

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

 [Printable PDF](#)


December 5, 2017



Hello,

We continue to celebrate the great work of students and educators across the state, as well as exciting new learning opportunities.

Congratulations to Kirsten Perry, a school counselor at Lawndale Community Academy in Chicago, for being named the 2018 National School Counselor of the Year! The American School Counselor Association has recognized Kirsten for her tireless work to improve student attendance, promote college and career readiness, support social emotional learning, and build a positive school climate. Kirsten has collaborated with students, staff, and community partners to create new learning and leadership opportunities for students and develop the necessary supports for all students to thrive. She strives to make all students feel included and cared for and to ensure families stay informed and engaged in her school. This is an incredible national honor, and we are proud to call Kirsten one of Illinois'

own! [Learn more about Kirsten's work and the award](#)  (<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Press%20releases/PerryPR.pdf>).

Countless educators in Illinois share Kirsten's dedication to preparing children for socially and economically secure futures. Many districts are empowering students to participate in real work that matters to them. One way districts are making school more relevant for the success of our students and communities is through competency-based education. Competency-based education expands the learning that "counts" to include collaborative, project-based, and work-based learning – moving away from lectures and one-size-fits-all learning to anytime, anywhere education.

On Nov. 30, ISBE released the request for applications for the [second cohort of the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Program](#) (/Lists/News/NewsDisplay.aspx?ID=1186). I appreciate the thoughtfulness with which the first cohort of districts has approached this work. The 10 current pilot districts are at different stages of developing the flexible supports students need to assume responsibility for their own learning and master competencies in alignment with the Illinois Learning Standards. Districts such as Round Lake Community Unit School District 116 and Williamsfield Community Unit School District 210 are redesigning the student experience schoolwide. Other districts are beginning with specific subject areas, such as Ridgewood High School District 234 and its initial focus on math competencies. The participating school districts convened in September to study national best practices, build relationships, find points of connection, and begin moving their pilots from vision to action.

The competency-based learning pilot might be the most exciting opportunity available to school districts right now. So much of the student experience has been organized around time, rather than around students demonstrating what they know. Competency-based learning recognizes students' individual starting points and allows them to pave a personalized pathway with no ceiling. It gives students the

Quick Links

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opportunity to do something that helps their community – and to have that learning experience count. The competency-based learning pilot maximizes autonomy, providing an important chance to engage educators as learners, too.

I look forward to welcoming a second cohort of pioneering districts. All Illinois school districts serving grades 9 through 12 are eligible to apply by February 16, 2018, to participate in the pilot. Find the application, a library of research, program implementation plans, and descriptions of current pilot districts on the [Competency Pilot page](#) (/competency).

The yearlong Illinois Bicentennial Celebration kicked off Dec. 3 with events across the state. The Bicentennial offers us a unique opportunity to engage Illinois students in learning about our shared heritage and collective history. ISBE is providing new educational resources for students and teachers to get to know our “homegrown heroes” and the rich history of our state. ISBE has partnered with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and What on Earth Publications to develop a first-of-its-kind book, *Illinois Chronicles*, as well as a wallboard and an online platform. Hard copies of the materials will be provided to every school in the state in spring of 2018. ISBE’s [Bicentennial Education webpage](#) (/bicentennial) offers sample activities created by ISBE staff and educators related to *Illinois Chronicles*. We invite educators and students to share how they are using these resources and to submit their own innovative ideas to IL200ed@isbe.net (mailto:IL200ed@isbe.net). Together we can empower students to engage with Illinois history and imagine their own roles in shaping the future of Illinois.

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>) or call the Illinois State Board of Education at (866) 262-6663.

