Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week the Board approved agency staff recommendations to implement reductions to the PreK-12 state budget required by Public Act (PA) 99-0001, legislation recently enacted to reduce state spending in fiscal year 2015 for the most part by 2.25 percent, with some exceptions. As a result of those exceptions, the actual reduction was a net overall decrease of 2.16 percent. General State Aid was reduced by 2.15 percent. Where possible, a disproportionate share of the cut to an appropriation was applied to the administrative allocation, thereby reducing the negative impact on districts.

Included in those reductions are all of the special education appropriations used for maintenance of fiscal effort in support of federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B – 611 funds, otherwise known as IDEA Part B Flow Through. This reduction has created an estimated state shortfall of $13.6 million to the required minimum to maintain sufficient state financial effort. Therefore, PA 99-0002 was also enacted, requiring ISBE to calculate each district’s pro rata share of the estimated shortfall to expend for special education services from GSA paid in FY 2015. In FY 2015, each district must expend, from GSA, the amount computed for the provision of special education services as defined in Section 14-1.08. The amount for each district was computed using its final Dec. 1, 2013, special education child count in proportion to the total child count of the state, which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/excel/pa99-0002-req-gsa-spded-expenditures-fy15.xlsx. Additional directions on qualifying expenditures are detailed immediately following the column.

The Board also approved staff recommendations for the distribution of a new $97 million supplemental appropriation to be distributed to school districts in financial distress, as stipulated in statute. The agency’s distribution methodology for the $97 million appropriation in response to statutory direction protects school districts with a high probability of financial crisis as a result of the reductions. Additionally, those school districts that have lower Available Local Resources on a per pupil basis and high concentrations of low-income pupils are protected. The actual process is outlined in the Board memo from April’s meeting. You may access that Board memo as well as documents that detail project cuts, distribution of the $97 million and special education required expenditures on the Funding and Disbursements page at http://www.isbe.net/funding/default.htm or from our hot topics link on the agency homepage.

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April 21, 2015
As I prepare to leave the agency, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your work on behalf of Illinois children. I know recent years have been challenging and I do hope that my efforts were of assistance as we navigated funding challenges and significant changes in policy and practice. It has been a privilege to serve as your State Superintendent of Education and I am proud of the accomplishments that we achieved together. As I reflect back on these years, I saw acts of courage and leadership among you again and again and this gives me great hope for the future of this great state. I want to thank those of you who took on challenges because they would result in improvements with teaching and learning and those who led to make things better. You may not have agreed with me on some or all of my decisions; however, know they were always made with the intention of moving Illinois forward in better serving our youngest citizens.

Again, thank you for your support over the years and I wish you the very best for the future.

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.

- Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) testing window – March 16 to May 8
- “Exploring the Impact of Suicide Prevention Research in Schools” webinar – April 21 (http://edc.adobeconnect.com/e24zcpe69c/event/registration.html)
- “Finding Mathematical Tasks Within and Beyond the Model Math Curriculum” webinar – April 21 (https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/687385100705915650)
- Eighth annual Illinois School Wellness Conference – April 23
- 2015 “Now is the Time” Project AWARE-Community Grant application deadline – May 1 (www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/sm-15-012)
- Deadline to register for No Child Left Behind technical assistance workshops – May 4 (www.isbe.net/grants/html/nclb-workshops.htm)
- Spring 2015 PARCC ELA/L Field Test Administration – May 4-June 5
- Extended deadline to submit the Truants’ Alternative and Optional Educational Program Request for Proposal and continuation application – May 5
- National School Nurse Day – May 6 (www.nasn.org/AboutNASN/NationalSchoolNurseDay)
- TECH 2015 student showcase – May 7
- Part 50 (Evaluation of Educator Licensed Employees under Articles 24A and 34 of the School Code), Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education) and Part 600 (Enrollment of and Payment for Nonresident Students at the Philip J. Rock Center and School) – Public comment period ends May 18
- Applications for the Exception to the 1.0 Percent Cap due – May 21
- ISBE offices closed for Memorial Day – May 25
- Deadline to submit Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program applications – May 29 (www.isbe.state.il.us/construction/html/qzab.htm)
- Application deadline for 2015-16 Student Advisory Council – May 29 (www.isbe.net/sac)
• Part 210 (Illinois Hope and Opportunity Pathways through Education Program), Part 232 (Summer Bridges Program) and Part 240 (Alternative Learning Opportunities Program) – Public comment period ends June 15


• “Lead … Focus … Connect: Every Student College and Career Ready” conference – June 23 (www.eventbrite.com/e/lead-focus-connect-conference-tickets-15693652136)

• Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data –Vision system - June 30

• ISBE offices closed for Independence Day – July 3

• Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in fall 2015 – Friday, Aug. 14, 2015 (See www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)

• ISBE offices closed for Labor Day – Sept. 7

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**Funding and Disbursements**

**District Required General State Aid Expenditures for Special Ed Services**

Public Act 99-0001, signed into law by Gov. Bruce Rauner on March 27, 2015, reduced most of the fiscal year 2015 appropriations for state programs administered by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). This reduction included all of the special education appropriations utilized to demonstrate state maintenance of fiscal effort in support of federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B – 611 funds, otherwise known as IDEA Part B Flow Through.

The reduction of special education funding has created an estimated state shortfall of $13.6 million to the required state minimum to maintain sufficient financial effort. Therefore, Public Act 99-0002 was also enacted, which requires ISBE to calculate each district’s pro rata share of the estimated shortfall to expend for special education services from General State Aid paid in FY 2015. The amount for each district was computed using its final Dec. 1, 2013, special education child count in proportion to the total child count of the state, which can be accessed at www.isbe.net/funding/excel/pa99-0002-req-gsa-sped-expenditures-fy15.xlsx.

In FY 2015, each district must expend from General State Aid the amount computed for the provision of special education services as defined in Section 14-1.08. This includes expenditures for special schools, classes, housing (including residential facilities), special instruction, special reader service, brailists and typists for children with visual disabilities, sign language interpreters, transportation, maintenance, instructional material, therapy, professional consultant services, medical services only for diagnostic and evaluation purposes provided by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches to determine a child's need for special education and related services, psychological services, school social worker services, special administrative services, salaries of all required special personnel and other special educational services (including special equipment for use in the classroom) required by the child because of his disability if such services or special equipment are approved by the state superintendent of education.

For questions regarding this information, contact ISBE’s Division of Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

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**Data Analysis and Accountability**

**Attention: EIS Salary Webinar Date Rescheduled to May 6**

Following feedback from our districts, ISBE has rescheduled the date for the upcoming Employment Information System (EIS) salary webinar to May 6.

As always, we appreciate the feedback and thank our constituents for alerting us of the scheduling conflict. The webinar will take place from 1 to 3 p.m. and will define and review the guidelines for entering 2015 salary data into EIS. This webinar will assist you with when entering salary data.

Please sign up for the webinar to reserve your spot at the following link:
In addition, a question and answer session will be conducted at the end of the webinar.

For tutorials explaining data entry with both EIS submissions and batch uploads, please see our brand-new EIS Basics Course at www.isbe.net/eis/html/training.htm.

For further EIS assistance, please contact the EIS help desk at (217) 558-3600.

- **Title**: EIS Salary Webinar
- **Date**: May 6
- **Time**: 1 to 3 p.m.
- **Register**: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3880204388041795842

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**Special Education Services**

**FY 2016 TAOEP Request for Proposal Application Deadline Extended to May 5**

The fiscal year 2016 Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) Request for Proposal (RFP), Continuing and Chicago applications deadline has been extended to 4 p.m. May 5.

Eligible applicants are public school districts, regional offices of education, community college districts, charter schools, area vocational centers and public university laboratory schools approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Questions about the program and application should be directed to Sally Veach at sveach@isbe.net or (V.) Sue Taylor at vtaylor@isbe.net or (217) 782-5589.

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**School Business Services**

**Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program for Calendar Year 2014 Authorization**

The Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program has been extended for another year as a result of the passage of the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-295). The implementing regulations provide that Illinois’ share of these allocations is $14.574 million for calendar year 2014.

School Business Services will be accepting QZAB applications through May 29. To be considered, all applications, supplemental materials and final signatures must be submitted to the address provided below by 4 p.m. May 29:

Illinois State Board of Education  
School Business Services (QZAB) (N-330)  
100 N. First St.  
Springfield, IL 62777

To obtain the application or for additional information, please visit www.isbe.state.il.us/construction/html/qzab.htm or contact Scott Durr at (217) 785-8779 or sdurr@isbe.net.

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**Title Grant Administration**

**FY 2016 No Child Left Behind Technical Assistance Workshops Scheduled**

ISBE’s Title Grants and Federal and State Monitoring division staff invites you to attend a one-day No Child Left Behind (NCLB) technical assistance workshop that will be offered throughout the state this spring.

This workshop will focus on what’s new in the fiscal year 2016 NCLB Consolidated Application, the new federal Omni Circular and its impact on auditing and monitoring, and proper grants management. Updates regarding the potential reauthorization of NCLB and amendments to Illinois’ ESEA Flexibility Waiver will be included. All NCLB grants-management administrators should attend.

A pre-session, which will focus on the Consolidated Application in its entirety, will be held for new directors. Experienced directors are welcome to attend, but the focus will be on the needs of new directors. There is no fee to attend, and lunch will be provided.

Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged. The registration deadline is May 4. For more information about these workshops, including instructions for registering, please visit www.isbe.net/grants/html/nclb-workshops.htm.
Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Application Now Available

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is an alternative to collecting household eligibility applications for the School Meal Programs in which all students enrolled at the CEP school can receive breakfast and lunch at no cost.

CEP uses a percentage derived from the number of Identified Students divided by the enrollment and then multiplied by a USDA factor of 1.6 to come up with a percentage. This percentage is used to determine reimbursement for meals. In order to be eligible, the school must have at least 40 percent of its enrolled students be Identified Students and it must agree to serve both breakfast and lunch to all students at no cost. Identified Students are not the same as free and reduced eligibility; Identified Students include only those students located in the Electronic Direct Certification system as receiving SNAP, TANF, Medicaid and Foster, extension of benefits and homeless/migrant/runaway/Head Start students. Identified Students do not include students who are on applications based on income.

CEP has been successfully implemented in more than 1,000 schools in Illinois, and we are currently on our fourth year of administering this option. For more information about CEP, we highly recommend visiting our CEP website at www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/nslp-hhfka-ceo.htm.

If you have questions, contact Lindsay in ISBE’s Nutrition and Wellness Programs division via email at cnp@isbe.net or by phone at (800) 545-7892.

School Health Issues

Webinar on Youth Suicide Prevention Education Scheduled for April 21

Public Act 096-0951 requires that school guidance counselors, teachers, school social workers and other school personnel who work with pupils in grades 7-12 be trained in suicide identification, intervention and referral techniques.

A webinar on this topic will be presented from 1 to 2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21. “Exploring the Impact of Suicide Prevention Research in Schools” will be delivered by researchers at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and the University of Rochester Medical Center. Webinar speakers will address suicide prevention research that is being conducted in schools, discuss the known impact the research has made, and identify needed research and practice going forward.

To register, go to http://edc.adobeconnect.com/e24zcpei69c/event/registration.html.

English Language Learning

Individuals Sought to Serve on Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education

The state superintendent of education is seeking individuals to serve on the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (ILCS 5/14C-13).

New members would serve a three-year term of office, beginning on Sept. 1. New members will be expected to attend four meetings per year, as well as actively participate in additional meetings and special projects.

If you are interested in serving on the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (IACBE), please email a cover letter and resume to the Division of English Language Learning (DELL) at dell@isbe.net before the close of business on May 15. The state superintendent will notify successful candidates in August.

Please contact Tina Paduck, DELL principal consultant, with any questions at tpaduck@isbe.net.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Three sets of proposed amendments recently reviewed by ISBE are available for public comment. The proposals have been posted on the agency’s website at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

Public Comment period ends June 15, 2015.

Part 232 (Summer Bridges Program): Updates statutory references to the new testing system, per P.A. 98-972, effective August 15, 2014.
Public Comment period ends June 15, 2015.

Public Comment period ends June 15, 2015.

Illinois Learning Standards

ISBE Seeks Input in Planning Summer Math Splash Events across State

ISBE staff is planning Summer Math Splash events to help improve mathematics education statewide. Staff members are inviting members and stakeholders of the mathematics education community to share input about their specific needs with event planners.

The Math Splash events will have energizing keynote speakers, engaging tasks and a plethora of practical information ready for participants to bring back to their educational settings. However, planners need help to iron out some of the specific content. Please take the time to complete the following survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/W2JLHZ7 by April 30.

Survey response will help ISBE tailor our professional development.

Model Math Curriculum Resources Webinar Scheduled for April 21

Have you been introduced to the Model Math Curriculum Resources and want to explore more? Are you ready to try a task in your classroom but aren’t sure where to find one?

Join us for “Finding Mathematical Tasks Within and Beyond the Model Math Curriculum,” the fourth installment in the Illinois State Board of Education’s Teacher-to-Teacher Webinar Series, airing at 3:30 p.m. on April 21.

Lewistown High School math instructor and Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics (ICTM) board member Anita Reid is presenting the webinar. Participants will delve into Livebinder, the online host housing the Model Math Curriculum, with time set aside to ask specific questions or receive direction in finding specific tasks. In addition, other online and print resources will be shared as well as methods for how to effectively search for tasks that best suit your classroom needs.

Participants are encouraged to bring along favorite task sites or print resources to share with the audience. Come with end-of-the-year content in mind and take away a task to try in your classroom.

- Title: “Finding Mathematical Tasks Within and Beyond the Model Math Curriculum” webinar
- Date: April 21
- Time: 3:30 p.m.
- Register: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6873385100705915650

Illinois P-20 Council

Educator and Administrator Input Sought for Teacher Leadership Survey

The mission of the Illinois P-20 Council Committee on Teacher and Leader Effectiveness is to advise the governor on recommendations for strengthening and aligning the preparation, recruitment, certification, selection, evaluation, support, development and retention of highly effective and diverse teachers and leaders.

This year the committee is taking a deeper look into the topic of teacher leadership through:

1. Examining the current “state” of teacher leadership in Illinois schools by documenting what is occurring in this arena throughout schools and districts and to identify the needs of districts in the area of teacher leadership.
2. Studying the new teacher leadership endorsement programs that universities have been implementing.
3. Learning about and publicizing the innovative teacher leadership programs at the district, school, higher education and state levels.
4. Making recommendations about the best practices in teacher leadership at the district and university levels.

The committee has developed a survey for teachers, principals and superintendents to collect feedback on what’s happening with teacher leadership throughout the state and the needs that exist. The survey information will help the committee move forward on supporting preschool through adult education in our state through the teacher leadership lens.

Superintendents are encouraged to distribute the surveys within their districts. The surveys are available online and should be completed by May 1:

- Teacher’s Survey: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/illinoisteachers](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/illinoisteachers)
- Principal's Survey: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/illinoisprincipals](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/illinoisprincipals)
- Superintendent's Survey: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/illinoissuperintendents](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/illinoissuperintendents)

The survey should only take about 15 minutes, and responses are completely confidential. Questions about the survey can be directed to Pam Reilly at reillyreillypc@gmail.com.

**Teacher Recruiting and Retention Taskforce**

**District Superintendents Asked to Fill Out Short Tier II Pension Benefits Survey**

During the 98th General Assembly, House Joint Resolution 27 created the Teacher Recruiting and Retention Taskforce. The purpose of this task force is to study the impact of Tier II pension benefits on the ability of school districts to recruit and retain teachers in public school classrooms.

In order to ascertain the opinions of district leadership, the Teacher Recruiting and Retention Taskforce has created a short survey that will be helpful in analyzing potential impact of Tier II pension benefits.

The survey can be found at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SuperintendentHRs](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SuperintendentHRs) survey. The survey will remain open until Friday, May 1, 2015. If you have questions about the survey, please contact Vince Camille at vcamille@isbe.net.

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**In Brief**

**Upcoming Events**

- **National School Nurse Day** is May 6, coinciding with National Nurses Week on May 6-12. For more information, visit [www.nasn.org/AboutNASN/NationalSchoolNurseDay](http://www.nasn.org/AboutNASN/NationalSchoolNurseDay).

**Grant Opportunities**

- The Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV), University of Colorado Boulder, seeks schools containing grades 6-8 or 7-9 to receive funding to implement the evidence-based LifeSkills Training (LST) Program, a middle school substance abuse and violence prevention program consistently proven to reduce alcohol, tobacco and drug use. CSPV subcontracts with the organization that developed the LST program to deliver expert training and technical assistance to teachers and to provide program sustainability training to administrators. The grant will allow CSPV to provide three years of training and technical assistance and program materials to eligible schools, districts and education agencies, beginning in fall 2016. More information and applications files are available at [www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/lst_grant/](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/lst_grant/).

**Student Opportunities**

- The Tourette Syndrome Camp Organization will host its 22th annual Tourette Syndrome Camp USA from June 28 to July 4 at YMCA Camp Duncan in Ingleside. The program is designed for children ages 7-16 with Tourette Syndrome and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Program cost and financial aid details are available online at [www.tourettemc.org](http://www.tourettemc.org). For more information, contact (773) 465-7536 or email info@tourettemc.org.

**Professional Development**

- **A workshop for registered nurses** working in schools is scheduled for Aug. 5-6 at Lewis University’s Oak Brook campus. The event is
aimed at RNs who do not hold an ISBE license as school nurses. The content serves as a basic orientation to school nursing. ISBE-licensed school nurses may also want to attend as a refresher. Nursing contact hours totaling 11.75 hours may be awarded. For more information and pre-registration, contact Linda Gibbons at gibbonli@lewisu.edu or (630) 564-2396.

- The Indiana Department of Education is holding a **Summer of eLearning conference** on June 9-10 at Mount Vernon Senior High School in Illinois. This year’s theme is “Connecting the 4C’s - Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking and Creativity.” The conference will feature nationally recognized keynote speakers and provide numerous opportunities for educators to engage in hands-on activities and workshops. To learn more, visit [www.connectingthe4Cs.org](http://www.connectingthe4Cs.org).

- The National Great Rivers Research and Education Center invites educators to attend a **Stream Discovery and Creek Freaks Workshop** May 16-17 in Elgin. Stream Discovery trains grade 5-12 educators on how to involve their student groups in water quality monitoring, analysis and stream cleanup. For more information or to register, visit [www.eventbrite.com/e/creek-freaks-and-stream-discovery-training-workshop-elgin-il-tickets-13025707241](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/creek-freaks-and-stream-discovery-training-workshop-elgin-il-tickets-13025707241).

- The **Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC)** invites beginning teachers (all grade levels and content areas) who have just completed their first year of teaching in Illinois to the INTC Beginning Teacher Conference, “Y2: Moving Beyond Survival.” The two-day conference is scheduled for June 30 and July 1 in Champaign and will feature speakers, breakout sessions and networking opportunities. For more details and to register, visit [http://intc.education.illinois.edu/events/btc2015/](http://intc.education.illinois.edu/events/btc2015/).

**Employment Opportunities**

- Watch for vacancy lists and find instructions for applying on ISBE’s Human Resources webpage at [http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm).