Good afternoon.

It’s a gray, rainy day here in Springfield. Not the best for our trick-or-treaters tonight—please keep an eye out for them so they all return home safely and are back in school tomorrow.

As you know, early childhood education has been a top policy priority in Illinois and Governor Blagojevich has increased funding by $90 million over the past three years to ensure its prominence in the state. Also, Illinois has received national recognition for its work to have all children in the state start school ready to learn. We are viewed as a leader in the national movement around making quality preschool both accessible and of high-quality.

The State Board of Education, in the recently adopted Strategic Plan, has noted the importance of early learning as a foundational component for literacy, which in turn is the building block for future learning. If you would like to build your knowledge base and background in this important area of educational programming for so many of our school districts around the state, let me share with you an upcoming opportunity to engage in a national discussion on this topic.

Illinois’ growing reputation as an early learning leader will be highlighted November 10, from noon to 3:15 in a national satellite conference on Engaging Leaders in the Pre-K Movement. The program begins with a lunch discussion about Illinois’ efforts to make quality preschool available to all three- and four-year-olds, followed by an interactive satellite program facilitated by Pre-K Now, a national network of early learning supporters.

Engaging Leaders will feature comments from several Illinois leaders, including Illinois State Board of Education Chairman Jesse Ruiz. The event is sponsored by Early Learning Illinois, a partnership of Action for Children; the Ounce of Prevention Fund; and Voices for Illinois Children—all in collaboration with over a dozen host organizations across the state. Find locations, additional information and registration at www.preknow.org/engagingleaders or contact Andy Wade at awade@ounceofprevention.org.

And in a final note—a hearty congratulations to all of our Sox fans. My daughter, who works in the Merchandise Mart building, couldn’t resist getting out and joining the celebration in Chicago last Friday. She was in the heart of it, on Wacker and called me from there. From the way she sounded—I’m sorry I missed the party! Lots of fun and well deserved.

Have a great week.

Randy Dunn

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding and Disbursements</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Information System</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and Instruction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Grants and Programs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition Programs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Hurricane Relief Efforts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Vacancy List</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the News</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Funding and Disbursements

Correction to Textbook Loan Program dates

The Illinois Textbook Loan Program (ITLP) information has been updated for 2006. This year's program covers grades five through eight. Schools will order from November 15, 2005 through March 15, 2006. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will mail the "school package" to schools in early November 2005 and will include the school's 2006 allotment along with passwords and school code number.

Additional information on the 2006 ITLP is linked from http://www.isbe.net under Hot Topics and Resources and is titled 2006 Illinois Textbook Loan Program.

Student Information System

SIS Training Video available online

A training video for the new Student Information System (SIS) is now available under “Hot Links” at http://www.isbe.net/sis/default.htm.

ISBE staff developed the video as a companion piece to the Illinois State Board of Education SIS Training Manual, which is available online at: http://www.isbe.net/sis/pdf/user_manual.pdf. The video is divided into sections for viewer convenience.

Curriculum and Instruction

Opportunities for math and science teachers

ISBE is coordinating opportunities for K-12 teachers of Mathematics and Science to expand their own content expertise in mathematics, sciences and engineering the NCLB Title II, Part B program. The eligible applicants include high need schools, whether from student achievement, poverty or teacher quality issues. An online survey has been developed to prioritize the professional development needs for teachers of mathematics and science in these schools. The survey even gives a special priority to the careers and technical educators whose curricula are associated with mathematics, science and engineering.

To further and more specifically identify the needs of Illinois K-12 teachers of Mathematics and Science, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers, please complete our annual on-line survey found under Announcements at: http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/Default.htm. The survey takes about ten minutes to complete.

A special section which takes an additional ten minutes will be randomly added for some middle and high school respondents, which further probes current knowledge and classroom applications associated with critical technologies and their connections in the Sciences and Mathematics of the 21st century.

This extra section will give CPDUs for its completion! Illinois educators' impressions of professional development needs and their own priorities for these needs will be most helpful in the designs of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships that will be funded in Illinois, as well as document their needs for proposed initiatives for our state. Responses will be submitted anonymously. Please encourage your faculty to be a part of this very important effort.

