Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

The Illinois State Board of Education’s regularly scheduled meeting for June, which was originally to be held in Belleville, has been moved back to Springfield. Board members wanted to be in Springfield June 17-18 when they must address issues related to the FY 2010 budget.

As you are aware, the Board already spent much time and made very difficult decisions constructing its FY 2010 budget recommendation, which members approved in January and is posted here [http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY10_budget_book.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY10_budget_book.pdf). As a result of the General Assembly’s recent actions, the Board must now come back and cut this already very lean budget by 50% in areas other than General State Aid and Mandated Categoricals. It is unfortunate because many good programs were already cut in the Board’s FY 2010 budget recommendation. Now even more will have to be reduced or eliminated.

In addition to the 50% reduction for programs that the Board highlighted as priorities last December, the budget approved by the General Assembly also places severe limitations on our agency’s use of contractual dollars for everything from hearing officers to computer programming for agency data systems to maintenance on computer servers to running the Interactive Report Card. The General Assembly’s budget includes language placing a cumulative maximum amount of $1.00 on such contracts. We currently have more than $37 million in contracts for these services. This limitation on the professional services contracts comes at a time when federal dollars to stabilize the state education budget and stimulate reform are flowing at unprecedented rates and when expectations for performance have never been higher, particularly for Illinois. We are doing what we can to see that this restriction is lifted.

I want to thank those who have already voiced your concerns regarding the reductions in the FY10 education budget. As you know, I am also very concerned about the FY11 budget. Illinois is using approximately $1 billion in stimulus funding in FY 09 and FY 10 for General State Aid purposes. In FY 11, the State will have to come up with an additional $1 billion just to maintain education funding levels. If we don’t come out of the recession soon, we will face even more troubled waters next year. This point needs to be made not only to legislators, but to members of our communities.

In making decisions about how to absorb the 50% reductions for FY 10, our Board will have to weigh all sorts of factors. Members will have to minimize further liability to the state, meet federal
maintenance of effort requirements, and ensure we are not putting the state at a further disadvantage for competitive ARRA funds. These will be incredibly difficult decisions.

I know many of you remain concerned about how a negative Local Determination for IDEA Compliance Indicators will impact your ability to utilize IDEA funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We have had several conversations with our counterparts at the U.S. Department of Education over the past few weeks and ISBE staff will be reconvening the LEA Determinations stakeholder group to discuss potential flexibility which may be afforded to states and districts on this issue.

Finally, I wanted to let you know that scores for the ISAT and IAA have been posted to IWAS and the correction window is now open. Additionally, AYP status reports have been posted for those elementary and middle schools that have submitted their E-report card data. More information follows in the Assessment section of the newsletter.

Have a great week!

Chris

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**Upcoming Dates & Deadlines**

- Deadline for entries in the Art on a Rain Barrel contest – June 10
- Part 65 (New Teacher Induction and Mentoring): Public Comment period ends – June 15
- Part 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing): Public comment period ends - June 15.
- Application for Reading Improvement Block Grant – June 15
- E-report Card Form – June 26
- 2009 Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report – June 30
- Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment, and Staff Report – June 30
- Student Health Data – Vision and Dental – June 30
- Early Childhood Block Grant Program Applications – June 30
- Applications for the Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program – June 30
- FY10 Consolidated Application to Serve English Language Learners - postmarked by June 30
- Migrant Education Application for the 2009-2010 School Year – July 15
- TSR Salary Data – July 15
- Request for Proposals (RFP) for Reading Recovery ® training and professional development – July 20
- Differentiated Accountability Flexibility Applications due - July 31
- FY 2009 State and Federal grant projects ending Aug. 31 submit amendments and project extension requests – Aug. 1
- Modified End of Year Report on IWAS- Aug. 1
- Deadline for entering data in IWAS on the 2008-2009 High School Students Taking Community College Courses – Aug.1
- Statewide Youth Summit – Aug. 10.
- Deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2009 – Aug. 14
- Annual Superintendents’ Conference in Springfield – Oct. 27-28
ARRA

Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) Program

The Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program (QZAB), created in 1997, has been extended through 2011 by the Tax Extenders and Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act of 2008 and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The QZAB program provides federal tax credits in lieu of interest on bonds designated as QZAB’s by the issuing school district. QZAB proceeds may be used for rehabilitating or repairing public school facilities, investing in new equipment and technology, developing challenging course materials or training teachers. They cannot be used for new school construction.

In order to designate bonds as QZAB’s, a school district must receive an allocation of the State’s volume cap through application to the State Board of Education. To qualify for an allocation, the school or program designated as a qualified zone academy by the school district must be located in an empowerment zone or an enterprise community; or there is a reasonable expectation that at least 35 percent of their students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches under the National School Lunch Act. Additionally, private business contributions that total at least 10% of the face value of bonds to be designated as QZAB’s must be secured by the issuing district on behalf of the zone academy.

A qualified zone academy is a school or program that provides education and training below the postsecondary level if: (1) the public school or program is/was designed in cooperation with business to enhance the academic curriculum, increase graduation and employment rates, and better prepare students for the rigors of college and the increasingly complex workforce, (2) students in the public school or program will be subject to the same academic standards and assessments as other students educated by the eligible local education agency, and (3) the comprehensive educational plan of the public school or program is approved by the eligible local education agency.

The federal legislation provided for national allocations of $400 million for calendar year 2008, and $1.4 billion in each of calendar years 2009 and 2010. The Internal Revenue Service notice (IRS Notice 2009 – 30) provides that Illinois’ share of these allocations is $14.972 million (for calendar year 2008) and $ 52.401 million (for calendar year 2009), for a total of $67.373 million. The allocations for calendar year 2010 have yet to be released by the IRS. Changes to the program made by the Tax Extenders and Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act of 2008 are discussed in the Notice which is available at: www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-09-30.pdf.

Allocations will be based on the relative degree of poverty as reflected by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, with preference given to those school districts that have not previously been awarded an allocation.

The State Board of Education will be accepting applications and supporting materials for the calendar year 2008 and 2009 allocations beginning June 9, 2009 through 4 p.m., June 30, 2009. Applications and additional information are available on the ISBE web site at: http://www.isbe.net/construction/html/qzab.htm

For further questions or inquiries, please call Lou Ferratier, School Support Services at 217-785-8779.

Qualified School Construction Bond (QSCB) Program

The Qualified School Construction Bond Program (QSCB) is a new category of tax credit bonds for the construction, rehabilitation, or repair of public school facilities or for the acquisition of land on which a public school facility will be constructed, and expenditures for costs of acquisition of equipment to be used in the facility that is being constructed, rehabilitated or repaired with the proceeds of QSCB’s. The program was created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). It provides federal tax credits to bondholders in lieu of the issuing school district paying interest on the borrowing.

The ARRA provides for national allocations of $11 billion for each of calendar years 2009 and 2010. The Internal Revenue Service notice (IRS Notice 2009 – 35) provides that Illinois’ share of these allocations for calendar year 2009 is $254.25 million for the City of Chicago School District 299, and $244.435 million for the balance of the state. The allocations for calendar year 2010 have yet to be made by the IRS.
Additional information regarding participation in this bond designation program will be provided in the near future.

**Maintenance of Buildings**

We have received many questions about what are acceptable or unacceptable expenditures under ARRA in terms of maintenance buildings costs. For example, is repair work covered? Can you use the funds to pay a janitor’s salary?

The 2003 federal handbook defines “maintenance of buildings” as “activities associated with keeping buildings at an acceptable level of efficiency through repairs and preventative maintenance.” Expenses associated with maintenance of buildings are not acceptable under ARRA General State Aid funds.

Therefore, maintenance costs not acceptable under ARRA General State Aid funds include expenditures such as window replacement, roof repair/replacement, electrical repair and maintenance personnel, painting and tuck pointing.

The federal handbook also includes “Operation of Buildings,” as activities concerned with keeping the physical plant clean and ready for daily use. This includes operating lighting and HVAC systems and doing minor repairs. Also included are the costs of building rental and property insurance. These expenditures are acceptable under ARRA General State Aid funds.

Therefore, some acceptable operational expenditures for ARRA General State Aid funds include janitorial services, janitorial salaries and utilities.

**Student Assessment**

**AYP Appeals process**

AYP status reports will be released shortly and districts will begin reviewing the results.

AYP status released via IWAS is final unless the data are changed during the correction process or rescoring is requested. 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. Appeal should be based on issues that could not have been resolved during the data correction period and for which there is an available remedy. For example, schools and districts have multiple opportunities throughout the year to ensure student demographic information is correct. The AYP appeal process cannot be used to correct demographic data that could have been addressed during the correction process.

Each appeal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by ISBE staff and by the Appeals Advisory Committee, if necessary. An appeal must be filed within 30 days or release of the AYP status report on IWAS or by September 1, whichever is later.

Procedural guidance, a sample timeline and forms to begin the appeal process are available online at: [http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/appeals_status.pdf)

**No Child Left Behind**

**Differentiated Accountability Flexibility**

ISBE continues to implement the U.S. Department of Education’s Differentiated Accountability pilot. Districts are encouraged to apply for the two pieces of available flexibility:

1) **Optional reversal of the order of Public School Choice (PSC) and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) for schools newly identified for improvement:**

   Schools that are entering their second consecutive year of not making AYP will be able to implement SES during the first year of School Improvement instead of PSC.

   Reversing the order of sanctions may provide a more effective intervention strategy for the first year of improvement by offering eligible students SES while planning for choice implementation in year two. For instructions on how to apply for the pilot, go to: [http://www.isbe.net/nclb/htmls/differentiated_flexibility_reverse.htm](http://www.isbe.net/nclb/htmls/differentiated_flexibility_reverse.htm).

2) **Waiver of some of the PSC notification requirements under NCLB:**

   In some instances, where there is limited or no space available for students eligible to participate in public school choice, a district may choose to target notification letters to a segment of the eligible student population. For details on the required
information needed to apply for the waiver, please see:  
http://www.isbe.net/nclb/htmls/differentiated_flexibility_waiver.htm).

Applications are due **Friday, July 31**. For additional information, contact **Ev Deimel** at 217-524-4832 or by e-mail at edeimel@isbe.net for additional information.

**Strengthening No Child Left Behind: Early Notification to Parents Regarding Public School Choice**

ISBE is encouraging school districts with schools in Federal status to notify parents about public school choice before the districts receive their AYP determinations. The final regulations and additional guidance provided by the U. S. Department of Education in October 2008 emphasized the importance of timely and clear notification to parents of the availability of public school choice (PSC) and supplemental educational services (SES). The supplemental regulations require the districts to implement the following requirements:

- Notify parents of eligible children of the option to transfer their children to another public school making AYP reasonable in advance but no later than 14 days before the start of the school year; and
- Notify parents of eligible children of the availability of SES in a clear and concise communication that obviously distinguishes SES from other school-related information the parents receive.

School districts with Title I schools in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that can not exit status this year can implement Early Notification.

The guidance document for Early Notification, with links to U. S. Department of Education documents, can be found at the following ISBE web site:  
www.isbe.net/grants/html/choice.htm

**Curriculum and Instruction**

**Registration for Illinois Virtual High School Open**

Students who already have an IVHS Login ID and want to register for Summer Term 09 courses only can login to the IVHS system (http://www.ivhs.org) to request a course. New students should click on the Registration link at the top of the IVHS home page (http://www.ivhs.org).

If you have questions regarding Summer Term 09, please email: ivs-summer@ivs.k12.il.us.
Fall registration will open in June. For questions regarding Fall Term 09, please email: ivs-fall@ivs.k12.il.us.

**Illinois Virtual School: Requested Feedback**

As we begin our efforts to expand and enhance the IVS, an initial step is to gather input from users statewide.

CURRENT IVHS USERS - We would like feedback on current virtual school operations, courses currently available through IVHS, and virtual courses desired to meet the education needs in your schools. Please complete the following online survey using the link below:
http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB2295BAFHNC

NON-IVHS USERS -. We would like feedback on current educational needs, virtual programs to be offered, potential challenges in offering online learning, and professional development needs. Please complete the following online survey using the link below:
http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB2295BGQHS7H

If you have specific questions regarding the transition between Illinois Virtual High School (IVHS) and the new Illinois Virtual School (IVS), please email Cindy Hamblin at chamblin@ltc3.k12.il.us.

The Peoria Regional Office of Education No. 48’s partners include Area III ROEs, Area III Learning Technology Center, Two Rivers Professional Development Center, and Western Illinois University.

**FY10 Reading Improvement Block Grant Applications**

The FY10 Reading Improvement Block Grant application became available for completion through the eGrants system on May 12. All eligible school districts serving grades K-6 may apply. Projected allocations for FY10, which are contingent on legislative approval, can be found near the bottom of the Budget Detail page of the application. Districts also may check their projected allocations by going to http://isbe.net/curriculum/pdf/ribg Alloc_fy10.pdf.

Please remember that the allocations are not final since the legislature has not yet approved the state’s budget. The total dollars allocated to each district could change.

The due date for the Reading Improvement Block Grant application is **June 15**. The start date for use of grant funds is July 1, or the date a substantially approvable application has been received by ISBE, whichever is later.

All FY10 funds must be spent by June 30, 2010. For more information, contact Sarah McCusker in the Division of Curriculum and Instruction at 217-557-7323.

**Learn and Serve America Grants**

The State Board has released an RFP for the Learn and Serve America Grants. The purpose of the program is to encourage the use of service-learning as a teaching methodology by supporting the development of high-quality service-learning projects in elementary, middle, and secondary schools. The RFP is available at the following site:
http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/html/Active _RFPs.htm.

**Reading Recovery RFP for Training and Ongoing Professional Development Site Grants**

The Illinois State Board of Education has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Reading Recovery ® training and ongoing professional development. School districts, charter schools, public university laboratory schools approved by ISBE, regional offices of education, postsecondary institutions, and Reading Recovery ® consortia are eligible to apply for funds to establish a training site if they employ a registered Reading Recovery ® teacher leader.

Reading Recovery®, first implemented by New Zealand psychologist and researcher Dr. Marie Clay, is a short-term, one-to-one intervention taught by specifically trained teachers. Teachers tutor the lowest achieving first-grade students for 30 minutes daily. The tutoring typically is provided within the school day as a pull-out program and consists of a 12- to 20-week set of customized lessons that supplement the regular education program provided by classroom teachers.

The goal is to accelerate progress for children in first grade who are having the greatest difficulty learning to read and write.

Those who wish to submit proposals by mail or in person should provide an original and four copies to the Illinois State Board of Education, Curriculum and Instruction Division, 100 North First Street, C-215, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001.
To ensure receipt, proposals should be submitted no later than 4 p.m., Monday, July 20.

Proposals also may be hand-delivered to the following locations:

• Springfield Office
  Information Center
  First Floor
  100 N. First St.

• Chicago Office
  Reception Area
  Suite 14-300
  100 W. Randolph St.

For more information on the RFP, contact Sarah McCusker, Curriculum and Instruction Division, at 217-557-7323 or by e-mail at smccuske@isbe.net.

Grants and Programs

Early Notification of Public School Choice

IWAS notification of ISAT scores has started the clock ticking for submitting improvement plans.

IWAS notification to district superintendents was provided on June 3.

This notification begins the time period for completing district and school improvement plans and developing restructuring plans for districts and schools in academic status.


If you need additional assistance, please contact your area RESPRO for assistance, http://www.isbe.net/sos/pdf/respro_contacts.pdf.

Districts and schools in academic status must always have a current two-year improvement plan posted at IIRC [see Section 1.85(d) of the Illinois Administrative Code]. If a district or school is in academic status and has a locally approved current improvement plan submitted to ISBE via the IIRC website, then no plan is due during the 2009-2010 school year. If a district or school is in academic status and does not have a locally approved current improvement plan submitted to ISBE via the IIRC website, a plan is due. If a district or school is not in academic status, no improvement plan is required. http://www.isbe.net/pdf/plan_submission.pdf

School Code and Rules

Background check reports for contractors

You may have seen the following statement from our agency regarding the sharing of background check reports for contractors:

There is no provision in Section 10-21.9 that permits sharing of background check reports for contractors (which would include construction workers) within or outside of the educational service region, so my advice to you is that such sharing is not permitted under the School Code. Further, as a point of clarification, the ROE is permitted to share background check reports with other ROEs and school boards only for substitutes and other concurrent employees.

We’d like to take this as an opportunity to clear up any unintended miscommunication that may have occurred from this language. This language was sent in response to a specific scenario: where a contractor has a contract with District A, and after that contract ends, the same contractor enters into a contract with District B (either in same ROE region as or a different ROE region than District A). The question posed was “whether it is permissible under Section 10-21.9 of the School Code for District A to share the background check reports of the contractor’s employees with District B.”

The position of our agency in regards to Section 10-21.9(f) of the School Code is that, if a contractor holds contracts in more than one school district within the educational service region simultaneously, Section 10-21.9(f) provides that any of those school districts may ask the ROE to coordinate the background check and provide copies to each of the school boards (with cost sharing to be worked out between the districts). The limitless portability of background checks between districts and ROEs across the state that exists for substitutes and concurrent employees does not exist to the same extent for contractors. The portability that Section 10-21.9(f) does provide for contractors is limited to a contractor holding simultaneous contracts with more than one district within the same ROE region, and allows
Early Childhood

Block Grants Available

Applications for two Early Childhood Block Grant programs are available through IWAS for school year 2009-2010 (FY 10).

Recipients of all Early Childhood Block Grant programs funded in FY 09 and earlier will apply online for their FY 10 continuation grants and will be applying for 100% of their current funding. NOTE: Projected allocations are contingent upon legislative appropriation.

Program availability and names in IWAS are as follows:

Preschool for All-Cont. 3-5 Early Childhood – available 6/4/09
Preschool for All-3-5 Early Childhood – available 6/4/09
Preschool for All-Cont. 0-3 Early Childhood – will be available within the next two weeks
Preschool for All-Prev Initiative 0-3 Early Childhood – will be available within the next two weeks

There is a change with the Preschool for All-3-5 Early Childhood application as it will now be one project instead of having separate projects for different fiscal years.

REMINDER: In order to create an FY10 Preschool for All-3-5 Early Childhood application, you must first click on the "Yes" box that appears on the Application Select page. This should display the fiscal year, project title, allotment amount, and Create New Project button. The FY10 application should display after you click on the Create New Project button.

All applications must be submitted to ISBE by June 30, 2009 for a July 1st start date.

If you have any questions, please call the Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835.

Nutrition

2009–2010 Special Observances Dates/Themes Announced

The School Nutrition Association announced the 2009-10 National School Lunch Week and National School Breakfast Week themes. Please bookmark the respective Web sites to help plan, promote, and publicize your special events.

National School Lunch Week (NSLW) will be October 12–16 and the theme is “All-Star School Lunch.”

Illinois School Breakfast Week is scheduled for November 16–20, and is celebrated in conjunction with American Education Week. Visit the National Education Association’s Web site at www.nea.org for more information. This year’s theme is “Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility.”

National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) is scheduled for March 8–12, 2010, and the theme is “School Breakfast—Ready, Set, Go!” For more information, visit: www.schoolnutrition.org/nsbw.

Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Illinois Schools Can! Free E-Newsletter

Join the over 2,300 Illinois individuals who have already signed up for the Illinois Schools Can! Free E-newsletter today to get the latest news on student wellness resources, grant opportunities and upcoming training to help you meet local wellness policy objectives or HealthierUS School Challenge criteria.

Visit www.kidseatwell.org/Enewsletter.htm and click on Subscribe to e-newsletter Illinois Schools Can! on the right side of the page. Archived issues are also available at that site.

Professional Development

Annual Superintendents’ Conference Announcement

The Annual Superintendents’ Conference is scheduled for Oct. 27-28 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield.

Roy Romer, former three-term Governor of Colorado, will serve as this year’s keynote speaker.

Mr. Romer has served as chair of the Democratic National Party, the National Governors Association, and
the Educational Commission of the States. He was Superintendent of Schools for the Los Angeles Unified School District and chair of Strong American Schools. Mr. Romer now serves as senior advisor to the New York-based nonprofit, The College Board, in its mission to connect students to college success and opportunity. He has a degree in agricultural economics from Colorado State University, a law degree from the University of Colorado and he studied ethics at Yale University.

Michael Geisen, the 58th National Teacher of the Year, will be the featured speaker on October 28. Mr. Geisen, a science teacher at Crook County Middle School in Prineville, Oregon, is just completing a year as a full-time national and international spokesperson for education that began on June 1, 2008. Mr. Geisen's goal is to ignite passion for learning in his students and his community.

Online registration opened Monday, June 1 and may be accessed at: http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/

Questions and concerns regarding the conference may be directed to Leigh Ann Smith at 217-782-4870 or via e-mail at lsmith@isbe.net.

Special Education Directors’ Conference 2009

Registration is open for the annual Special Education Directors’ Conference and can be accessed online at: http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/

This year’s keynote speaker is Daniel Habib, who will present and discuss his documentary film Including Samuel. Before his son, Samuel, was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, photojournalist Mr. Habib rarely thought about the inclusion of people with disabilities. Now he thinks about inclusion every day.

Shot and produced over four years, Mr. Habib's award-winning documentary film, Including Samuel, chronicles the Habib family's efforts to include Samuel in every facet of their lives. The film also features four other families with varied inclusion experiences, plus interviews with dozens of teachers, young people, parents and disability rights experts.

The conference’s featured speaker will be Nelson Lauver. In 1992, at age 29, Mr. Lauver, then a parking lot line painter, set a goal to overcome a lifetime of illiteracy caused by undiagnosed dyslexia. Intense struggle, burning desire, and a never-give-up attitude enabled him to achieve his goal, and change his life. Mr. Lauver learned to read and write - and that was just the start. Today, Mr. Lauver touches the lives of millions of listeners with his syndicated radio feature, The American Storyteller Radio Journal.

Further information on the conference can be found at the following links:


Questions regarding the conference may be directed to Leigh Ann Smith at 217-782-4870 or via e-mail at lsmith@isbe.net.

Gifted Education Seminar Training Opportunities

The Illinois State Board of Education has made approximately $6 million in funds available to Regional Offices of Education to fund the statewide delivery of the new Gifted Education Seminar in Fall 2009 through Summer 2010. The Gifted Education Seminar is a 45-hour course of study that replaces the Gifted Education Institute.

The Gifted Education Seminar will help classroom teachers deepen their understanding of how to teach and reach gifted and talented students, including assisting them to create an environment that is conducive to identifying gifted and talented learners, addressing their diverse needs, providing skills to differentiate instruction and measuring student growth in the classroom.

The Gifted Education Seminar is being piloted throughout the state in Summer 2009 and will be available in Fall 2009 for additional teachers to be trained. For more information, please contact your Regional Office of Education or Intermediate Service Center. http://www.isbe.net/regionaloffices/pdf/roedirectory.pdf

2010 OAH Tachau Teacher of The Year Award
The Organization of American Historians sponsors an annual award to recognize the contributions made by pre-collegiate or classroom teachers to improve history education. The award memorializes the career of Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau, University of Louisville, for her efforts to build bridges between university and precollegiate history teachers.

Applications must be received by December 1. Pre-collegiate teachers engaged at least half time in history teaching, whether in history or social studies, are eligible to apply.

For more information, please visit:
http://oah.org/activities/awards/tachau/index.html

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**Student Opportunities**

**Illinois Youth Summit**

On August 10, The Illinois State Board of Education's Student Advisory Council, in conjunction with State Farm and America's Promise Alliance, will host a statewide youth summit to gather input from Illinois students about their school experiences.

The summit will bring students from diverse geographic, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds from across Illinois to Bloomington-Normal for a one day symposium and will serve as a catalyst to guide and inform future initiatives, especially the Drop-Out Prevention Summit scheduled for November 4.

This will be a student-planned and student-led conference. We expect the day to be a terrific experience for all participating students and adults. Please share information about the Youth Summit with students who can benefit from this one-day event and who will provide honest and forthright information about their school.

To have students register for the Youth Summit, please go to http://www.sfamericaspromise.com/summits-il.php

**Gallup Student Poll**

America's Promise Alliance (the Alliance), Gallup, and the American Association of School Administrators, recently completed the first phase of the Gallup Student Poll - a nationwide survey of 5th through 12th graders measuring hope, engagement, and well being. Now, the Alliance is preparing for the fall round of polling. With the permission of school officials, the Alliance will administer the poll in schools across the country to capture the voices of our youth. Available in English or Spanish, and free of charge to participating districts, the Gallup Student Poll will provide schools and communities with results within two weeks of the survey period. More information is available at http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com where you can register for webinars June 18 through the 26th.

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**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

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**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/090605.htm