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
- 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
- Deadline to apply to be a grant reader for the fiscal year 2016 School Improvement Grant 1003(g) competition – May 15
- No Kid Hungry Illinois Child and Adult Care Food Program At-Risk After-School Meals Grant deadline – May 15
- 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
• ISBE offices closed for Columbus Day – Oct. 12
• Deadline to submit fiscal year 2016 School District Budget/Joint Agreement Forms to ISBE – Oct. 30

System of Support & District Intervention

Grant Readers Sought for School Improvement Grant Competition

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) System of Support and District Intervention Division is seeking grant readers for the fiscal year 2016 School Improvement Grant 1003(g) competition.

Preferred grant readers should have school or district administrative experience, expertise in school improvement (transformation and reform), previous grant writing and reading experience, program management and experience working with low-performing schools and districts serving specialized populations such as early childhood, students with special needs and linguistically and culturally diverse English Learners. Grant readers should also be familiar with the new School Improvement Grant 1003(g) final requirements as published on the U.S. Department of Education website at www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/02/09/2015-02570/final-requirements-school-improvement-grants-title-i-of-the-elementary-and-secondary-education-act.

Readers will be required to participate in a half-day training that will be delivered via webinar in June and a one-day inter-rater reliability face-to-face training session. Readers are also expected to be available in July to read and score their assigned Request for Proposal (RFP) applications, which will be sent to the readers through a web-based system. Access to a computer with Internet capability and technology literacy will be necessary. An honorarium based on the number of reviews completed on time will be provided. Once selected, readers will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, a memorandum of understanding and complete a conflict of interest questionnaire. Individuals working for a district, school or Lead Partner that is currently funded through a School Improvement Grant 1003(g) are not eligible to serve as a grant reviewer.

Candidates should send a letter of interest, detailing their contact information and qualifications in the areas listed above along with a resume or curriculum vitae by May 15 to Rae Clementz, principal consultant, Illinois State Board of Education, System of Support and District Intervention Division, 100 N. First St., Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001 or via e-mail at aclement@isbe.net. Contact Clementz with questions at (217) 524-4832.

Illinois Learning Standards

“Toes in the Water,” a Preview of the ISBE Math Splash Conferences 2015

A webinar to discuss the upcoming ISBE Summer Math Splash Conferences is scheduled for May 12.

The conferences will be held in July. This webinar will feature teacher guests describing their roles in the Math Splash events, giving viewers a glimpse of what is to come at this dynamic two-day event. Conference topics to be sampled during the webinar include:

• PARCC updates
• Statistics progressions
• EQuIP rubric
• Interactive notebook
• Engaging tasks for elementary teachers

Register online at
Title: “Toes in the Water,” a Preview of the ISBE Math Splash Conferences 2015
Date: May 12
Time: 3:30 p.m.
Register: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/421747527733276162

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Grants Available for After-School Meals through No Kid Hungry Illinois

After-school meals serve a critical need for hungry children in Illinois. Many after-school programs already feed students using their own budgets because they recognize that for many students, lunch is a distant memory and they may not get an adequate healthy dinner at home.

Under the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the USDA offers reimbursements for snacks and meals served at eligible low-income after-school programs (www.isbe.state.il.us/nutrition/pdf/at_risk_fs.pdf). Yet, of the federally funded child nutrition programs, At-Risk After-School Meals are the least utilized. In Illinois, less than 5 percent of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch receive meals after-school.

In order to expand access to and participation in the At-Risk After-School Meals Program, No Kid Hungry Illinois and the Rise & Shine Illinois campaign are offering grants of up to $2,500 for schools and organizations to help maximize their ability to provide students with a full supper meal. Grant funds may be used toward staffing, equipment, program costs, outreach materials, transportation and other resources, with the exception of food.

Eligible programs include:
- Starting new CACFP sponsors operating in conjunction with an eligible after-school program
- After-school programs that are already offering snacks through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or CACFP that wish to offer supper meals through the CACFP
- Current CACFP supper sponsors looking to expand or enhance their program to serve more children

The first application deadline is May 15.

Full grant details and a link to the application can be found here at http://riseandshineillinois.org/about-us/at-risk-after-school/.

Contact Malaney Varaljay at Rise & Shine Illinois for more information at mvaraljay@gcfd.org or (773) 843-6706.

School Health Issues

National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day Scheduled for May 7

May 7 is National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. This day is an opportunity to join the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), communities, organizations, agencies and individuals nationwide in raising awareness that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development from birth and that children with behavioral health needs can thrive in their communities.

To learn more about how your district and communities can prepare for the 2015 Awareness Day activities, visit www.samhsa.gov/children/national-childrens-awareness-day-events/awareness-day-2015.

Funding and Disbursements

Public Act 99-0001 – New Proration of Fiscal Year 2015 General State Aid

On April 15, the State 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. General State Aid (GSA) was reduced by 2.15 percent, resulting in a revised proration of 87.1 percent. The remaining four GSA payments scheduled for May and June have been recomputed at the new prorated level.

Weekly Message – State Board of Education – May 4, 2015
2015 GSA entitlement calculations and payment schedules can be accessed via GSA Inquiry at http://webprod1.isbe.net/gsainquiry/default.aspx.

Questions regarding this information may be directed to Ethelene Ferdinand, Division of State and Federal Forecasting, at eferdin@isbe.net or (217) 782-0249.

**Public Act 99-0001 – $97 Million Supplemental Appropriation**

PA 99-0001 provided a new supplemental appropriation of $97 million to be distributed to school districts in financial distress, as stipulated in statute. The agency’s proposed 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. On April 15, the Board approved staff recommendations for the distribution of the supplemental appropriation to districts that met specific criteria. You may access the Board memo as well as documents that detail the distribution of the $97 million on the Funding and Disbursements page at www.isbe.net/funding/default.htm or from our Hot Topics link on the agency homepage.

ISBE will voucher a lump sum amount for the 578 qualifying districts today. The Office of the Comptroller has prioritized this payment for release soon after this date. Districts receiving the supplemental funding may identify the project payment as 2015-3999-HH, which defines the fiscal year, revenue code as Other State Revenue, and subproject code as hold harmless. If you have questions regarding the supplemental calculation or district eligibility, please contact Kim Beachy, School Business Services, at kbeachy@isbe.net or (217) 785-8779.

**PA 99-0002 – District Required GSA Expenditures for Special Ed Services**

Included in the 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 fiscal year 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-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, braillists 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.

To document the expenditure of FY 2015 GSA funds for special education services, a district may reflect an expenditure entry locally that identifies the Fund for instructional special education salaries paid in fiscal year 2015. In FY 2015, each district is required to expend for special education services 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-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, braillists 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.

Questions regarding this information may be directed to Marj Beck, Division of Funding and Disbursement Services, at mbeck@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.
2014-15 Final Public School Calendars

The ability to file the 2014-15 Final Public School Calendar will be available May 1 via the Public School Calendar system in IWAS. Please complete and transmit the Final Calendar to the appropriate Regional Office of Education (ROE)/Intermediate Service Center (ISC) by the last day of school.

REMINDER: The document type Final Calendar must be submitted even if the district has previous approval on a document type Amended Calendar. A Final Public School Calendar must be submitted and approved prior to filing the 2014-15 claims for General State Aid, Pupil Transportation and 18-3 Regular Education Orphanage. If a document type Amended Calendar is in draft status, i.e., has not been submitted for RCDT Administrator or ROE/ISC approval, just leave it in draft status and proceed entering the Final Calendar.

HELPFUL HINT: The unused proposed emergency days (calendar code XED) that are coded at the end of the school calendar may be removed by correcting the Regular School End Date to the last day of actual school activity. Once the Regular School End Date has been corrected, the calendar codes after that date will be omitted.