Teen pregnancy prevention guide available

The National Education Association and the NEA Health Information Network are excited to announce the publication of a brand new teen pregnancy prevention guide, Promoting Sexual Responsibility: A Teen Pregnancy Prevention Resource for School Employees by Eva Marx, Vicki Harrison and Kandra Strauss Riggs. This valuable guide gives educators the resources they need to help students avoid behaviors that can result in pregnancy, as well as HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases. Drawing on current research and practice, this book offers strategies to help young people prepare to become responsible adults.

Order Promoting Sexual Responsibility for $26.95 by calling 1-800-229-4200 or visiting the online NEA Professional Library.

For more information contact: kstraussriggs@nea.org.
Special Education

Federal education program participation study announced

The United States Department of Education (USDE) will be doing a study of the participation of private school students and teachers in Federal education programs. Many of the major Federal education programs require equitable participation of private school students and teachers, including parts of Title I through Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA).

This study will gather information from a nationally representative sample of private schools and public school districts concerning the level of participation of private school students, teachers and parents in these Federal programs, the nature of the relationship and consultation process between districts and private school officials, the funds LEAs allocate to provide services to private school students under each program and the IDEA child find practices employed by the districts.

The study will survey approximately 1,500 private school officials and 600 district administrators. In Illinois, 58 private school officials and 21 district administrators will be contacted. The study has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The Urban Institute is conducting this study under contract to the USDE. If you have any questions, please contact Ary Amerikaner of the Urban Institute research team at PrivateSCHSurvey@ui.urban.org or 1-866-859-0635; or Beth Franklin, the project officer at the USDE, at beth.franklin@ed.gov or 202-205-5798.

Federal Grants and Programs

Attention State Coordinators of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Program (SDFSCAP)

The United States Department of Education (USDE) National Study of the Implementation of Programs to Prevent Youth Substance Abuse and School Crime is conducting a study which consists of two components:

1. nationally representative surveys of districts and of elementary and secondary schools (fall 2005); and
2. a survey of staff who implement prevention programs in a subset of the schools that participate in component 1 (Spring 2006).

Questionnaires were recently mailed to District Prevention Coordinators, Coordinators are encouraged to collaborate with other staff who may have pertinent information. Districts are asked to return their completed surveys by mail or fax within three weeks.

If you have questions about the survey, please call Dr. Barbara Williams, Project Director, Westat, at 1-800-937-8281, ext. 4249 or email her at barbarawilliams@westat.com, questions about the SDFSCAP, please call Albert J. Holmes at the Illinois State Board of Education at 312-814-3618 or email him at aholmes@isbe.net

Nutrition Programs

Helpful online resource available for new school lunch sponsors and staff

Have you recently hired new food service and nutrition management staff? Do you have schools that are new to the National School Lunch Program? Then, download the useful easy-to-read Basic Training Manual that covers the NSLP regulations, operational responsibilities and more online at www.isbe.net/nutrition.
Illinois School Hurricane Relief Efforts

We continue our recognition of the students, teachers, principals, parents and school staff around the state have organized fundraisers, bake sales, walk-a-thons and many other events to raise funds to help the areas damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We applaud the spirit of giving and compassion that Illinois schools have demonstrated!

We will continue to highlight schools each week until all submissions have appeared. To submit more great news of relief efforts, email Becky Watts at rwatts@isbe.net.

- **Field–Stevenson School** in Forest Park Public Schools District 91 held one of its “Every Penny Counts” drives to raise funds for Katrina relief. Large jugs were placed around the building and the students, faculty and staff were encouraged to share their spare change. At the end of five days, they had collected $913. When one family heard the result, they anonymously gave another $87 to raise the collection to $1,000. The school then took the money to Lowe’s Home Improvement, which matched it dollar for dollar. Through this cooperative spirit, the total donation to the American Red Cross became $2,000 in just five days.

- Under the direction of its eighth grade students, **Cooper Middle School** mobilized in the days following the landfall of Hurricane Katrina and put together "The Parade Must Go On!" a walk-a-thon event for the community. The students spend four learning-packed weeks planning the event for September 30. Exemplifying the goals of service learning, the event raised over $16,000 for hurricane relief. The school credits its students and their teachers who facilitated the students’ planning work with the event’s great success.

- **At Chippewa Middle School** in Des Plaines the Student Council began collecting loose change at lunch. All three grade levels engaged in a "Penny Wars" campaign where students donated pennies to their homeroom teacher. If someone from one homeroom put nickels, dimes, quarters or bills into another homeroom’s jar, that amount of pennies was deducted from the receiving homeroom’s total. The "Penny Wars" started the week after the hurricane and lasted for two weeks.

