

I know that many of you have departed for a seasonal vacation by now and will read this in January, but I did want to wish you all the best at this time and on into the new year. There have been a number of changes this year here at ISBE that have sometimes made your lives more complicated, and I am deeply appreciative of the grace and patience you have shown. It is my fullest intention to make this program work ever better, but sometimes we take one step backwards for every two steps forward!

I hope you will also use this time of year, which lends itself so much towards contemplation, to consider the majesty of your vocation. The transmission of knowledge and culture from one generation to another is a delicate but vital task. I think it was the Durants who pointed out that an interruption of just one generation would send us all back into savagery. This is a high calling with great responsibilities attached, and I honor you for your commitment.

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I assume you who are recognized schools have realized that the **Application for Recognition and Calendar** in IWAS is open again. There was a small fix to be installed today, but that may have happened early today—some of the tech people start at the crack of dawn! Otherwise, everything seems to be working pretty well. We have extended the deadline now to Friday, January 19, and I note that a large proportion of you have been busy in the system. We will be checking later to ensure that all of the submissions have responses for all of the questions. Our earliest problem with the system was that you were seeing last year's text, which was minus the new items for this year. Some of you were able to get all the way through the submission process, but if you have missing responses, we will need to return your application to you. I expect to deal with this in the first week of January.

I will be gone next week and back in the office on the 2nd, so if you have a question that can wait, call me in January. Otherwise, call 217-782-8535 to get connected to one of my colleagues who may be able to help you.

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Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have a direct influence on national education policy affecting school communities across America? Do you have a keen interest in working with U.S. Government officials to better serve our country's students and teachers? **If so, apply for the U.S. Department of Education School Ambassador Fellowship Program!** This year, for the first time since the program's inception, the Department selected a private school fellow, Patrick O'Connor, for the 2017-18 cohort. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with Mr. O'Connor and we encourage other private school professionals to apply. The [School Ambassador Fellowship](#) is designed to improve

education for students by involving educators in the development and implementation of national education policy. The Fellowship seeks to:

- Create a community of teachers, principals, and other school staff members who share expertise and collaborate with leaders in the Federal government on national education issues.
- Involve educators who work daily with students and teachers in developing policies that affect classrooms and schools.
- Highlight practitioners' voices and expand educators' critical leadership at the national, state, and local levels.

Throughout their Fellowship year, School Ambassador Fellows collaborate as a team and with Alumni Fellows to:

- Learn about federal education policy and the Department of Education (ED)
- Reach out to teachers and schools in the field
- Reflect with ED staff on the knowledge gained

For more information on how the Fellowship works, review the [Program Overview](#). The 2018-19 [application](#) is now open and accepting applications for next year's cohort of fellows. To be considered for the 2018-2019 School Ambassador Fellowship class, applicants must use the online system to submit a complete application. Any materials submitted by U.S. mail or email will not be reviewed. The application window closes on **Wednesday, January 31, 2018 at 5:00 pm Eastern**.

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In school year 2011-12, public and private school principals reported spending a larger percentage of time on internal administrative tasks, than on any other type of task. The data show that private school principals (34 percent) spent a greater proportion of their time on internal administrative tasks than public school principals (31 percent). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released the results in a new Statistics in Brief report, [How Principals in Public and Private Schools Use Their Time: 2011-12](#). This Statistics in Brief examines the mean percentage of time that principals reported spending on various activities in the 2011–12 school year, both overall and by selected school, staffing, and principal characteristics. Key findings from school year 2011-12:

- Compared to private school principals, public school principals allocated smaller percentages of time to internal administrative tasks and parent interactions and a larger percentage of time to student interactions. There were no measurable differences in the percentages of time that public and private school principals reported that they spent on curriculum and teaching-related tasks;
- Principals in public schools with at least one assistant principal spent a smaller percentage of time on student interactions than their peers in schools with no assistant principals; and
- In public schools, principals with a bachelor's degree or less reported spending a smaller percentage of time on curriculum and teaching-related tasks than principals with a higher degree. However, in private schools, principals with a bachelor's degree or less reported spending a larger percentage of time on curriculum and teaching-related tasks than principals with a higher degree.

This Statistics in Brief uses data from the 2011-12 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). The SASS has been replaced by the National Teacher and Principal Survey. The latest survey results on public school principals are located on the [NCES website](http://nces.ed.gov).

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To help with questions about the new tax credit program, ISBE's Invest in Kids Webpage is now live and can be accessed at <https://www.isbe.net/investinkids>.

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