



Sept. 28, 2009

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Late last week, the U.S. Department of Education held the first of a series of hearings to develop its proposal for reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The folks in Washington don't like to call it No Child Left Behind anymore, because it has become so contentious – dividing not only Democrats and Republicans, but also educators, parents, advocates and just about anyone who has a stake in education.

Secretary Arne Duncan outlined his view of the ESEA. Like many of us, he sees value in parts of the law, while having major problems with other portions. Secretary Duncan said one of the biggest concerns of the law was that it did not encourage rigorous learning standards. He believes it actually encourages states to lower their state standards.

As many of you know, Illinois has already taken steps to improve our learning standards. Last year, Achieve Incorporated reviewed the Illinois Learning Standards and we joined the American Diploma Project. This year, Illinois was a leader in launching the Common Core State Standards Initiative to develop internationally benchmarked standards that will prepare students for college and careers.

The second draft of the Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards were released this past week. Currently, the standards cover math and English-language arts and attempt to define what students are expected to know and be able to do to be successful in entry level credit bearing courses in a postsecondary institution. These standards are the first step in the Common Core process that will eventually include standards from kindergarten through 12th grade.

The goals of the Common Core Initiative are to develop fewer, clearer and higher standards that are critical for student success. They are to be evidence-based and internationally-benchmarked standards that are inclusive of all learners, incorporating 21st century skills.

Ultimately, the Common Core standards will lead to shared assessments among states to be used on a voluntary basis.

It is important to note that these are proposed standards, not curriculum. Curriculum would still need to be developed locally, with input from administrators and teachers that would allow for multiple strategies to best educate all children. Having fewer, clearer standards will allow teachers more time to focus on what strategies best work for their individual students.

Public feedback on the Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards will be accepted through Oct. 21, 2009. Many of the national organizations to which you belong have provided comment on the standards but I would encourage you to review and provide your own feedback on the standards at www.corestandards.org.

In addition, ISBE, in coordination with the Board of Higher Education and Community College Board, will be holding a series of regional meetings around the state over the next couple of weeks to gather feedback on the draft standards. A

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list of the meetings follows my column and, if you cannot attend one, you may also submit comments at <http://www.ibhe.org/commonCore/comment.asp>.

After the feedback period, the public comments will be reviewed by an expert validation committee, including representatives from the U.S. and abroad. They will review the process used to develop the standards, validate the evidence supporting them and develop additional standards not now included but deemed necessary.

Later this winter, the math and English-language arts K-12 common core standards will be finalized and it is expected that states would begin moving toward adoption of the standards sometime next year.

Have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in DeKalb** – Oct. 1
- **State Farm’s Youth Advisory Board service-learning grants deadline** – Oct. 2
- **Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards meeting in Mount Vernon** – Oct. 2
- **Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards meeting in Chicago** – Oct. 5
- **ARRA FY 2009 and FY 2010 expenditure reports** – Oct. 5
- **ISAT Writing Pilot** – Oct. 5-9
- **U.S. Senate Youth Program and Hearst Scholarship application deadline** – Oct. 7
- **Education Funding Advisory Board meeting** – Oct. 7
- **Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards meeting in Chicago** – Oct. 7
- **Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards meeting in Springfield** – Oct. 8
- **Illinois Youth Dropout Prevention Summit** – Oct. 12
- **Deadline for submitting the 2009 Reduction in Force Survey** – Oct. 15
- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Peoria County** – Oct. 19
- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Chicago** – Oct. 21
- **Those Who Excel/Illinois Teacher of the Year Banquet in Peoria** – Oct. 24
- **Part 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting and Auditing):** Public comment period ends Oct. 26
- **Annual Superintendents’ Conference in Springfield** – Oct. 27-28
- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Springfield** – Oct. 28
- **School District’s Adopted Budget due at ISBE** – Oct. 30
- **Illinois Dropout Prevention Summit** – Nov. 4
- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Wheeling** – Nov. 5
- **Annual Statewide Transition Conference** – Nov. 8-10
- **Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet deadline** – Nov. 16
- **Annual Financial Report due at ISBE** – Nov. 16 (excluding those granted extensions due Dec. 15)
- **FY 2011 Budget Hearing in Mundelein** – Dec. 9
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Spring 2010** – Jan. 8

Common Core

Meetings Slated to Gather Feedback

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) invite you to attend a critical

stakeholder meeting to review and provide feedback on the draft national Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards for mathematics and English language, which potentially will impact the K-12 learning standards in Illinois.