One of the school’s clubs, Helping Other People Everyday (HOPE) and the parent group Chippewa Organization of Parents and Educators (COPE) is conducting a community garage sale. More than 40 displaced families from the Gulf Coast who are staying at the Maryville Academy received their pick of the donated goods. All proceeds will go to the American Red Cross.

- **Glendale School**, an elementary school (grades three through five) in East Peoria Elementary District 86 collected $1394 for those suffering as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The money was donated to the American Red Cross in an all-school assembly. This accomplishment is notable considering the student population’s low-income percentage of 46 percent.

- Through the work of many grade school, middle school and high school service organizations, **Byron Schools**, raised $3,226.34 that was given to the Illinois Principals’ Association Hurricane Relief Effort.

- **At Kenneth E. Neubert Elementary School** in Algonquin District 300, students brought in Coins for Katrina, putting their money in small "flood buckets" in the classrooms. The money was deposited daily into a five-gallon water jug in front of the office. Students collected almost $1,400. The money was sent to Habitat for Humanity: Operation Home Delivery. All of the money will be used to purchase supplies to build a home for a family left homeless by the hurricane.

- **Limestone Walters Elementary**, District #316 in Peoria asked for donations from its 220 students. The students, faculty and staff raised over $4000 for the relief effort.

- **Edwards County Community United School District #1** challenged neighboring **Grayville Community United School District #1** to a contest to see which district could raise the most money per student. The challenge lasted just over one week. Edwards County raised $9,566, totaling $9.91 per student. Grayville collect $3,636.01 which represented $11.16 per student.
The two districts collectively raised $13,202 which was presented to the American Red Cross. Grayville received a plaque courtesy of Edwards County Principal Stan Sruckmeyer for winning the challenge.

- **Berkeley School District #87** adopted **Jackson Elementary School** and **Trent Lott Middle School** in Pascagoula, Mississippi after Katrina devastated the area. Through the generosity of students and their families, staff members and friends of District #87 new school supplies, teacher supplies, new library books and school uniforms were packed and shipped directly to the children and teachers in the two Mississippi schools.

- **Sandburg Elementary School** in Springfield has been busy raising money for the Hurricane Katrina victims. The Student Council of third through fifth graders led the charge, first by asking each family to donate one dollar for every family member living in their home. Next, they held candy sales at lunch time, selling treats for 50¢. The teachers contributed to the fund with "comfortable for a cause." They could purchase stickers with the Red Cross emblem and each sticker purchased (up to 10) allowed the teacher to wear comfortable clothing on that day. Finally, Katrina relief bracelets were sold to the students to show their support.

   Principal Keith Kincaid said if the school raised $1000 or more, he would spend the night on the roof of the school. So far the school has raised in excess of our $1000 and its 275 students look forward to seeing Mr. Kincaid on the roof very soon!

Nominations should be submitted by the close of business on Friday, October 28, 2005 to Jean Ladage, FAX 217-785-3972 or email jladage@isbe.net. For more information, call Jean Ladage or Marsha Moffett at 217-557-6626.

**State Board Recognition Program**

The State Board of Education has begun the process of becoming more proactive in its efforts to recognize the exemplary achievements of students, teachers, school administrators and local board members in Illinois. These achievements would be such that they truly stand out from the ordinary.

Upon review and acceptance, the State Board of Education will pass a resolution describing the particulars of the achievement. The signed resolution would be presented in one of the following three ways:

- mailed to the recipient(s);  
- personally awarded to the individual(s) at their respective school(s); or  
- presented to recipient(s) during the State Board meeting at which their resolution is approved.

If you would like to nominate an individual a group for this recognition, please use the Recognizing Achievement form available online in the Resources box at [http://www.isbe.net/board/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/board/Default.htm).

**External Vacancy List**

Please visit [http://www.isbe.net/hr/pdf/positions.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/hr/pdf/positions.pdf) to view a list of vacancies at the Illinois State Board of Education. Please note that at the end of this list there is also a link to our ongoing vacancy list.

**In the News**

Weekly news clips  

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**Recognition Opportunities**

**Thomas Lay Burroughs Award**

The State Board of Education invites nominations for the 2006 Thomas Lay Burroughs Award for the State's Outstanding School Board President. This award will be presented at the Illinois Association of School Boards/Illinois Association of School Administrators/Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASB/IASA/IASBO) Conference on Sunday, November 20.

Nomination information is available online at: [http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf).