She is eager to collaborate and inspires her colleagues with her enthusiasm and professionalism. To learn more about Lindsey’s story, visit the [Those Who Excel webpage](#) (/Pages/Those-who-excel.aspx) and read the [Oct. 28 press release](#) (/Lists/News/NewsDisplay.aspx?ID=1181).

Beyond the Those Who Excel award recipients and Teachers of the Year, we are also celebrating the passion, dedication, and resourcefulness of students and educators across the state. As demonstrated by the 2017 Illinois Report Card, released today at <http://webprod.isbe.net/ereportcard/publicsite/getSearchCriteria.aspx> (<http://webprod.isbe.net/ereportcard/publicsite/getSearchCriteria.aspx>), our students and educators have a tremendous capacity for growth. Despite significant economic uncertainty last couple of years, educators have done incredible work to support student progress. State-level data show student outcomes improved in English language arts achievement on the PARCC, the four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates, college enrollment rates, Advanced Placement (AP) participation and success, the community college remediation rate,

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ninth-grade students on track to graduate, and eighth-grade students passing Algebra I. Find more state-level highlights in the [press release](#) (/Lists/News/NewsDisplay.aspx?ID=1182). The www.illinoisreportcard.com (<http://www.illinoisreportcard.com/>) interactive website will go live on Friday, Nov. 3.

I am particularly energized by the growing number of students taking on more advanced coursework. We have seen increases in the numbers of students enrolling in AP courses and taking AP exams, while holding steady on the AP exam pass rate. Kudos to the students and educators whose hard work has helped Illinois achieve this success.

The purpose of the Report Card is to guide conversations around creating conditions for children to thrive. We know that talent is abundant, but opportunity is not. It is important that we continue to increase access and opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know. The passage of the new evidence-based funding formula means districts will have more resources to serve children, in particular children in the greatest need. The Illinois ESSA Plan provides a framework for a common, clear, high standard for all students and differentiated support based on need. The Report Card can help facilitate deeper connections, including opportunities for districts to learn from and collaborate with other districts, as well as public, private, and philanthropic partnerships to support communities.

Congratulations to Lindsey, all of the other Teacher of the Year finalists, all of the recipients of the 2017-18 Those Who Excel awards, and all of the students and educators across the state for their progress in the face of extreme financial uncertainty. The well-being of our communities and our state depends on having a well-educated populous. As Ricky said, "We are here to play our part in securing the longevity of our nation." We have a lot to celebrate, but we still have work to do to make sure all of our children are ready for their civic and economic future.

Have a great week!

Tony



UPCOMING ISBE DATES AND DEADLINES

Please note this is not a complete list of events, meetings, and deadlines. For more events and details, visit the [ISBE Meetings page](https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ISBE-Meetings.aspx) (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ISBE-Meetings.aspx>) or call the Illinois State Board of Education at (866) 262-6663.

Oct. 31: Deadline to submit FY 2018 School District Budget/Joint Agreement Forms

Nov. 1: Deadline to submit EIS SY 2018 data for 5Essentials Survey email addresses, EIS Employment and Position records, and Noncertified Staff aggregated FTE counts

Nov. 1: Evidence-based funding data verification tool available in IWAS

Nov. 2: [Evidence-based funding data verification process Webinar](#)

(<https://register.gotowebinar.com/#register/1074030832115158275>)

Nov. 8: [FY 2019 Public Budget Hearing in Mt. Vernon](#) (<https://www.isbe.net/budget>)

Nov. 9: Deadline to submit 2017-18 Unfilled Positions Survey in IWAS

Nov. 10: ISBE offices closed for Veterans' Day

Nov. 15 - Jan. 18: [5Essentials survey window](https://www.isbe.net/Pages/5Essentials-Survey.aspx) (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/5Essentials-Survey.aspx>)

Nov. 15: Deadline to submit Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment, and Staff Report in IWAS

Nov. 15: Deadline to submit Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet

Nov. 15: Deadline to submit Student Health Data - Immunization in IWAS

Nov. 17: [Illinois State Board of Education meeting](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-State-Board-of-Education-Calendar.aspx) (<http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-State-Board-of-Education-Calendar.aspx>)