If you have questions that are not addressed in the Public School Calendar Guidelines or Final/Proposed Calendar Checkpoints, you may contact the ROE/ISC office or Marj Beck of the Illinois State Board of Education at mbeck@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256. If you encounter technical issues with the Public School Calendar in IWAS, please contact the ISBE Call Center at (217) 558-3600 during business hours, which are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Deadline for Final FY 2015 State & Federal Grant Amendments & End Date Extensions

Many state and federal grant projects are approaching a June 30 end date for obligating fiscal year 2015 grant funds. Please be advised that per Policy Statements 2 and 3 on page 6 of the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures, www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf, all state and federal project end date extension requests and final budget amendments must be received at ISBE no later than 30 calendar days prior to the end date of the project.

As a reminder, please be advised of the following regarding the need for a project end date extension:

- An end date extension past June 30 is NOT needed for regular term staff salaries paid on a 12-month salary schedule.
- An end date extension past June 30 is NOT needed to pay obligations (e.g., purchase order for supplies) incurred June 30 or prior.
- An end date extension past June 30 IS NEEDED for new activities and obligations incurred July 1 or later (e.g., Summer School, Professional Development).

Final amendments for state and federal grants with a project end date of June 30, 2015, must be received by ISBE no later than May 31, 2015. For those grants with a project end date of Aug. 31, 2015, the last day amendments will be accepted is Aug. 1, 2015. However, budget increases for state-funded grant projects must be received by June 30, even if the project end date has been extended. For grant applications in the electronic Grants Management System (eGMS), the deadline is also referenced on the Program Overview page under “Amendment Due Date.”

Note to Special Education and Education for Employment Cooperative Administrators: Member district amendments need to be submitted to the Cooperative/EFE Administrator timely to accommodate a final review for accuracy and approvability before acceptance and approval to ISBE on or before the May 31/Aug. 1 deadline.

Questions regarding this information can be directed to Funding and Disbursements at (217) 782-5256.

FY 2016 Employer Contributions to TRS – Federal Grants

Please be advised that for fiscal year 2016 (July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016) the preliminary employer’s share of teachers’ retirement rate will be 36.06 percent for personnel employed with federal grant funds.

More information is available on the Teachers’ Retirement System (TRS) website at
http://trs.illinois.gov/employers/payments/contribution.htm.

If you have specific questions regarding TRS contributions, you can direct your inquiries to the TRS Employer Services Division at employers@trs.illinois.gov or (888) 877-0890.

**Employer’s TRS Contribution on Federally Funded Salary for Summer Activities**

TRS requires earnings for summer work to be reported on an accrual basis. Earnings for work performed in June 2015 must be reported on the 2014-15 TRS Annual Report, even if the member is not paid for the June work until July or August. The 2014-15 TRS and THIS contribution rates apply to accrued earnings for work performed in June, regardless of when the June earnings are paid to the teacher.

Earnings for work performed in July and August 2015 must be reported on the 2015-16 TRS Annual Report. The 2015-16 TRS and THIS contribution rates apply to accrued earnings for work performed in July and August, regardless of when the July and August earnings are paid to the teacher.

Based on several questions from the field regarding what federal TRS rate to use for SUMMER salaries, the Teachers’ Retirement System (trs.illinois.gov) has instructed local educational agencies to use the new employer TRS contribution on federally funded salaries that are providing services AFTER the start of the new fiscal year (July 1, 2015). Below are three scenarios and what federal TRS rate to use in each scenario:

1. FY 2015: federally funded staff/teachers who have completed their assignments by June 30, 2015, but being paid after July 1: The CURRENT RATE (FY 2015) applies (33 percent).
2. FY 2015: federally funded staff/teachers providing services and being paid after July 1: The NEW RATE (FY 2016) applies (36.06 percent). (Please note that an FY 2015 amendment may be needed in this scenario.)
3. FY 2016: federally funded grant staff: The NEW RATE applies (36.06 percent).

Further questions can be directed to the TRS Employer Services Division at employers@trs.illinois.gov or (888) 877-0890.

**2013-14 Driver Education Cost Report**

Per Public Act 97-1025 effective Jan. 1, 2013, the State Board of Education is required to provide an annual report of the per capita Driver Education cost. The 2013-14 report has been compiled and can be accessed at www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/driver-ed-cost-rpt-13-14.pdf.