Dec. 5: [5Essentials survey window opens](#)
(<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/5Essentials-Survey.aspx>)

Dec. 11: [Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirement Pilot RFA webinar](#)
(<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1377610391473335554>)

Dec. 12: [Deadline to submit Arts Education Week Posters](#)
(<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Arts-Week.aspx>)

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

Dec. 14: [Every Illinois Child Ready for Kindergarten Summit](#) (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mastering-kids-summit-every-illinois-child-ready-for-kindergarten-tickets-39270297517>)

Dec. 15: 2017 Illinois Science Assessment student data correction window closes in IWAS

Dec. 18-19: [Accountability Technical Advisory Committee Meeting](#)
(<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/AccountabilityTechnicalAdvisoryCommittee.aspx>)

Dec. 25: ISBE offices closed for Christmas Day

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

Jan. 2: Nonpublic Application and Recognition window closes

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

Jan. 12: [Deadline to submit FY 2019 Preschool For All and Preschool For All Expansion RFPs](#)
(<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/RFPs.aspx>)

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

Jan. 15: Public comment period on ISBE rules ends

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

Jan. 31: FY 2018 IDEA Excess Cost worksheets due to the IDEA grant coordinators

Feb. 1: Teacher Salary Study window closes

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

Feb. 2: [Deadline to submit FY 18 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant RFPs](#)
(<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Equipment-Grants.aspx>)

Feb. 9: Deadline to submit Early Childhood Prevention Initiative RFPs (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/RFPs.aspx>)

Feb. 16: Early Childhood RFP Call for Evaluators window closes

Feb. 16: Deadline to submit application for 2018 Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot program (<https://www.isbe.net/competency>)

March 12-18: 2018 Illinois Arts Education Week (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Arts-Week.aspx>)

COMPETENCY-BASED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT PILOT

Call for Applications Released and Upcoming Informative Webinar Dec. 11

ISBE will host a webinar at **10 a.m. on Dec. 11** during which experts on competency-based learning will share information with stakeholders about the request for applications to participate in the second cohort of the competency pilot. [Register for the webinar](https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1377610391473335554) (<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1377610391473335554>).

On November 30, ISBE launched the [call for applications](#) (/competency) for the second cohort of districts to be included in the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot. The pilot will allow up to 12 innovative school districts to replace high school graduation requirements with a competency-based learning system of the district's design. In competency-based learning, educators assess and advance students based on demonstrated mastery of specific skills, abilities, and knowledge, rather than on time in the classroom. The deadline to submit applications is **4 p.m. on Feb. 16**.

For more information on this RFA, contact competencypilot@isbe.net (mailto:competencypilot@isbe.net). All questions asked concerning this RFA will be responded to in a [Frequently Asked Questions document](#) (/Competency) so all respondents can see all questions and the responses to the questions.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

ISBE Accountability Technical Advisory Committee Meeting – Dec. 18-19

The ISBE Accountability TAC brings together experts and leaders with broad experience developing, implementing, and/or validating statewide school accountability systems. By design, the ISBE Accountability TAC includes professionals from Illinois and other states in order to provide both a local and national perspective.

The central purpose of the TAC is to provide advice and recommendations to the State Board to inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of Illinois' ESSA accountability system. The National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment will facilitate TAC meetings and produce meeting notes, as well as a produce a report documenting the work and recommendations of the TAC.

The first meeting will be held on Dec. 18-19 at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Individuals are invited to observe via a webinar or in person. If you wish to observe in person, please RSVP to acoffin@isbe.net (mailto:acoffin@isbe.net) to see if space is available. For more information, including a link to the live feed, please visit the [Accountability TAC page](#).
(/Pages/AccountabilityTechnicalAdvisoryCommittee.aspx)

ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

2016 Illinois Science Assessment Student Roster Reports Available in IWAS

The 2016 Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) student-level results are now available to schools and districts for viewing in IWAS in the Assessment system listing. The 2016 data corrections window is closed. **Please note these results are complete, but not yet finalized or aggregated.** Suppressions may still occur for students who took both the Dynamic Learning Maps-Alternative Assessment and the ISA, but ISBE wanted to return student results as soon as possible. The 2016 participation rate is preliminary at this time as finalization continues. Aggregate 2016 state-, district-, and school-level data will be available later this month when analyses are complete. A public release of the data will follow. Printed student score reports for distribution at your discretion will ship after schools return in January.

The task of creating and standing up a brand new test in six months, in combination with the lack of a state budget for more than two years, greatly impacted the timeline for administering, scoring, and reporting the 2016 ISA. ISBE sincerely appreciates the continued cooperation in making each year of the assessment more successful than the last.

Please contact the ISBE Division of Assessment and Accountability at (866) 317-6034 or assessment@isbe.net (mailto:assessment@isbe.net) with questions.

2017 Illinois Science Assessment Student Data Corrections Window Closing

The window to correct student demographic information and reason for no valid test attempt (RNVTA) for the 2017 Illinois Science Assessment will close at **5 p.m. on Dec. 15. Please note the 2017 ISA correction window has been open since June 2017; therefore, you may have already completed your review.** “How to” documents (</Pages/Illinois-Science-Assessment.aspx>) for finding the report and making/verifying corrections are also available. Please contact the ISBE Division of Assessment and Accountability at (866) 317-6034 or assessment@isbe.net (mailto:assessment@isbe.net) with questions.

RULES & WAIVERS

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Two sets of proposed amendments recently reviewed by ISBE are now available for public comment. The proposals and a summary of the issues involved have been posted under [Proposed Rules and Amendments](/Pages/Proposed-Rules-and-Amendments.aspx) (</Pages/Proposed-Rules-and-Amendments.aspx>). Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net (mailto:rules@isbe.net). The public comment period ends January 15, 2018. The rulemakings are Part 27 (Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields) (Repealer) and Part 27 (Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields) (New Part).

Public Act 100-465 and Active Waivers

[Public Act 100-465](http://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=1947&GAID=14&GA=100&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=105288&SessionID=91&SpecSess=) ([http://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?](http://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=1947&GAID=14&GA=100&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=105288&SessionID=91&SpecSess=)

[DocNum=1947&GAID=14&GA=100&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=105288&SessionID=91&SpecSess=](http://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=1947&GAID=14&GA=100&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=105288&SessionID=91&SpecSess=)) not only enacted funding formula changes; some nonfunding statutory provisions within the Illinois School Code were modified or repealed as well. Please note all active waivers are currently being reviewed to evaluate how they may have been impacted by Public Act 100-465. Staff in ISBE's Regulatory Support Division will be reaching out to any district with a current waiver that may be impacted by the changes brought about by this new legislation. We encourage all districts with active waivers to review this Public Act to determine how it may affect any future waivers submitted on behalf of districts. If you have any questions regarding the waiver process, please contact the agency waiver coordinator, Kristy Jones, at kjones@isbe.net (mailto:kjones@isbe.net).

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

National Census of Visually Impaired/Legally Blind Students

The Chicago Lighthouse Illinois Instructional Materials Center, our state liaison with the American Printing House for the Blind, is in the process of contacting parents/guardians of Illinois students with visual impairments in order to comply with FERPA requirements governing the listing of individual visually impaired/legally blind students in a national census. This is known as the Federal Quota Registration process. Federal funds for the production of educational materials for students who are eligible as legally blind are allocated annually based upon completion of this national census. Direct communications to parents/guardians and special educators who refer qualified students to the services of the Illinois Instructional Materials Center are currently underway. Completion of the consent process and subsequent inclusion in the census is requested before March 1, 2018.

Your awareness is appreciated since parents/guardians or educators may have questions. Questions may be directed to Greg Polman, the ex officio trustee and supervisor of the Federal Quota Registration process for Illinois, at greg.polman@chicagolighthouse.org (mailto:greg.polman@chicagolighthouse.org).

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Prevention Initiative Request for Proposals Released

The Request for Proposals (RFPs) for Prevention Initiative has been released and is located on the [ISBE Early Childhood website](#) (/Pages/RFPs.aspx). Proposals are due to ISBE no later than **4 p.m. Feb. 9, 2018**. These are open competitive grants with funding beginning in fiscal year 2019. Links to data, webinars, and other resources to assist communities, providers, and others in preparing for the FY 2019 re-compete can also be found on the Early Childhood page. For questions, please contact the Division of Early Childhood Education at (217) 524-4835.

NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Application Process Begins for NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants

More than \$1.365 million will be awarded to school food authorities (SFAs) in FY 2018 for the replacement, renovation, or purchase of kitchen equipment that will allow SFAs to serve healthier meals that meet the updated meal patterns, with emphasis on more fruits and vegetables in school meals, improve food safety, and expand access.

ISBE is required to competitively award these equipment assistance grants to eligible SFAs participating in the National School Lunch Program. Higher priority must be given to high-need schools in which 50 percent or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

The FY 2018 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant Request for Proposals (RFP) is available on the [Equipment Assistant Grants page](#) (/Pages/Equipment-Grants.aspx). The deadline to apply is Feb. 2, 2018.

NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

Nonpublic Application for Recognition and Calendar Now Open

The Nonpublic Application for Recognition and Calendar is now open in IWAS for nonpublic schools needing to renew recognition. The system will be open until midnight on **Jan. 2**. Schools are advised to check their status after they click on the submit button. "Pending ROE Admin Approval" indicates the application is sent to the ROE/ISC office, which occurs before coming to ISBE. Schools seeing this

message will want to check back in IWAS to see if the ROE/ISC has approved the applications (which are then forwarded on to ISBE) or the ROE/ISC has returned it to the school for edits. An application is **not** completely submitted until the status reads "Received by ISBE" or "Entered by ISBE Administrator." Any other status message indicates the school has not been successful yet in submitting its recognition renewal. For further information, contact Dr. Gary Greene at ggreene@isbe.net (mailto:ggreene@isbe.net) or (312) 814-3985.

GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY TRANSPARENCY ACT

Un-Submitted First Quarter FY 2018 Grantee Periodic Performance Reports Now Past Due

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 FY 2018 grants administered by the State of Illinois unless specifically exempted. Exempted ISBE programs include Evidence-Based Funding, Mandated Category, 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 webinars in the "What's New?" section on the [GATA page](#) (/Pages/Grant-Accountability-and-Transparency-Act.aspx). The [webinar](#)  (<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/8522017045705743106>) held on Nov. 1 covers the periodic reporting requirements and system, as well as the implementation of risk-based conditions and addresses participant questions.

Questions may be submitted to the ISBE GATA administration staff at GATA@ISBE.net (mailto:GATA@ISBE.net).

IN BRIEF

School Recognition

- Congratulations to **Elmhurst Academy**  (https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b84766_a98a956f76084ca48166becbc673d958.pdf) for being designated a Partnership for 21st Century Learning Exemplar School for 2017-18!

Student Opportunities

- The **RIT National Technical Institute for the Deaf** is holding two contests for deaf and hard-of-hearing high school students:
 - Students in 9 – 12 grades can enter artwork in the categories of web design, graphic media, 3-D animation, film, interactive media, or photo imaging. The deadline to enter is March 15, 2018. Encourage your artistic students to [register today](https://rit.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=37c5a86004ffbda657980d18c&id=e49f554f50&e=9559113c06) (<https://rit.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=37c5a86004ffbda657980d18c&id=e49f554f50&e=9559113c06>).
 - Student in 10 – 11 grades are being asked to submit their original compositions to the SpiRIT Writing Contest to win a scholarship to [Explore Your Future](https://rit.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=37c5a86004ffbda657980d18c&id=1ed1bbedf0&e=9559113c06) (<https://rit.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=37c5a86004ffbda657980d18c&id=1ed1bbedf0&e=9559113c06>), a week-long summer career exploration program at RIT that can help your student make important decisions about his or her future or win a cash prize. Students should complete the [entry form](https://rit.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=37c5a86004ffbda657980d18c&id=dd8fd0c1c6&e=9559113c06) (<https://rit.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=37c5a86004ffbda657980d18c&id=dd8fd0c1c6&e=9559113c06>), assemble the required sampling of his or her original work, and submit the materials by March 15, 2018.

District Recognition

- **Union School District 81** (<http://www.theherald-news.com/2017/11/13/union-d-81-to-reimburse-property-taxes-to-residents/a3ivgsj/>) has continued their fiscally conservative practices by reimbursing homeowners a portion of their property taxes for the second straight year!

ISBE Employment Opportunities

- Watch for ISBE career opportunities and find instructions for applying on ISBE's [Career page](/Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx) (/Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx).