From: Angie Christensen
To: Angie Christensen
Subject: ISBE"s Weekly Message - Sept. 9, 2020
Date: Thursday, September 10, 2020 11:08:00 AM

ISBE's Weekly Message

September 9, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

I hope you enjoyed your holiday weekend as much as possible and had the opportunity to spend some time outside. Labor Day marks the traditional end of summer, and even though this summer wasn't typical, it's still time for our students to start a new school year, whether in-person or remotely.

In recognition of this milestone, we would like to invite the parents and guardians in your school communities to the first Statewide Return to School Family Convening, happening via Zoom on Friday, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. This event is an opportunity for parents, caretakers, and students to meet with state agency and with parent and student advocacy group leaders.

We hope to hear from attendees about their experiences with school during COVID-19 and ask for their feedback on ISBE's guidance. We also will share with participants about services and supports available to them. Our overarching goal is to help everyone learn more about accessing and advocating for high-quality and equitable resources to ensure better educational outcomes for all Illinois students.

To help all interested families participate, this event will be hosted in English, with real-time translation into Spanish, Polish, Urdu, Arabic, and American Sign Language, plus captioning. We are hosting this convening in partnership with several organizations, including Illinois PTA, Community Organizing and Family Issues, Voices of Youth in Chicago Education, and the co-chairs of several statewide Family And Community Engagement committees. Sergio Hernandez, Jr., ISBE's Director of Family and Community Engagement, will co-chair this event.

Please share this registration link with your students and their parents and guardians: https://tinyurl.com/y2vqlu6s. The event will be recorded to make it accessible for families who cannot join live.

On the topic of resources for families, the Learning Technology Center of Illinois will debut a parent/caregiver-focused page called SPARK (Supporting Parents And Remote Kids) this month to help parents and guardians navigate the different platforms and hardware used by schools to educate students. A few SPARK resources, including an interactive schedule builder, are already available at https://ltcillinois.org/services/resources/?_app_audience=parents.

For our older students, another new tool is available. Illinois Colleges Forward is an online hub launched last month that provides centralized access to COVID-19-related changes for more than 120 of the state's colleges and universities, including placement and admissions test information and resources for transfer students. It was developed by The Partnership for College

Completion with support from the Steans Family Foundation. I encourage you to share this resource with your guidance counselors, students, and families.

We know there's light at the end of this long COVID-19 tunnel, and tools like SPARK and Illinois Colleges Forward are helping educators and families keep going along the way.

Be kind to each other and yourselves, and thank you for everything you do.

Sincerely,

Carmen

Pictured: Second grade students from Madison School in CCSD 181.

COVID-19 - IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Each week, this section will contain a list of the resources and information posted to the COVID-19 webpage over the past week. Please continue to check the COVID-19 webpage on a daily basis for the newest updates and information.

- **Back to School 2020-21**
  - IDPH Frequently Asked Questions – **Updated Sept. 9**
  - **COVID-19 Guidelines Posters Available for Download**
    ISBE has translated posters to place around school buildings re-enforcing guidelines to keep students and staff safe and healthy. Visit www.isbe.net/covid19 to download the posters in 11 languages.
- **Program Resources**
  - Guidance for Delivering Sexual Abuse Prevention Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic - **Sept. 8**
- **Messages from the Superintendent**
  - Message from State Superintendent Dr. Carmen I. Ayala - **Sept. 3**
- **U.S. Department of Education Updates and Guidance**
  - Letter from U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos Regarding Intent to Not Make Waivers Available for Spring 2021 Assessments - **Sept. 3**

2020 CENSUS

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU'S STATISTICS IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM | As the 2020-21 school year gets underway, the U.S. Census Bureau's Statistics in Schools (SIS) program is continuing to support educators, parents, and caregivers through easy-to-use resources for classroom lessons or at-home learning. As a reminder, the 2020 census is open until the end of September. Go to my2020census.gov to take the census now!

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ASSESSMENT

NEW! ACCESS FOR ELLS - SITE FILE UPDATES BY SEPT. 18 | ISBE is in the process of updating Illinois' testing site information for the ACCESS assessment. Districts should ensure that their site information is current in the Student Information System (SIS) by **noon on Sept. 18**. Updates can be entered in SIS by going to Assessment Pre-ID, in the left margin, and selecting *ACCESS*. Please contact assessment@isbe.net with questions.

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NEW! WHAT TO KNOW: WIDA ASSESSMENTS IN THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR | This is the time of year when we welcome all of you back to school and tell you what's new with our assessments. We know that the return to school this year is very different for all of you and the educators in your state. In fact, you might not be ready to learn about what's new with our assessments and that's OK. We put all pertinent information about WIDA Screener, ACCESS for ELLs, and WIDA MODEL, plus tips for safer testing, into a welcome back news article that you can view and return to when it's convenient for you.

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REMINDER: ASSESSMENT INVENTORY PART 2 – DUE OCT. 16 | We asked districts in July to provide local, district-required formative assessment information, scored both inside and outside the district, by responding to the annual Assessment Inventory, which was previously called the Assessment Survey. There are two parts to the Assessment Inventory, the first of which was due Aug. 1. The second part of the Assessment Inventory is due by **Oct. 16**.

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

NEW! REMINDERS: KIDS DATA UPLOAD | Like many things this year, the Fall 2020 KIDS data collection guidance has been adjusted to take the current COVID 19 situation into account.

However, district-level preparations for teacher data entry into KIDStech remain consistent with previous years. The following steps must occur before teachers can enter student ratings into KIDStech:

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NEW! PRESCHOOL FOR ALL & PRESCHOOL FOR ALL EXPANSION ADMINISTRATORS – SAVE THE DATES! | ISBE's Early Childhood Education Department, in collaboration with The Center: Early Childhood Professional Learning, will be holding a series of virtual professional development events for administrators throughout the fall to support you in implementing your grant. Mark your calendar for the first three events in the series. Registration information will be forthcoming.

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EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES 'CONTACT US' WEBPAGE | The Educator Effectiveness Department, together with the Illinois Association of Regional School Superintendents, has implemented a new "Contact Us" webpage to streamline communications

between educators, Regional Offices of Education/Intermediate Service Centers (ROEs/ISCs), and ISBE.

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EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

NEW! ISBE TO ISSUE MORE THAN $80 MILLION IN DIGITAL EQUITY GRANT ALLOCATIONS BEGINNING THIS WEEK | ISBE will issue more than $80 million in fiscal year 2021 Digital Equity Grant allocations and release the application to access funds beginning this week. Every eligible entity will receive a base funding amount plus a per pupil allocation for both devices and connectivity.

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MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

NEW! SUPPORTING MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS DURING COVID-19 MICRO-OFFERINGS | WIDA Professional Learning has launched a new series of micro-offerings to help navigate the unique challenges of teaching during the pandemic. The courses, which last 35-40 minutes, are open to anyone and are designed for educators who work with multilingual children and youth across a variety of settings.

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NEW! 2020-21 WIDA SELF-PACED EWORKSHOPS FOR EL EDUCATORS NOW AVAILABLE | Educators in Illinois have the opportunity to participate in the following six on-demand eWorkshops. The Self-paced eWorkshops page provides course descriptions, a promotional flyer, a PowerPoint slide to help spread the word, and an Inform Your Admin customizable outline for educators to use to inform their administrator of all the benefits of engaging with WIDA self-paced eWorkshops.

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NUTRITION PROGRAMS

NEW! ICN STAR WEBINAR SET FOR SEPT. 17 | The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) plans a webinar on "Food Safety from Beginning to End: Follow the Flow of Food" **from 2-3 p.m. Sept. 17**. Registration is now underway for the training, which is part of ICN's School Nutrition Strategies, Training, Action Plans, Resources (STAR) webinar series.

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NEW! U OF I EXTENSION OFFERS TRAININGS FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION PROFESSIONALS | The University of Illinois Extension is planning several trainings as part of "The ABCs of School Nutrition," a professional standards project for school nutrition employees. More information, including registration, is available at https://www.isbe.net/Documents/ABCsVirtualTrainingFlyer.pdf.

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USDA EXTENDS SUMMER MEALS WAIVERS TO DEC. 31 | The Illinois State Board of Education is excited to share an USDA that it is extending waivers for Summer Meals programs through the end of this calendar year. This will allow schools participating in the Child Nutrition Programs to continue serving free reimbursable meals to all children through Dec. 31, 2020.

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TRANSPORTATION

NEW! CORRECTION TO TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT Q&A | ISBE sent information last week on Thursday, Sept. 3, incorrectly describing allowable expenses for transportation reimbursement. Expenses to implement the Part 3 Joint Guidance for Starting the 2020-21 School Year, such as conducting symptom screenings and temperature checks, are **not** eligible for reimbursement by the formula under Section 29-5 of the School Code. We apologize for the miscommunication.

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NEW! SCHOOL YEAR 2020-21 TRANSPORTATION UPDATE WEBINAR – SEPT. 15 | Join ISBE staff for a webinar regarding transportation from **9-10 a.m. on Sept 15**. The webinar will provide an overview of claimable costs, funding, and state reimbursement for student transportation in the 2020-21 school year. An emphasis on the impact of COVID-19 to transportation operations will be covered. Time will be allotted for Q&A. The webinar will be recorded for those who are unable to attend. Registration is now available. Please contact Mike Stier at mstier@isbe.net with any questions.

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WELLNESS

NEW! GUIDANCE FOR DELIVERING SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC | ISBE, Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois, and Chicago Children's Advocacy Center have released a new joint guidance document focused on Delivering Sexual Abuse Prevention Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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View upcoming Dates & Deadlines and In Brief items.