



July 20, 2009

Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week, the Illinois General Assembly passed and Governor Quinn signed a Fiscal Year 2010 budget that will allow state funds to continue to flow and state government to continue to operate. While having a budget in place is welcome news and education was treated more fairly than many other state funded areas, this is not a budget that we consider sufficient.

The budget includes full funding for mandated categoricals (MCATS) and a \$160 per pupil increase in the General State Aid (GSA) Foundation Level. It also removes previous language that limited the agency’s ability to use contractual dollars.

Unfortunately, the remainder of the budget is similar to the “50 percent budget” previously passed by the General Assembly and vetoed by the Governor. After GSA and MCATS, the budget includes only slightly more than \$500 million for all of our other educational programs. This will mean that many very good programs will have to be substantially reduced or cut altogether.

Members of the Illinois State Board of Education will meet at 10:00 a.m. Tuesday in Springfield for a special meeting to determine which programs will have to be cut and by how much. This is not a pleasant scenario for any of us, but it is our unfortunate reality.

The Board already prepared for this by setting aside time during the June meeting to hear several hours of testimony from many of you. Dozens of advocates spoke on behalf of specific programs, providing the Board and agency staff with fresh perspectives on the impact of these programs. We know each of these programs is about people. They are not just numbers on pieces of paper. In many cases, these programs can be life changing for participants and that’s what makes all of this so difficult.

In the coming weeks, we will send program grantees communications, detailing the impact of the budget in each specific area. Again, until you hear further from your contact at the agency, I would urge you not to spend any Fiscal Year 2010 state funded program funds at this time.

Many difficult decisions will have to be made and I speak for the Board and agency staff when I say that we appreciate your passion, professionalism and understanding.

Thanks,

Chris

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Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- Request for Proposals (RFP) for Reading Recovery ® training and professional development– July 20
- PSAE corrections – July 21
- Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision), Part 25 (Certification) and New Part 425 (Voluntary Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Schools) Public comment period ends – July 27
- Qualified Zone Academy Bond allocation application due – July 27
- 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 2008-09 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
- TSR Salary Data – Aug.15
- Reading Improvement Block Grant Performance Report – Aug. 17
- Part 120 (Pupil Transportation Reimbursement), Part 180 (Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools), Part 252 (Driver Education), Part 401 (Special Education Facilities Under Section 14-7.02 of the School Code), and Part 675 (Providers of Supplemental Educational Services): Public comment period ends Aug. 20.
- Annual Superintendents' Conference in Springfield – Oct. 27-28

ARRA

Guidance for Reports on Use of ARRA Funds

The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently released guidance for carrying out the reporting requirements included in Section 1512 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The guidance requires sub-recipients that receive ARRA funds, such as districts, regional offices of education, joint agreements and other local education agencies, to obtain a D-U-N-S number and register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR).

Q: What is a D-U-N-S number and who provides it?

- A: Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) maintains a business database of information on businesses worldwide. D&B provides a D-U-N-S number which is a unique 9-digit identification number for each physical location of a business organization. D-U-N-S number assignment is free for all entities required to register with the U.S. federal government for contracts or grants.

Most school districts already have a D-U-N-S number. Please check with your business office to ensure that your district has this number. If the district does not have a D-U-N-S number, please register at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Q: What is a CCR?

- A: The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is the primary database for the federal government. CCR collects, validates, scores and disseminates data in support of agency acquisition missions. Since October 2003, it is federally mandated that any organization wishing to do business with the federal government under a Federal Acquisition Regulation-based contract must be registered with CCR before being awarded a contract. There is no cost to registrants. Additional information is available at <http://www.ccr.gov>.

Please check with your business office to determine whether your district is registered with a CCR, and if not, access the CCR link and register. Note: You must have a D-U-N-S number before registering with CCR.

If your district needs to obtain a D-U-N-S number and/or register with CCR, please allow sufficient time to complete the process.

Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program

The deadline for applying for a Qualified Zone Academy Bond allocation has been extended until **Monday, July 27**. Applications will be accepted until 4 p.m.

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 QZABs by the issuing 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; but they cannot be used for new school construction.

In order to designate bonds as QZABs, 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 percent of the face value of bonds to be designated as QZABs 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 work force, (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: <http://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 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., July 27. 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 Business Services, at 217-785-8779.

Funding and Disbursement Services

FY 2009 Transition Assistance

The FY 2009 Transition Assistance payment has been calculated and vouchered. The voucher, dated July 13, has been sent to the Office of the Comptroller for payment. A school district automatically qualifies for the payment if its FY 2009 payments were less than its FY 2008 payments in specified programs. For FY 2009, these specified programs include: General State Aid, State Free Lunch/Breakfast Program, Transportation, Special Education (excluding Orphanage), ADA Block, Bilingual Education and Fast Growth. Qualifying school districts and details of the FY 2009 calculations can be accessed at

http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/transition_assistance_calculations09.pdf.

Questions regarding the calculations can be directed to **Toni Waggoner or Jason Hall** at 217-782-0249.

Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

2008-09 Teacher Service Record – Revised Due Date

The Illinois State Board of Education has determined that it is necessary to move the close of the 2008-09 Teacher

Service Record (TSR) spring data collection period from July 15 to **midnight Aug. 15**. This change is being made to assist districts in being able to submit complete and accurate TSR data, including actual salaries. The revised deadline is firm since ISBE has immediate TSR data usage needs, and missing or incomplete data will affect state totals and averages.

For the spring data collection, you must do the following as soon as possible (**no later than Aug. 15**):

- Make necessary educator updates. Please note that special education teachers must have at least one teaching assignment beyond assignment 1.
- Indicate if a teacher is paid (in part or in full) with Title I funds.
- Enter the number of classes for each teaching assignment.
- Ensure that your superintendent approves the data in the “Teacher Service Record Data Wizard” and submits the data to ISBE.
- Submit actual 2008-09 salaries (i.e., creditable earnings). Please note that salaries can only be submitted through the “Submit/Update Teacher Salary” wizard.
- It is your responsibility to check the error log generated from the “Submit/Update Teacher Salary” wizard and correct any low and/or high salaries if necessary. If you have already submitted your TSR salary data and reported accurate actual salaries, you may ignore this message.

Questions about the 2008-09 TSR spring data collection may be directed to the ISBE Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at TSR@isbe.net or 217-782-3950.

Nutrition

U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Distribution Program and Illinois Commodity System Workshops

Nutrition Programs staff is providing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Distribution Program (FDP) and Illinois Commodity System (ICS) Trainings at seven sites in November and December 2009. The sessions focus on the Illinois Commodity System, placing annual commodity orders, diversions to processors, the Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable

Program and additional monthly processes to teach better management of USDA foods. Some workshops are scheduled from 12:30 to 4 p.m. with registration beginning at noon, and others are scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to noon with registration beginning at 8 a.m. Preregistration is required and space is limited.

12:30 p.m. workshops

- Nov. 3Galesburg
- Nov. 12Schaumburg
- Nov. 17 Marion
- Dec. 2 Springfield

8:30 a.m. workshops

- Nov. 4 Bloomington
- Nov. 13 Tinley Park
- Nov. 18Fairview Heights

For more information and to register, go to <http://webprod1.isbe.net/cnscalendar/asp/EventList.asp> and scroll down to the USDA Food Distribution Program and Illinois Commodity System.

Professional Development

Edgenics-Digital Journalism Program

With funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Edgenics Inc. is inviting schools in southern Illinois to participate in a digital journalism program. Participating schools will be in line to receive technology upgrades. The company’s program provides curriculum for students grades 9-12.

Schools in the coverage area of the Delta Regional Authority (<http://www.dra.gov>), which spans portions of eight states, are eligible. In Illinois, those counties include Alexander, Hamilton, Johnson, Pope, Saline, Williamson, Franklin, Hardin, Massac, Pulaski, Union, Gallatin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph and White. Fifty-five schools from the entire multi-state region will be selected.

Edgenics is preparing a grant application with a submission deadline of Aug. 14, which will include schools desiring to participate in the second phase of the project. Schools need to fill out a questionnaire by Friday, July 24, to show interest in the program. Visit http://www.edgenics.com/Digital_Journalism.html for the form and for more information.

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/090717.htm>.