Nov. 23-24: ISBE offices closed for Thanksgiving holiday

Nov. 30: FY 2018 NCLB/ESSA Monitoring Instrument due in IWAS

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Nov. 30: FY 2018 NCLB/ESSA Title I Comparability Analysis due in IWAS

Dec. 12: [Deadline to submit Arts Education Week Posters](https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IAEW-CONTEST-FORM.pdf) (<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IAEW-CONTEST-FORM.pdf>)

Dec. 13: [Illinois State Board of Education meeting](https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-State-Board-of-Education-Calendar.aspx) (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-State-Board-of-Education-Calendar.aspx>)

Dec. 25: ISBE offices closed for Christmas Day

Jan. 1: ISBE offices closed for New Year's Day

Jan. 12: Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Spring 2018

Jan. 15: ISBE offices closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Jan. 17: [Illinois State Board of Education meeting](https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-State-Board-of-Education-Calendar.aspx) (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-State-Board-of-Education-Calendar.aspx>)

Feb. 1: Teacher Salary Study window closes

Feb. 1: Non-Certified Staff Salary Study window closes

March 12-18: 2018 Illinois Arts Education Week

BUDGET AND FINANCE

Evidence-Based Funding Enrollment Data Verification Process to Begin Nov. 1

Please register for a webinar **at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 2**, to walk through the evidence-based funding (EBF) data verification process and have the opportunity to ask any questions. [Register for the evidence-based funding data verification walk through](https://register.gotowebinar.com/#register/1074030832115158275) (<https://register.gotowebinar.com/#register/1074030832115158275>). ISBE will also provide information on the process to request reallocation of the Base Funding Minimum for special education cooperatives and member districts. ISBE will record and post the webinar on the ISBE website at its conclusion. The EBF data verification tool will be available in IWAS beginning Wednesday, Nov. 1.

Please complete the first step in the data verification process by Friday, November 17. Non-completion will be interpreted as an endorsement of the data ISBE currently has.

- Once the tool opens on Nov. 1, please log into IWAS, access the eReportCard application, and click the new link in the menu at the left that says New! Evidence Based Funding Formula.
- Please follow the instructions on the screen once you access the EBF tool.
- If all of your data matches what ISBE currently has, please check the confirmation box at the bottom of the screen and then click the Save button.
- If your data does not match what ISBE currently has, ISBE will provide a second tool on Monday, November 13, 2017, for you to submit your data. This second tool will be open through Friday, November 17.

Each district's Average Student Enrollment for the past three school years serves as the basis for the evidence-based funding formula. Going forward, the traditional annual collection of student enrollment and Special Education Pre-K students via the Student Information System (SIS) and iSTAR will serve as the source of record for EBF. For this first year of EBF, however, ISBE is requesting that every school district verify enrollment counts explicitly for ISBE to use in determining funding. The funding formula builds upon itself year-over-year, with your district's total EBF funding level for the previous year (Base Funding Minimum plus Tier Funding) serving as the Base Funding Minimum (in other words, hold harmless) for the following year. ISBE wants to ensure we have accurate enrollment data, especially in this critical baseline year of the formula.

Thank you in advance for your participation as we work together to ensure this first year of our historic new funding formula is a success and every school district receives complete and accurate EBF amounts as soon as possible.

Upcoming Public Hearings on FY 2019 Budget Recommendations

ISBE is hosting public hearings this fall to gather requests to inform ISBE's FY 2019 budget recommendations for pre-K through 12th-grade educational service providers statewide. All individuals – including those attending a hearing in person – should submit their comments and stories by completing a budget request form (available at <http://www.isbe.net/budget> (<http://www.isbe.net/budget>)) and

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emailing the form to isbeFY19@isbe.net (mailto:isbeFY19@isbe.net).

The two remaining public budget hearings for fiscal year 2019 will take place in:

- **Mount Vernon – Wednesday, Nov. 8,** 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Dr. Nick Osborne Primary Center (401 North 30th St.)
- **Chicago – Friday, Nov. 17,** 11 a.m. in Conference Room 16-503 at the Thompson Center (100 W. Randolph St.)

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter School Program – QSO – Cohort III Request for Proposals Available Nov. 1

The electronic Charter Schools Program - QSO Program Design and Initial Implementation Request for Proposals (RFP)-Cohort III is available on Nov. 1 through ISBE's IWAS system. All responses must be submitted electronically to ISBE by **4 p.m. on Dec. 18**. This grant opportunity can provide up to \$950,000 to new charter school development teams to aid with design of the charter school and the initial implementation costs during the first two years of operation.

Any applicants interested in applying will need to submit the Letter of Intent to Apply Form in order to gain electronic access to the RFP. The Letter of Intent to Apply, and further grant eligibility information can be found at [Charter Schools Grants and RFPs web page](#) (/Pages/csGrantsRfps.aspx).

If you have questions, please email charter@isbe.net (mailto:charter@isbe.net) or call Charter Schools at (312) 814-2220.

Upcoming Fall Charter Startup Workshop

Attend the free **Fall Charter Startup Workshop** (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fall-charter-startup-workshop-tickets-39099185717>) on Saturday, Dec. 2, to explore how you can bring change to education in your community by launching an innovative charter public school. The workshop, hosted by the Illinois Network of Charter Schools, will take place at Moving Everest Charter School, 416 N. Laramie Ave., Chicago, IL 60644, from 9:30 a.m. to noon. Learn more and register for the [Fall Charter Startup Workshop](#). Contact Anne with questions at alevybrown@incschools.org (https://incschools.sharepoint.com/personal/alevybrown_incschools_org/Documents/Charter%20Growth%20-%20General/alevybrown%40incschools.org).

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

ESSA Update

The ESSA State Plan for Illinois identifies three areas in which stakeholders will provide recommendations to ISBE. These areas include recommendations for a P-2 Indicator, an Elementary/Middle Level Indicator, and definitions for the College and Career Readiness Indicator. These three indicators are categorized for the purpose of ESSA as "school quality" or "student success" indicators. ESSA requires, in addition to the mandatory academic indicators (e.g., academic attainment in ELA and math, EL proficiency, growth in third through eighth grade, and graduation rate in high school), that each student success or school quality indicator must allow for meaningful differentiation in school performance, be valid and reliable, be used within each grade span, be comparable and applicable statewide, and be measured and reported annually for all students and disaggregated by sub-group. In addition, other indicators include a climate survey, chronic absenteeism, and the fine arts.

The work of the P-2 and Elementary/Middle Level Indicator Committee, made up of practicing educators, regional superintendents, and individuals from other educational advocacy groups, was initiated in early summer 2017. The principles that the groups identified include creating a continuum of accountability, promoting that the selected metrics should drive positive educational practice, acknowledging the potential burden of data collection for districts and schools, and being humble when examining metrics insofar as there is not a great deal of previous work upon which to build.

In the case of the former, areas of study thus far include access to social and emotional development, support for kindergarten transition, teacher retention, and teacher/student ratio, among others. In particular, the committee is carefully considering access to enrichment, dual language learners, and chronic absenteeism.

In the case of the latter, areas of study thus far include access to extracurricular activities, parent and community involvement, service learning experience, access to the fine arts, and access to world languages, among others. During the summer, the Elementary and Middle Level group rank ordered the value of each indicator. At that time, attendance, grade readiness, access to acceleration, and access to high-quality teachers were identified as most valued.

Both groups have also utilized supports from outside experts throughout development. For instance, the Elementary/Middle Indicator Committee utilized the expertise at the California Department of Education when considering social and emotional learning as well as that of the University of Chicago and a local superintendent when contemplating on-track and high school readiness. The P-2 Indicator group is working with staff from the REL Midwest and Bellwether Educational Partners to develop briefs on areas of interest for inclusion within the indicator.

The College and Career Ready Indicator Committee, whose members include practicing educators as well as members of the business and civic communities, is using the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act as a foundation to ensure that the extant definitions in the act do not contradict or conflict with the work occurring with the indicator. For instance, the group is developing initial definitions of work-based learning, industry credential, military service, and community service, among others. This work is led by the Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University.

The ESSA State Plan for Illinois specifies that all committee recommendations will be shared with ISBE no later than December 31, 2017. Once submitted to ISBE, these recommendations will be shared for public comment in early 2018.

RULES & WAIVERS

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that one set of amendments recently adopted by ISBE became effective September 26. Changes have been posted on the [Rules webpage](/Pages/Rules.aspx) (/Pages/Rules.aspx). Please choose "Rules Currently in Effect" and scroll to the Part number. Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education): See Section 228.10.

GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY TRANSPARENCY ACT

Required FY 2018 Grantee Periodic Performance Reporting

The federal Uniform Guidance and GATA to a large extent are based on risk management and performance improvement. Both of these purposes are served by increased communication and collaboration between grantors and grantees. In recognition of this, both the Uniform Guidance and GATA require periodic performance reporting by grant recipients.

Another goal of GATA is to increase efficiencies by establishing uniform, standard non-redundant processes for the administration of grants. To this end, the Governor's Office of Management and Budget's GATA Unit has developed standard templates and protocols for the submission of periodic performance reports.

Periodic performance reports are required for all fiscal year 2018 grants administered by the State of Illinois unless specifically exempted. Exempted ISBE programs include Evidence-Based Funding, Mandated Categoricals, and Drivers Education.

The reports include information on the accomplishment of deliverables described in the grant, the status of performance measures, and the alignment of accomplishments to date with spending to date.

ISBE is implementing the periodic performance reporting requirement through an IWAS-based system that incorporates the required information fields. The new Grant Periodic Reporting System became available on Thursday, October 26, 2017. Most grant recipients are required to report quarterly. Some will be required to report monthly due to findings of elevated programmatic risk.

Due to the delay in the implementation of the reporting system, the initial FY 2018 reporting period for all ISBE grantees will have a report date of October 31, 2017, and should include all activity from July 1, 2017, through October 31, 2017.

Following this initial reporting period, all reporting periods will be based on calendar quarters or months. Quarterly reports are due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. Monthly reports are due within 20 days following the end of the month covered by the report.

NOTE: This performance reporting is **in addition to** the regular fiscal reporting done through the Electronic Expenditure Reporting system.

To learn more about the new reporting system and your obligations, please view the recorded webinar that can be found in the "What's New?" section on the [GATA site](#) (/Pages/Grant-Accountability-and-Transparency-Act.aspx). If you have questions after viewing the recorded webinars and visiting the reporting system, please register to participate in the live webinar scheduled for November 1 that will cover the periodic reporting requirements and system as well as the implementation of risk-based conditions and provide a forum for questions. Register for the [GATA Informational webinar](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2919081712115746817) (https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2919081712115746817). Questions may also be submitted to the ISBE GATA administration staff at GATA@ISBE.net (mailto:GATA@ISBE.net).

NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Recall Notice Issued on Vegetable Products

On Oct. 19, Mann Packing of Salinas, Calif., voluntarily recalled some lots of minimally processed vegetable products because they may be contaminated with listeria monocytogenes. The recall has been expanded since that date to include additional product codes. Mann Packing is issuing this recall out of an abundance of caution. To date, public health officials have not reported any illnesses associated with these products.

The recalled products were distributed throughout the United States and Canada with "best if used by" dates from Oct. 12 to Oct. 20 listed on the front of the packaging. Please contact your distributor or view the FDA recall notice in the link below for additional details about the affected lot codes.

Products provided through the USDA Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program are affected by this recall.

Schools that received these products should have already been notified by their prime vendor with further instructions.

Questions for the U.S. Department of Agriculture can be directed to USDA Foods Feedback at (800) 466-6991. Questions for Mann Packing can be directed to its 24-hour consumer line at (888) 470-2681 or [veggiesmadeeasy.com/products](https://www.veggiesmadeeasy.com/products) (https://www.veggiesmadeeasy.com/products-overview/).

The Defense Logistics Agency point of contact for this activity is CPT Janas Gray, food safety officer, at (215) 737-2934 or dscpcnsssafofc@dla.mil (mailto:dscpcnsssafofc@dla.mil). More information about this recall, a complete list of affected products, and a list of recalls associated with the Mann Packing recall can be found on the [FDA's website](https://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/MajorProductRecalls/ucm581921.htm) (<https://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/MajorProductRecalls/ucm581921.htm>).

Nominations Sought for Opportunity to Attend Produce Safety University

ISBE's Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division is looking for nominations to attend Produce Safety University (PSU), a one-week, all-expenses-paid training course offered to local school district partners. A limited number of Illinois school district partners may be nominated to attend.

Participants must have a current role in training school foodservice staff at the school district and school levels. Participants will be expected to teach others about the subject matter learned using the comprehensive training materials provided to all attendees.

Nominees are encouraged to select the nearest training in order to reduce time and cost of travel and facilitate regional networking. **Produce Safety University 2018 will be June 4-8 in Chicago.** Other dates and locations are March 19-23 in Davis, Calif., April 16-20 in Atlanta, May 21-25 in Baltimore, and July 23-27 in Philadelphia.

If you are interested in being nominated to attend PSU, please submit a letter of intent, including approval from your district superintendent, to Roxanne Ramage (rramage@isbe.net (mailto:rramage@isbe.net)) as soon as possible but no later than Nov. 20. Approval from your superintendent is required due to PSU being a week-long commitment. Please email Ramage or call (800) 545-7892 if you have questions.

[Visit the PSU website for more information](https://www.fns.usda.gov/ofs/produce-safety) (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/ofs/produce-safety>).

USDA Foods Show and Conference Scheduled for Nov. 28 in Bloomington

Registration has started for the USDA Foods Show and Conference, hosted by ISBE and the Illinois School Nutrition Association (ILSNA). The event is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Nov. 28 at the Parke Regency Hotel, 1413 Leslie Drive, in Bloomington.

The show includes educational sessions that qualify for training hours as well as the opportunity for school nutrition staff to see and taste new products. Attendees can earn up to 3.25 professional development continuing education units for the sessions.

Registration begins at 7:45 a.m., followed by a welcome session and the following topics: Illinois Commodity System, USDA Foods, Diverting USDA Foods to Processors, DOD Produce, USDA Food Buying Guide and the Recipe Analysis Worksheet, and an ISBE Update. The USDA Foods Show ends the day-long event from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

For more information and to register, visit the [ILSNA website](http://www.ilsna.net/) (<http://www.ilsna.net/>) today.




Team Nutrition Offers Webinars on Updated CACFP Meal Patterns

Sponsors in the Child and Adult Care Food Program are encouraged to register for free training offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Team Nutrition. The new webinar series, "CACFP Halftime: Thirty on Thursdays," will cover important topics related to the updated meal patterns.

The webinars will be held on the third Thursday of the month. Next up is "Choose Yogurts That Are Lower in Added Sugars" on Nov. 16. A webinar in English will be held from 1-1:30 p.m. A Spanish version is offered 2-2:30 p.m. A webinar on "Serving Milk in the CACFP" is slated for Jan. 18.

The webinars are for sponsoring organizations, CACFP providers and program operators, and state agencies. Others who work with CACFP are welcome to attend.

For more information and to register, visit the [CACFP Halftime Webinar page](https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp-half-time-thirty-thursdays-training-webinar-series) (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp-half-time-thirty-thursdays-training-webinar-series>). All webinars will be recorded and made available at a later date on the [USDA Team Nutrition website](https://teamnutrition.usda.gov) (<https://teamnutrition.usda.gov>).


Additional resources on the updated meal patterns for CACFP can be found on [ISBE's website](#) ([/Pages/Child-Adult-Care-Food-Program-Documents.aspx](#)), under the "Meal Pattern Requirements and Nutrition Information" tab. They include helpful tip sheets on [serving milk](#)  ([/Documents/serving-milk.pdf](#)), [choosing yogurts](#)  ([/Documents/choose-yogurts.pdf](#)), [choosing breakfast cereals](#)  ([/Documents/choose-cereals.pdf](#)), and more.

IN BRIEF

Classroom Opportunity

- Looking for a creative student project? The [Made By Milk contest](http://madebymilkcontest.com/contest-details/) (<http://madebymilkcontest.com/contest-details/>) asks a team of students to repurpose milk cartons into a work of art. Entries are due Nov. 15.

