



July 27, 2010

## Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

The Fordham Institute last week released a study comparing state learning standards to the Common Core standards. It comes as no surprise that our Illinois learning standards fared poorly, receiving letter grades of ‘D’ in both English Language Arts and Math. While I do not like to receive poor grades, I believe this is a reflection of us not updating our standards in 13 years and supports the Board’s decision to begin reviewing our standards more than two years ago and adopting the Common Core last month. You can find the study at [http://edexcellence.net/index.cfm/news\\_the-state-of-state-standards-and-the-common-core-in-2010](http://edexcellence.net/index.cfm/news_the-state-of-state-standards-and-the-common-core-in-2010).

I met with several stakeholders last week to discuss the Common Core standards and how we will implement them during the next months and years. I must remind everyone that the Board only adopted new learning standards in math and English Language Arts; our other learning standards remain in place, including our standards for social/emotional, social science, fine arts, foreign language, physical development and health and science.

I know that there are also a number of questions about how adopting the Common Core will impact our assessment system. New assessments will not be available until at least 2014-15, so we are examining what options are available during the intervening years. Illinois is not alone in this transition phase. We will be working with you, teachers and the U.S. Department of Education to develop a plan to maintain the integrity of the system as we implement the Common Core and new assessments.

Late last week, I met with representatives from several districts in Regional Superintendent Larry Fillingim’s area in southern Illinois. They were engaged in Response to Intervention (RtI) training, and we discussed how those local districts were making progress with interim assessment data and interventions. Keep in mind when growth measures are implemented, the progress students are making will increase in importance. Would you, for example, be able to show at least one year’s growth for the majority of your students with disabilities within the school year? RtI enables districts all over the state to be able to make these determinations early in the school year and use different interventions if current ones are not working.

I have also been meeting with superintendents from around the state and I know you would like to finalize your FY 2011 budgets. The Governor’s Office of Management and Budget continues to work to finalize the state’s budget and once we know the final numbers, we will post them to our website. The only advice I can offer is to be very conservative with your numbers, do not count on seeing extra funds in any state funded line items and plan on all state funding, with the exception of General State Aid, being late.

Chris

### Table of Contents

Assessment .....	2
Special Education Services.....	3
School Support for All Schools .....	3
Rules and Waivers .....	3
Career and Technical Education.....	4
Student Opportunities .....	4
Employment Opportunities .....	5
In the News .....	5

## Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Special Education Directors’ Conference in Peoria** – July 28-30
- **2010 Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report deadline** – July 30
- **Amendments for grants with a Project End Date of Aug. 31, 2010** – Aug. 1

- **Illinois Summer Reading Conference in Tinley Park** – Aug. 10-13
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2010** – Aug. 13
- **2009-10 Teacher Service Record spring data collection period deadline** – Aug. 15
- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 22 (Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators) and Part 226 (Special Education)** – Public comment period ends Aug. 23
- **Physical education exemption report deadline** – Aug. 30
- **Illinois ASPIRE Middle School/High School RtI Summit in Collinsville** – Sept. 27, 28
- **Illinois ASPIRE Middle School/High School RtI Summit in East Peoria** – Sept. 28, 29
- **Illinois ASPIRE Middle School/High School RtI Summit in Naperville** – Sept. 29, 30

## Assessment

### Peer Review and IAA Participation Guidelines

Illinois' assessment system has been going through the final steps in the NCLB required federal Peer Review. One of the last issues we needed to address was our IAA Participation Guidelines. We needed to make them clearer. This is consistent with what we've been hearing from some in the field, so we are hoping the clarifications will be helpful. Although there are a couple of changes, there is one that we are asking districts, schools, and IEP teams to attend to carefully. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are described in more detail, which should assist the field in better understanding for whom the IAA is intended. The new Guidelines starting for the 2010-11 school year can be found at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/iaa.htm>. We recommend that administrators and teachers carefully review these guidelines and determine if revisions are needed to any of their students' IEPs altering how they will participate in the state-wide assessment. Any district that needs to make revisions should have the IEP teams use the formal IEP process to note those changes.

### AYP Appeals

The 2010 School/District AYP status reports for all schools/districts are posted. The AYP status reports for elementary/middle schools/districts are final. The AYP status reports for high schools/districts should be considered final unless schools requested rescoring or made further corrections related to AYP data elements. High schools should check their AYP reports again after the final PSAE file is posted. In addition, testing irregularity investigations may result in changes after the closing of the correction window.

The No Child Left Behind law and the State Accountability statute and rules allow schools and districts to appeal their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

status if the district has questions regarding the accuracy of the determination. Appeals should be based on statistical and substantive issues that could not have been resolved during the data correction periods and for which there is an available remedy. The AYP appeal process cannot be used to correct data that could have been addressed during the correction process. (Schools and districts have multiple opportunities throughout the year to ensure student demographic information is correct.) Also, the appeals process can not be used to request changes to the legal requirements for calculating AYP (e.g., minimum subgroup size, safe harbor's application to subgroups only, full academic year definition, etc.) or to challenge the applicable law. Each appeal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by ISBE staff and by the Appeals Advisory Committee, if necessary. If you have a valid appeal, it must be filed within 30 days of release of the AYP status report on IWAS or by Sept. 1, 2010, whichever is later. Procedural guidance, a sample timeline and forms for the appeal process are available at [http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals\\_status.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf).

### Budget Crisis Forces Suspension of ISAT Writing Assessment for 2010-11

Due to the historic budget crisis facing Illinois, the State Board of Education decided not to administer the writing assessments (grades 3, 5, 6, and 8) for the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA) in the 2010-11 school year. The writing assessments are not part of the No Child Left Behind federal mandate, and Illinois receives no federal dollars to support the writing assessments.

The writing assessments will still be a component of the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) and IAA given to 11th-grade students in Illinois. Many universities require the writing assessment for admission.

The writing assessments will be re-evaluated for the 2011-12 school year, with hopes budget levels will return to fund vital education programs.

---

## Special Education Services

### Educational Environment Code Changes for Early Childhood Special Education

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has changed data reporting for preschool educational environments, beginning with the 2010-11 school year. ISBE is working with Harrisburg Project to implement the Early Childhood Educational Environment codes for the 2010-11 school year in FACTS. These new codes will be available to clients in iePoint>2011, scheduled to be released in fall 2010. Clients will receive warnings if the new categories are not used in the October 2010 FACTS transmission, however these warnings will not prohibit transmission. FACTS records for Early Childhood students that do not use the new categories in the December 2010 transmission will result in errors, prohibiting successful data submission.

In order to assist school districts/special education cooperatives in transitioning to the new reporting categories, ISBE and Harrisburg Project have gathered several resources, which are available at [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/ec\\_speced\\_lre.htm](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/ec_speced_lre.htm). These resources include:

- A revised document describing the new reporting requirements
- A worksheet for determining the correct EC Educational Environment Codes
- A PowerPoint presentation
- A document describing scenarios
- A training video for the new EC Educational Environment Codes

School district/cooperative administrators, case managers and other staff who have responsibility for FACTS reporting should review the training and resources at this website. Please direct any policy questions to ISBE via [ecee@isbe.net](mailto:ecee@isbe.net). This dedicated e-mail address has been established to ensure your questions receive appropriate attention and response. Questions regarding changes in iePoint> can be directed to Harrisburg Project at 800-635-5274 or [support@hbug.k12.il.us](mailto:support@hbug.k12.il.us).

---

## School Support for All Schools

### Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program Announcement for Superintendents

Per PA 94-1039, school districts are charged with the responsibility of ensuring each first year principal in

Illinois is mentored by a qualified, highly-trained mentor. To guarantee new principals receive the mentoring needed, school districts may contract for mentoring services with an ISBE certified Mentoring Provider best suited to meet their needs.

A complete listing of certified Mentoring Providers approved to offer mentoring services as well as information about the INPM Program can be found at <http://www.ilprincipalmentoring.org>. Please note that mentoring is for those who will be in their first year as a building principal, not for experienced principals new to your district.

Also, please e-mail the name(s) of any first year principal(s) new to the profession you have hired to Lynne Woodrum at [lynne@ilprincipals.org](mailto:lynne@ilprincipals.org) by July 30, 2010. Thank you for your leadership and assistance to ensure that new principals receive the support they need to be successful in their first year and beyond.

---

## Rules and Waivers

### Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that a set of amendments recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education is now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency's Web site at <http://www.isbe.net/rules>. Please choose "Rules Currently in Effect" and scroll to Part 180.

#### **Part 180 (Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools)**

Clarifies procedures for districts seeking to use fire prevention and safety funds for emergency situations, as set forth in P.A. 96-252, effective Aug. 11, 2009.

*Affected Sections:* 180.500, 180.530

*Effective Date:* June 24, 2010

### Friday, Aug. 13, Deadline for Fall 2010 Waiver Report

The fall deadline for submission of waiver requests to the Illinois General Assembly is Oct. 1, 2010. In order to meet that deadline, applications for waivers of School Code mandates to be considered by the General Assembly during the Fall 2010 session must be sent to the State Board postmarked by Friday, Aug. 13, 2010.

Note: Requests to modify the School Code, or to waive or modify rules of the State Board of Education, are not subject to this deadline. Such applications are reviewed for approval or disapproval by the State Board of Education. Moreover, in the majority of cases holiday modifications are no longer required, nor are most waiver

requests for parent-teacher conferences. Please call up the link below for more details.

For detailed information on the waiver process, please go to <http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm> or call Winnie Tuthill at 217-782-5270.

---

## Career and Technical Education

### Students, Educators Bring Home Awards From National Leadership Conference

Illinois student members of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America brought home 33 gold medals, 27 silver medals and six bronze medals in competitions held in association with FCCLA's National Leadership Conference, which was held July 4-8.

In addition, Illinois FCCLA had the national first-place culinary arts team: Brian Francis of Lyons Township North High School in LaGrange, Collin Bumber of Lockport Township North High School and Alex Tondu of York High School in Elmhurst. Jordan Hutton of Casey Westfield High School was the first-place entrepreneurship winner. And the second place hospitality team was composed of Brenda Martinez and Miguel Pantoja of Wilco Area Career Center in Romeoville.

Nicole Wenger of Prairie Central high School received the Wiley Publishing Company Scholarship for outstanding leadership. And Charlotte Goetz of Campbell Hill High School in Trico received the Spirit of Advising Award, which recognizes one family and consumer sciences teacher/FCCLA adviser from each state. Illinois FCCLA executive director Marta Lockwood received the national FCCLA State Adviser of the Year Award.

The Oakland High School FCCLA chapter was named the national winner of the Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety (FACTS) Award for its "Operation Teen Safe Driving Project."

For more information, visit <http://www.fcclainc.org/>.

---

## Student Opportunities

### Grants Available to Visit Lincoln Presidential Museum

The Winnick Family Foundation and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation are offering

grants for field trips to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield.

Teachers of grades 4-12 in U.S. public and nonpublic schools that have a low-income student enrollment greater than 30 percent are eligible to apply. The grants help pay for transportation costs. School groups do not pay a museum admission fee. The deadline to apply is Sept. 1.

"This generous grant from the Winnick Family Foundation makes it possible for eligible schools, across the nation, to bring students to the museum for an innovative learning experience on the life and times of Abraham Lincoln," said T. Tolbert Chisum, chief executive officer of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation.

For more information, call 217-558-9016 or e-mail [randy.wiseman@illinois.gov](mailto:randy.wiseman@illinois.gov). For an application, go to [http://www.presidentlincoln.org/education/WINNICK\\_Grant\\_Application.pdf](http://www.presidentlincoln.org/education/WINNICK_Grant_Application.pdf).

### New Exhibit Set to Open Oct. 14 at Lincoln Museum in Springfield

An original letter written by newly-inaugurated President Abraham Lincoln to an 8-year-old schoolboy is one of the highlights of a new exhibit coming to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield.

George Patton of New York and his father met Lincoln while traveling to Springfield shortly after he won the Republican nomination for president. His schoolmates didn't believe he had met the president-to-be, so his teacher wrote Lincoln to determine the truth. Lincoln responded with a short letter, which is now on loan from a private collector to be part of the Team of Rivals exhibit.

The exhibit opens Oct. 14, just prior to the 150th anniversaries of Lincoln's election as president in November, the farewell address to Springfield in February and the start of the Civil War in April. The new exhibit is named after the book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author and presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin.

For more information about the exhibit and the museum, visit <http://www.presidentlincoln.org/> or call 800-610-2094 or 217-782-5764. There are special admission rates for school groups.

---

## Employment Opportunities

### ISBE External Vacancy List

An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at <http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm>.

---

## In the News

### Weekly News Clips

ISBE has posted highlights from last week's education news clips at <http://www.isbe.net/news/2010/newsclips/100726.htm>.