Hello,

I hope you enjoyed the Memorial Day weekend.

Just a quick update today -- Some changes are underway for the PARCC assessment next year to help simplify the logistics, decrease testing time for students, and reduce the overall number of testing units. These changes are a result of feedback from you, our students and families, as well as other educators. Thank you for sharing your experience and insight.

There will be only one 30-day testing window next year. The testing window will extend from roughly the 75 percent mark of the school year to the 90 percent mark. The exam will now consist of six or seven test units, depending on grade level, compared to the eight or nine sessions that students took this year. We are also reducing the math testing time by 60 minutes and removing a half hour from the English language arts portion for most students. Each year a limited number of students will participate in an additional embedded ELA field-test unit.

I am committed to listening to your feedback and will continue working on the PARCC content and process based upon that feedback. We will have additional clarification on the testing window soon.

Thank you,
Tony

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.

- Extended Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) testing window – March 16 to May 29
- Spring 2015 PARCC ELA/L Field Test Administration – May 4-June 5
- 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)
• Deadline to submit final fiscal year 2015 State and Federal Grant Amendments for projects ending
  June 30 – May 31
• Deadline to complete online survey on the implementation of the new Illinois Learning Standards –
  May 31 (www.aefect.com/studies/1515003.asp?id=SUPLIST&l=SUPLIST)
• Fiscal year 2016 School Technology Revolving Loan Program (STRLP) application period – June 1 to
• Deadline to submit nomination forms for the 2016 Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year
  program – June 8 (www.isbe.net/those-who-excel/pdfs/those-who-excel-app.pdf)
• 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
• 2015 National Family and Community Engagement Conference – June 22-24
  (www.event.com/D/S4QT7N)
• “Lead … Focus … Connect: Every Student College and Career Ready” conference – June 23
  (www.eventbrite.com/e/lead-focus-connect-conference-tickets-15693652136)
• E-Report Card Data Collection – June 30
• Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data –Dental system – June 30
• Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data –Vision system – June 30
• ISBE offices closed for Independence Day – July 3
• Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 25 (Educator Licensure),
  Part 26 (Standards for Endorsements in Early Childhood and in Elementary Education) and Part
  405 (Payments to Certain Facilities under Section 14-7.05 of the School Code) – Public comment
  period ends July 13
• 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.)
• Annual Pupil Transportation Reimbursement claim due – Aug. 17
• 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

Funding and Disbursements

2014-15 (FY 2016) Pupil Transportation
Claim Reimbursement System Available

Please be advised that the Pupil Transportation Claim
Reimbursement System (PTCRS) is now available for
local education agencies to enter claim data for the
2014-15 school year. Please refer to the 2014-15 Pupil
Transportation Reimbursement Claim Instructions at
www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/pupil_reimburse_instruct.pd
f for assistance in completing the claim.

Please note the following changes to the claim
instructions for 2014-15:

• Page 2 – Added further information that shall be
  retained by the local education agency and made
  available for audit purposes:
  1. Documentation of the pupil transportation
  vehicle miles transported
  2. Detailed General Ledgers, invoices, revenue, payroll details, job descriptions, and contracts
  3. Copies of vehicle lease/purchase agreements
  4. Annual Financial Reports

• Page 3 – Clarified that homeless students are
  included on Line 1(a)

• Page 38 – Bus Trust or No Lease Agreements
  Some companies promote what are known as “bus
  trust” or “zero interest” lease agreements, which
  are advertised as agreements to lease buses
  without interest or finance charges. These
  agreements do not disclose inherent interest or
  finance charges that are not claimable on the
Regular/Vocational Transportation Reimbursement claim. Each local education agency must ensure that all lease agreements identify the fair market value of the buses leased and the yearly lease payment that clearly separates the interest and finance charge inherent in the payment. If ISBE auditors are not able to secure documentation of finance and interest charges from the bus manufacturer that were not originally disclosed in order to compare the fair market value of the vehicle to the lease payment, the costs will be stated as questioned costs and therefore non-claimable.

Per statute, the Annual Pupil Transportation Reimbursement claim is due to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) on Aug. 15. However, due to the fact that the statutory date falls on a Saturday this year, the due date to ISBE will be Monday, Aug. 17.

If you have questions regarding PTCRS please contact Mike Slife at mslife@isbe.net or call (217) 782-5256.

FY 2015 Year-End Expenditure Report Changes – Obligations for Federal Grants

ISBE has implemented new expenditure reporting requirements effective with all fiscal year 2015 federal grant projects and thereafter, if the project end date extends past June 30.

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).

The new change in the Electronic Expenditure Reporting System is:

- All federal grant recipients with a project end date after June 30 must report the split of obligations incurred June 30 and prior compared to July 1 and after.

Please review the changes in the following presentation at www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/end-year-changes15.pdf.

If you have questions regarding these changes, please contact the Funding and Disbursement Division at (217) 782-5256.

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.

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 at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision): Revises the timetable for administration of the KIDS assessment; sets criteria for the Survey of Learning Conditions; and makes other technical changes and clarifications. Public Comment period ends July 13, 2015.

Part 25 (Educator Licensure): Addresses changes necessitated by a number of public acts, modifies requirements for certain educator endorsements, and sets criteria for physical education and health education teachers to be considered “highly qualified.” Public Comment period ends July 13, 2015.


Part 405 (Payments to Certain Facilities under Section 14-7.05 of the School Code): Aligns the proposed ending date for the issuance of the short-term emergency special education approval under Section 25.48 of rules governing Educator Licensure to the date contained in those rules (Sept. 1, 2018). Public Comment period ends July 13, 2015.

State Superintendent

Meet the New State Superintendent WebinarScheduled for May 28

District personnel are invited to participate in a May 28 webinar to meet new State Superintendent of Education Tony Smith, Ph.D.

Smith began his term as superintendent on May 1. The webinar will give Superintendent Smith an opportunity to introduce himself to the field, take questions from district staff, and provide an insight into his education philosophy and vision for his role as state superintendent.

Registration is now open, and participants will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

- What: “Meet the New State Superintendent: Tony Smith, Ph.D.” webinar
- Date: May 28
- Time: 1 p.m.
- Register: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1370072119055564289

Data Analysis and Accountability

2014-15 Dental Data Collection Now Open

The Student Health Dental System is now open for data entry through June 30. The data must be submitted online using IWAS. Once logged into IWAS, the “Student Health Data – Dental” link will appear on the System Listing page under “Annual.”

Below are links to important related documents. Please use them for assistance when submitting your data.

School Dental Examinations Information Sheet: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/dental_information.pdf

IDPH Proof of School Dental Examination Form: www.idph.state.il.us/HealthWellness/oralhlth/DentalExamProof10.pdf
IDPH Dental Examination Waiver Form:  
[www.idph.state.il.us/forms/ohpm/Dental%20Exam%20Waiver.pdf](http://www.idph.state.il.us/forms/ohpm/Dental%20Exam%20Waiver.pdf)

Dental Information-Data Entry Worksheet:  
[www.isbe.net/research/xls/dental_worksheet.xls](http://www.isbe.net/research/xls/dental_worksheet.xls)

As mandated by Section 5/27-8.1 of the School Code, dental data must be submitted for all Illinois schools serving any combination of kindergarten, grade 2, and/or grade 6 students who are enrolled as of May 15.

Public school districts may enter the data for each of their schools or approve school IWAS users to enter the data. Regardless of who enters data, it is the responsibility of the nonpublic school administrator/public school district administrator to review the accuracy of entered data and submit the finished data to ISBE.

The deadline to enter dental data is 11:59 p.m. June 30.

For technical assistance with IWAS, please contact the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

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**Illinois P-20 Council**

**Opportunity to Provide Feedback on Key State Education Policies and Programs**

The Implementation Review Committee of the Illinois P-20 Council, an education group that advises state policymakers, invites educators, parents and community members to share their thoughts and suggestions on key state education policies and programs impacting Illinois schools.

Small group conversations will be held to discuss important issues in four areas:

- **Standards:** What are students learning?
- **Assessment:** How students are tested? For what purposes?
- **Data:** What student and educator information is collected and how it is used?
- **Evaluations:** How are teachers and principals evaluated?

Some sessions will be held in person and others will be conducted by phone. Groups are available in English and Spanish primarily in the evening. Please check registration link at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ILedconvos](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ILedconvos) for the most up-to-date times and dates.

These discussions are an opportunity to help strengthen and improve the implementation of key initiatives. Participants’ comments and suggestions will be shared with state education leaders and policymakers guiding these programs.

Please note that registration is not confirmation of participation as space is limited. Following registration, participation will be confirmed by email or by phone (based on preference). Confirmation will include address or call-in number, parking and transportation options along with other details.

Contact Amber at [akirchh2@illinois.edu](mailto:akirchh2@illinois.edu) with questions or to learn more.

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**Illinois Emergency Management Agency**

**IEMA Helps Schools Remove Unused Radioactive Materials at No Cost**

More than 60 schools have benefited from a state program that helps schools safely remove unused radioactive materials at no cost. The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) is encouraging other schools to check for similar materials in storage closets and laboratories and contact IEMA about collection and disposal.

The types of radioactive materials found in schools are chemical compounds containing uranium or thorium and small solid sealed sources. This material is commonly used in chemistry, physics and earth science experiments to demonstrate the physical and chemical properties of radioactive material.

There is no cost to schools for IEMA’s removal of the materials. A school that does not take advantage of IEMA’s program could pay more than $1,000 to dispose of these materials. In addition, a spill of the materials at the school could create extra expenses for cleanup activities.

Any school with unwanted radioactive materials can contact IEMA at (217) 558-5135 for more information.
about the Orphan Source Recovery Program School Initiative.

**Illinois Learning Standards**

**ISBE Online Survey of the New Illinois Learning Standards for Educators**

ISBE is requesting educators’ participation in an online survey on the implementation of the new Illinois Learning Standards. Participation is crucial to helping ISBE determine the statewide implementation of the standards along with additional supports still needed for educators.

Educators are asked to complete the survey before the end of May. The online survey is completely confidential and is being hosted by a local independent research company, Aeffect Inc. Participants can take the survey from any PC, laptop or mobile device at anytime.

The survey is available at www.affect.com/studies/1515003.asp?id=SUPLIST&l=SUPLIST. For help with any technical issues with accessing the survey, contact Frank DeMonte, Aeffect’s IT director, at fdemonte@affect.com.

**In Brief**

**Professional Development**

- Registration is open for upcoming ENTICE (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) workshops from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The workshops offer training on Illinois-specific topics and supply educators with the tools needed to implement the topic into their curriculum immediately. Participants learn from resources professionals, take part in activities, and spend time outdoors (where appropriate). Professional development hours are available at all ENTICE workshops. For more details and to register, visit https://www.enticeworkshops.com.

- The Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC) is presenting a two-day conference for new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) teachers on July 28-29 in Champaign. Priority will be given to first- and second-year teachers, including secondary teachers of math, science, technology and engineering and elementary teachers who teach any STEM content. For more details and to register, visit http://intc.education.illinois.edu/stem.

- 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.

**Educator Opportunities**

- The 2016 Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant application form is posted at http://dnr.state.il.us/education/entice/forms/ibftgap06.pdf. Teachers, including home-schooling teachers, may apply to receive funding for natural resources-related field trips. For additional information, contact the Illinois Department of Natural Resources’ Division of Education at dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov or (217) 524-4126.

**School Opportunities**

- The Roads to Reading Summer Camp Kid Explorer Club is a free, turn-key program available to schools that provides a comprehensive reading curriculum aligned with the Common Core standards for students in prekindergarten through sixth grade. The program, which includes before- and after-school and full-day services, provides free resources (including books, iPads and access to more than 6,000 online books) to participating schools and offers financial aid to qualifying students to attend. Roads to Reading also provides a Parent Incentive Program. For more details and information on how to become a host school, call (888) 293-1605. The deadline to sign up is July 1.

**Safety Issues**

- The League of Illinois Bicyclists’ Bicycle Safety Quiz is a classroom-ready bicycle safety education website for both bicyclists and motorists that provides training in an in interactive format
through three separate quizzes for children, adults (including teenagers) and motorists. The child bicyclist and motorist quizzes are set up for easy use by school teachers and driver’s education instructors. For more information, visit www.bikesafetyquiz.com/teacherpage.

**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.