Educator Recognition

- Congratulations to **Kirsten Perry of Lawndale Community Academy** in Chicago for being named one of six [2018 School Counselor of the Year national finalists](#)  (https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Press%20releases/2018-SCOY-Finalists-Press-Release_1.pdf) by the American School Counselor Association!

Administrator Recognition

- Congrats to **Dr. Robert McBride**, principal of Neuqua Valley High School in Naperville, for receiving a [2017 Terrel H. Bell Award for Outstanding School Leadership](#) (<https://nationalblueribbonschools.ed.gov/education-secretary-devos-announces-recipients-of-the-2017-terrel-h-bell-awards-for-outstanding-school-leadership/#.WfivFU0rIdU>)!
- Congratulations to four Illinois Superintendents recognized by **NSPRA** (<https://www.nspr.org/meet-superintendents-watch-2017-18>) as **2017-18 Superintendents to Watch**:
 - Dr. Laurie Heinz**, Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 (Park Ridge)
 - Kathy Hinz**, Crystal Lake Elementary District 47 (Crystal Lake)
 - Floyd Williams**, Community Consolidated School District 62 (Des Plaines)
 - Dr. Daniel Woestman**, Belvidere School District (Belvidere)

Funding Opportunities

- Applications are due Dec. 8 for **KidsGardening's 2018 Youth Garden Grant** (<https://kidsgardening.org/2018-youth-garden-grant/>). Any nonprofit organization, public or private school, or youth program in the United States planning a new garden program or expanding an established one that serves at least 15 youth between the ages of 3 and 18 is eligible to apply.
- The School Nutrition Association, U.S. Apple Association, and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture are working together on **Apples4Ed** (<http://apples4ed.com/>). Schools can compete for healthy snacking program grants. Nominations close at the end of November.

- The **Illinois Energy Workforce Consortium** (<http://www.cewd.org/state-consortia/illinois.php>) is offering free materials and an opportunity to win one of three \$250 classroom grants. Email a photo and brief description of how you used the materials with students to Illinois@consortia.getintoenergy.com (mailto:Illinois@consortia.getintoenergy.com) with the subject line “Class Grant Entry.” The deadline to submit entries is Jan. 26, 2018. The drawing will take place Feb. 2, 2018, with award presentations occurring in March 2018.

Upcoming Events

- The **2017 Raising Student Achievement Conference (RSAC)** sponsored by the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) will be held Dec. 4-5 at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles. This very popular annual conference offers an abundance of presenters on a variety of topics focused on increasing student achievement. [Learn more and register for the conference](http://www.roeachievementconference.org/) (<http://www.roeachievementconference.org/>).

Professional Development Opportunities

- **The Illinois Geographic Alliance** is offering a free, one-day workshop for K-12 teachers titled “Geography Education in the 21st Century” on Saturday, Nov. 11, on the Illinois State University campus. There is no registration fee. PD hours will also be provided. [Registration now open](https://forms.illinoisstate.edu/forms/geo__2017_geography_education_conference_registration) (https://forms.illinoisstate.edu/forms/geo__2017_geography_education_conference_registration).

Student Opportunities

- U.S. high school students can apply now for a **full merit-based scholarship to study abroad** during the 2018-19 school year sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Please note that each program has a separate online application process and application deadlines vary from Nov. 2 to Dec. 11. [View the study abroad programs and apply](https://exchanges.state.gov/us/high-school). (<https://exchanges.state.gov/us/high-school>)

District Recognition

- Teachers, administrators, and school nutrition professionals from Illinois shared the difference Fuel Up to Play 60 makes in their schools during the **2017 Fuel Up to Play 60 Excellence Awards**, hosted at the Walter Payton Center in Lake Forest, IL. Check out this [video on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xc7sl4-11Ug&t=4s) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xc7sl4-11Ug&t=4s>) posted by the Midwest Dairy Association. Learn more about [Fuel Up to Play 60 online](https://www.midwestdairy.com/schools-and-communities/fuel-up-to-play-60/) (<https://www.midwestdairy.com/schools-and-communities/fuel-up-to-play-60/>).

ISBE Employment Opportunities

- Watch for ISBE career opportunities and find instructions for applying at www.isbe.net/Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx (<http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx>).