The report utilizes expenditure and revenue data submitted by school districts via their audited Annual Financial Report (AFR) ending June 30 as well as the number of students provided Driver Education in the same year. District AFRs for fiscal year 2014 can be accessed at www.isbe.net/sfms/html/financial_archive.htm.

Questions can be directed to Lisa Willhoit, lwillhoi@isbe.net, in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at (217) 782-5256.

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**School Business Services**

**School District/Joint Agreement Budget Forms Now Available**

Now available on the School Business Services Division website at www.isbe.net/sfms/budget/default.htm are fiscal year 2016 School District/Joint Agreement Budget forms (ISBE Form 50-36/50-39) with related additional information and instructions. **Note: New federal revenue account number added, Race to the Top - Preschool Expansion Grant - Account #4902.**

Also on the website are:

- FY 2016 School District/Joint Agreement Budget, ISBE Form 50-36/50-39
- Links to current rules and school code requirements
- Dates to remember
- Additional help guides and other useful links

FY 2016 School District Budget/Joint Agreement Forms must be submitted to ISBE no later than **Friday, Oct. 30, 2015**. The Illinois School Code,
Section 17-1 (105 ILCS 5/17-1) requires school districts/joint agreements to electronically submit the adopted annual budget to ISBE and also requires school districts that adopt an unbalanced budget in the operating funds to complete a deficit reduction plan to balance the budget within three years. Additional deadline dates are included in the webpage.

As a reminder, amended FY 2015 budgets must be completed and adopted no later than June 30, 2015. Please submit the amended budgets to ISBE through the Attachment Manager to the School Finance Reports (SFR).

**ILEARN Now Updated with Fiscal Year 2014 Financial Data**

ILEARN (Illinois Education Agency Retrieval Network) now includes the financial data from the fiscal year 2014 Annual Financial Reports. The database is updated each year following the completion of the Annual Financial Report processing.

ILEARN contains financial, tax and per pupil data from fiscal years 1997 to 2014 and has been used by many for school district financial studies, comparisons and other inquiries. The database has the capability of comparing financial data from district to district, county to county and one year to another for a specific school district.

Questions regarding the database can be directed to Debbie Hemberger, School Business Services Division, at (217) 785-8779 or finance@isbe.net.

**Standards and Assessments**

**Districts Begin Pilot of Student Assessment Inventory Tool**

ISBE is collaborating with three school districts to pilot the Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts. Bensenville School District 2, Urbana School District 116 and West Aurora School District 129 are committed to the development of local balanced assessment systems using the assessment inventory tool.

Achieve – an independent, bipartisan nonprofit education reform organization – developed the Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts to support educators as they take stock of the assessments students are currently taking and determine the minimum amount of assessment needed for essential diagnostic, instructional and accountability purposes.

“We chose to participate in the pilot to address our ongoing need to increase assessment literacy and the use of high-quality assessments to make informed instructional decisions to better meet the needs of all students,” said Jean Korder, Urbana School District 116 director of curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Assessment is a critical component of effective instruction, but many educators, parents and students have expressed concerns about the amount of assessment occurring in school districts. The inventory tool is an opportunity for teachers and administrators to respond to these concerns by engaging in a collaborative and transparent conversation addressing the amount and quality of assessment occurring at the district level.

“We are committed to supporting the development of local balanced assessment systems and increasing educators’ assessment and data literacy. Engaging in an assessment inventory process using the Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts is a great first step,” said Dr. Diana Zaleski, project administrator at ISBE.

The Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts and companion Assessment Inventory Facilitation Process are available on the ISBE Balanced Assessment webpage at www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/balanced-asmt.htm.

**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.

**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/.

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.tourettecamp.com. For more information, contact (773) 465-7536 or email info@tourettecamp.com.

Professional Development

- Funded by a grant from the Library of Congress, the Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS) program provides professional development and ongoing support in the use of primary sources in the classroom, including alignment with current state standards and initiatives. For more information about TPS professional development, please visit www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/about/professional.html. For a list of the 11 TPS partners in Illinois, including contact information, please visit www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/consortium/#il.

- 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.

- 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.

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.