A series of regional meetings will occur during October to gather feedback on these drafts so that the state partners can share Illinois-specific feedback with the national network.

- **9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 2**
Rend Lake Market Place
321 Potomac, Building 4
Rooms 403 and 404
Mount Vernon, IL 62864
Audience: General Public
- **1-4 p.m. Monday, Oct. 5**
Harold Washington College
30 E. Lake St., Chicago, IL 60601
Audience: General Public
- **Wednesday, Oct. 7**
Chicago area location and time to be determined
Audience: Business and Labor
- **1-4 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 8**
Springfield Crown Plaza
3000 S. Dirksen Pkwy.
Springfield, IL 62703
Audience: General Public

If you cannot attend one of the regional meetings, consider submitting comments electronically at <http://www.ibhe.org/commonCore/comment.asp>.

Education Funding Advisory Board

Meeting Scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 7

The Education Funding Advisory Board will hold its second Fiscal Year 2010 meeting Oct. 7. The meeting is set for 1 to 4:30 p.m. in Room 16-503 at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago.

EFAB makes recommendations to the General Assembly on funding levels for school districts with a high volume of children at or below the poverty level.

This meeting will be accessible to persons with disabilities. Persons planning to attend who need special accommodations should contact the Board office no later than the date prior to the meeting. Contact the Superintendent's office at the Illinois State Board of Education, phone: 217-782-2221; TTY/TDD: 217-782-1900; fax: 217-785-3972.

In May, Gov. Pat Quinn named five members to the advisory board. They are: Sylvia Puente, Board Chair and the Executive Director of the Latino Policy Forum; Dean Clark, a former board member of ISBE and EFAB as well as the National Association of State Boards of Education, Arthur Culver, Superintendent of Champaign Unit 4 School District, Ed Geppert Jr., President of the Illinois Federation of Teachers and Ken Swanson, President of the Illinois Education Association.

Legal

The U.S. Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act

On June 25, 2009, the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services issued an amended Declaration for the use of the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) (Pub. L. 109-148, 42 U.S.C. §§ 247d-6d, 247d-6e) for the 2009 H1N1 vaccine. This Declaration triggers the immunity provisions under the PREP Act, assuming certain conditions are met as required by the PREP Act, which may provide some protection from liability to school districts and their employees (including school nurses) if a school district participates in school-located vaccination clinics. School districts should ask their local counsel to review the PREP Act and the facts related to their participation in a school-located vaccination clinic, to determine what liability protection may exist. The amended Declaration can be found at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-14948.pdf>.

CDC Releases Guidance Materials for School-Located Vaccination Clinics

If you are considering a school-located vaccination clinic, the CDC has released guidance materials that you may find helpful. The guidance materials can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/slv/>. Local school districts planning on holding school-located vaccination clinics should work with their local counsel in developing agreements with local health officials and evaluating communications with parents and the community. The guidance also references aspects of the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

2009 Annual Notice of FERPA and PPRA

Below are the links to the annual notice to state educational agencies of their responsibilities under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/doc/ferparights.doc>

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/doc/ppraconsent.doc>

Also included are links to the letter and enclosures addressed to local superintendents.

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/doc/chiefsea.doc>

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/doc/pprasuper.doc>

We hope that you will find this information helpful in protecting parents' and students' privacy rights under FERPA and PPR.

H1N1 Influenza

Districts Needed to Report Information

As noted in our message on Aug. 18, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in collaboration with state and local health education agencies, are implementing a Web-based school dismissal monitoring system for the 2009-10 school year. This monitoring system will generate daily data on the number of school dismissals in Illinois and other states. School dismissals are defined as any instance of a public or private school with any of grades K-12 that dismissed all students for one or more days and any instance when an entire school building with any of grades K-12 was completely closed to all students and staff in response to confirmed or suspected H1N1 influenza cases.

We asked that each district assign an individual at the district level who will be responsible for promptly entering information about the occurrence of school dismissal into the Web-based monitoring system at http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/schools/dismissal_form/ and report that person's name and contact information by Aug. 31 to **Jeff Aranowski** by e-mail at jaranows@isbe.net or by fax to at 312-814-8190. To date, we have not received responses from many districts throughout the state. This is an extremely important matter that should be attended to as soon as possible. If your district or nonpublic school has not yet submitted this information, please do so immediately, but no later than the Sept. 29.

Public Health Promotes Resources

The Illinois Department of Public Health has issued resources to help collaboration between schools and local health departments in dealing with the H1N1 influenza virus.

The information can be accessed at <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/htmls/H1N1.htm> (Under School Guidance Documents. The document includes guidance in a question-and-answer format on tracking influenza-like illness and absenteeism in schools, and a form that can be used for ongoing monitoring of absenteeism and dismissals. Also included is information on H1N1 that can be distributed to parents and guardians.

More information on influenza surveillance in Illinois is available at <http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/fluupdate08-09.htm> and <http://www.ready.illinois.gov/>.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

ARRA Applications Announcement

Districts, there has been a delay in the approval of the ARRA applications. Please be patient with staff as they are working hard to review all of the 735 NCLB and 735 ARRA applications. There was a problem with the two applications not talking to each other in e-grants. We now have the problems corrected.

Deadline for NCLB and ARRA Applications

This year we have a deadline for submitting NCLB and ARRA applications in e-grants. NCLB Applications and ARRA applications deadline is **Nov. 2**. All applications must be submitted by Nov. 2. Applications after this date will not be accepted. If you have questions contact your Principal Consultant in the Grants and Programs Division at 217-524-4832.

ARRA FY 2009 and FY 2010 Expenditure Reports Due Oct. 5

Section 1512 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) requires reports on the use of ARRA funding by each agency that awards ARRA funds (e.g. ISBE) no later than the 10th day after the end of each calendar quarter beginning with the quarter ending Sept.30, 2009. Due to the short timeline, sub-recipients that have received and expended ARRA funds must transmit expenditures and other required

ARRA data through the Electronic Expenditure Reporting system in IWAS within five calendar days from the end of each quarter so that the 10 day submission requirement is met.

All local education agencies (LEAs) have already received ARRA funds through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund for General State Aid (Revenue Codes 4850 in FY 2009 and 4870 in FY 2010), and some LEAs have received ARRA Title I (Revenue Codes 4851, 4852 and 4853), Child Nutrition Equipment Assistance (Revenue Code 4863), IDEA Part B Flow Through (Revenue Code 4857), IDEA Part B Preschool (Revenue Code 4856) and McKinney Homeless (Revenue Code 4862) funds.

All data contained in each quarterly LEA expenditure report will be cumulative in order to encompass the total amount of funds expended to date. Each LEA must report ARRA information by fiscal year. The State Board will combine the data for all fiscal years and submit a total cumulative report to the federal government each quarter. This means that LEAs that received ARRA funds in FY 2009 will report expenditures and required ARRA data from the beginning of the ARRA grant through the period ending June 30, 2009. LEAs that received funds in FY 2010 will report cumulative expenditures and required ARRA data from July 1 or the project start date thereafter of each ARRA grant through the periods ending Sept. 30, 2009; Dec. 31, 2009; March 31, 2010; and June 30, 2010, respectively. The State Board will combine all ARRA data for FY 2009 and FY 2010 for each LEA when reports are submitted to federalreporting.gov.

ARRA reports are aimed at providing transparency into the use of these funds and must include the following detailed information:

- D-U-N-S Number. IMPORTANT: All LEAs must secure a D-U-N-S number or they will not be able to transmit expenditures and required ARRA data.

Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) maintains a business database of information worldwide. D&B provides a D-U-N-S number, which is a unique 9-digit identification number for each location of a business organization. For school districts and other LEAs this would be the physical location of the central administrative office. D-U-N-S number assignment is free. Many school districts already have a D-U-N-S number. Please check

with your business office to determine if your LEA has a D-U-N-S number assigned, and if you do not, please register immediately at <http://www.dnb.com>. Once entered and verified on the initial report, ISBE will pre-populate the D-U-N-S number in subsequent quarterly reports.

- Total amount of funds expended on approved ARRA projects and activities.
- The number of jobs created or retained reflected as full-time equivalent.
- Details on sub-awards and other payments made to vendors over and under \$25,000.

Detailed instructions for reporting ARRA data are at http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf. For questions regarding the ARRA quarterly reporting requirements, contact the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

Grants and Programs

NCLB Performance Report for FY09

Each year all districts who received NCLB funds are required to submit a performance report to the Illinois State Board of Education. The NCLB performance report is located in IWAS. You will find it when you log in to IWAS under Reporting and then under Annual. The NCLB performance report for FY09 is now available for you to enter your information. The deadline to submit is **Oct. 20**. If you have any questions about how to submit the performance report, contact **Gail Buoy** in the Grants and Programs Division at 217-524-4832 or gbuoy@isbe.net.

Data Analysis and Reporting

2009-10 Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report

Starting Oct. 1, the Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report (87-01) for school year 2009-10 will be available in IWAS at <https://sec1.isbe.net/iwas>. Completed reports must be received by ISBE no later than Dec. 31.

Nonpublic schools that have registered with ISBE at least once in the past must submit their data online via IWAS. Nonpublic schools that have never registered with ISBE

must submit their data using the paper form 87-01 at http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/np_entity.htm.

Public district administrators should communicate with nonpublic school administrators within their district boundaries and encourage them to submit registration, enrollment and staff data. A portion of the public district funding allocation calculated for the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) uses nonpublic enrollment data that is reported voluntarily by nonprofit elementary and secondary schools.

Nonpublic schools seeking recognition must submit the Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment and Staff Report before applying for recognition.

Questions can be directed to **Md. Shafiqul Azam** in the ISBE Data Analysis and Reporting Division at 217-782-3950.

2009-10 Non-Certified Staff Salary Study

Starting Oct. 1, the Non-Certified Staff Salary Study survey will be available in IWAS for submission of 2009-10 school year data. Here are URLs for two useful documents are provided below.

Worksheet:

http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/2007_ncss_worksheet.pdf.

Example for completing the survey:

http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/2007_ncss_instruct.pdf

The deadline date for submission is March 1. Districts with student enrollments of less than 1,000 as of the last school day in September 2008 can ignore this message.

Questions can be directed to **Md. Shafiqul Azam** in the ISBE Data Analysis and Reporting Division at 217-782-3950.

School Business Services

Reorganization Feasibility Studies

Funding is available for FY 2010 School District Reorganization Feasibility Studies. Feasibility studies are a tool to be used by school districts wanting to investigate the advantages and/or disadvantages of reorganization options. Interested school districts should submit a proposed agreement with an independent contractor(s) to their Regional Office of Education

(ROE). The ROE will submit the agreement to the Illinois State Board of Education for approval.

Each study will be funded on a base tier according to the number of school districts involved in the study. Studies will be funded an additional tier based on the combined enrollment of the districts involved in the study. Studies are funded between \$4,500 and \$8,000 based on the procedure listed above. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis. In order to receive reorganization feasibility study funds in FY 2010, agreements must be approved by both ROE and ISBE, and studies must be completed and approved for payment no later than June 30.

Procedures, funding allotment and sample forms are available at

<http://www.isbe.net/sfms/html/feasibility.htm>.

For questions, contact **Michelle Heninger**, School Business Services, at 217-785-8779 or mheninge@isbe.net.

Assessment

ISAT Writing Pilot

Schools that are participating in the fall ISAT writing pilot should have received testing material by now. The window for the pilot test administration is Oct. 5 through Oct. 9. If you were notified of your participation previously and have not received your material, please contact Measurement Inc. at 800-683-2413.

Computers and Technology

Microsoft Select Licensing Program Fall 2009 Update

ISBE offers Illinois K-12 public schools and organizations of all sizes the ability to purchase Microsoft software at greatly discounted prices through the Microsoft Select Licensing program. The current agreement with Microsoft expires on Feb. 28. ISBE is working on plans to renew this agreement for an additional three years through February 2013.

The Select program is a perpetual license program allowing schools the ability to purchase even a single license at discounted prices. Media can be ordered only when needed. All of the Microsoft Applications like Office are offered along with the complete set of Microsoft server products and Operating System Upgrade licenses. Subscription based products such as

Forefront for Exchange (used at ISBE) that allow you to license software for the remaining five months of the current contract are also available.

Illinois schools place their orders directly through Microsoft LARS chosen by ISBE to service this program. Pricing and program information can be found online at <http://www.isbe.net/msselect/contract.html>. A brief price list of the most popular Microsoft products and a complete list of all products are current and are updated monthly.

The Microsoft Bi-weekly Education Newsletter is a new edition to the Web link this fall. Published by Microsoft, the newsletter provides information on upcoming Microsoft Live Meeting product and program Webcasts as well as new product and promo information.

Funding and Disbursement Services

FY09 Expenditure Reports and First Quarter FY10 Expenditure Reports for Title I (4300) and Their Impact on Carryover

Title I, Part A, regulations limit local education agencies (LEAs) to carry over no more than 15 percent of the current year allocation for those grants of \$50,000 or more.

The total of both FY09 Title I expenditures and FY10 Title I expenditures through Sept. 30 are compared to the total funds available in FY09 to determine if a district will exceed the 15 percent carryover limit. Any funds in excess of 15 percent are deducted from the district's FY10 Title I allotment. This applies to both Regular Title I and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) Title I. It is important to monitor budgeted amounts and expenditures during FY10 to ensure at least 85 percent is expended during the current year program plus the first quarter of the subsequent year's (FY11) program so your district does not lose Title I allotment.

Please be timely in submitting your FY09 and FY10 expenditure reports. Remember that expenditure reporting for ARRA funds must be completed within five days of the end of each period, where other expenditure reports are due 30 after the end of the period. (Please note that it was previously reported in the Weekly Message that it was within seven days of the end of each period for expenditure reporting for ARRA funds. It has been switched to five days.)

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact Sally Cray or Kim Lewis in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

Safety Notice

Product Alert Issued on Light Poles

The Capital Development Board (CDB) has brought to the State Board's attention an alert issued by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) regarding light poles manufactured by Whitco Co. LP of Fort Worth, Texas, which have cracked and fallen over. Here is a link to the alert:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PREREL/prhtml09/09321.html>. Given the serious risks to injury and death associated with this public alert, CDB is suggesting, as described by the CPSC, any facility within your school district that may have high mast/stadium light poles be inspected by a qualified professional to determine your exposure to this alert.

If it is determined you have any high mast/stadium light poles covered under this product alert, you should move to remediate the life safety situation as soon as possible. Initially, you should consult your procurement files to determine whether any warranties covering repairs are available, or if you have other rights that may enable you to obtain repairs or recover the costs of repairs. You may wish to consult counsel about your recovery rights. Also, CDB would ask that you inform them as to the number of the defective high mast/stadium light poles discovered in your review, whether warranties may cover repairs and, if repairs appear to be necessary, are they being performed. This data may help in any possible legal action through the Attorney General. CDB also suggest you consult with your attorney about your specific rights. To report any defective high mast/stadium light poles or if you have any questions, please give CDB a call at 217-782-2864 in Springfield or 312-814-6000 in Chicago.

Professional Development

IAEOP Fall Conference Coming Up

The Illinois Association of Educational Office Professionals is gearing up for its fall conference, set for Oct. 16-18.

Oct. 5 is the registration deadline for the annual conference, which will be held at the Stoney Creek Inn in East Peoria. The year's keynote speaker will be Linda Glackin, coordinator of victim services for the Peoria

Police Department, who will present “Frauds, Scams and Safety Issues.”

Hotel information, a list of presenters and registration forms are available at <http://www.iaeop.com/>.

For more information, contact Paula Bender at 630-466-2371 or pbender@waubonsee.edu or Mitzy Widebeck at 217-525-3040 or mitzyh@springfield.k12.il.us.

James Madison Fellowship Available

The James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation is seeking applicants from Illinois committed to a career in teaching American history, American government or social studies at the secondary level.

The James Madison Fellowship offers up to \$24,000 to pursue a master’s degree. Teachers and students about to complete their undergraduate work can apply at www.jamesmadison.gov for the federal program.

Visit the Web site for more information. Contact Lewis F. Larsen at llarsen@jamesmadison.com for questions.

Student Opportunities

Poster Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

The Official State of Illinois poster for 2009 Hispanic Heritage Month was recently unveiled at a press conference with Gov. Pat Quinn.

The poster features some of the award-winning artwork from Chicago-area high school students in a contest organized by Latino Art Beat. Visit <http://latinoartbeat.com/images/HHP08.09proof.pdf> to see a large version of the poster, which marks a celebration from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15.

Latino Art Beat, a Chicago-based not-for-profit organization, awards scholarships to high school students through the contest. For more information, visit <http://latinoartbeat.com>.

Contest Honors Top Volunteers

Applications are available for the 15th annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, which honor outstanding

community service by young people in fifth through 12th grades.

Local honorees selected by participating schools and organizations will compete at the state level, where the top two students will be selected to represent their state in Washington, D.C. State-level winners receive an all-expenses-paid trip to D.C., \$1,000 and a silver medallion. National winners receive \$5,000, gold medallions, a trophy for their school and a \$5,000 grant to the charity of their choice.

Last year’s state winners were Tayler McGillis of Toluca and Madelyn McGlynn of Belleville.

Visit <http://spirit.prudential.com> or <http://www.principals.org/prudential> to apply or for more information. A paper version of the application form is available by call 877-525-8491 (toll free). Deadline to apply is Nov. 2.

C-SPAN Offers Documentary Contest

C-SPAN is kicking off its sixth annual StudentCam video documentary competition, which invites middle and high school students to compete for cash prizes totaling \$50,000.

This year’s national competition asks students to examine “One of the country’s greatest strengths” or “A challenge the country is facing” with a five to eight minute video. The deadline for entries is Jan. 20 with winners being announced in March.

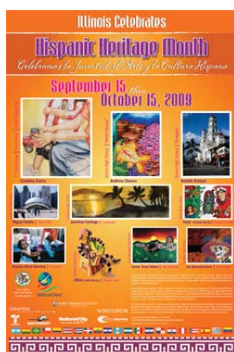
For details and an entry form, visit <http://www.studentcam.org>.

U.S. Justice Department Organizes Poster Contest for Fifth-Graders

Fifth-grade students across Illinois are eligible to participate in the U.S. Department of Justice’s annual National Missing Children’s Day Poster Contest. The agency’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is asking teachers to incorporate the contest in their lesson plans.

Winning entries from each state will advance to national judging to compete for a trip to Washington, D.C., to participate in the National Missing Children’s Day ceremony on May 25.

Applications and additional information are available at <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/programs/postercontest/>. For



questions, call **Nadia Tunstall** at 888-347-5610 or 202-347-5610 or e-mail mc.day.2010@fvtc.edu.

Real World Design Challenge Returns

The Real World Design Challenge is gearing up for its second year in search of high school teams to compete. Teams consist of a teacher and three to seven students who will compete in the area of aviation. The national competition will be held in March.

The Real World Design Challenge is run by a public and private partnership that aims to promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics in schools.

For more information, visit www.realworlddesignchallenge.org or contact Ralph K. Coppola at 703-298-6630 or rcoppola@ptc.com.

School Opportunities

Library Grant Application Available

The FY2010 School District Library Grant Program (commonly referred to as the School Library Per Capita Grant) application is available online at http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/what_we_do/schoolpercapgrant.html. The deadline is Nov. 20.

The purpose of this grant is to enhance the school districts' library programs. It is noncompetitive and was established with legislation. The school district's attendance centers (buildings) must meet specific eligibility requirements, detailed in the grant application, to be considered eligible for funding.

For questions call the Illinois State Library, Library Development Group, at 800-665-5576, ext. 1, or e-mail **Ron Winner** at rwinner@ilsos.net.

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/2009/newsclips/090925.htm>.