Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This past week legislation was introduced that would dismiss members of the State Board of Education allowing for a new process of appointing members. Our Agency is opposed to this bill. The men and women who make up this board are among the hardest working people for education that you will ever meet. They put in countless hours as volunteers working for all students across Illinois and have literally hundreds of years of education experience among them. I’d like to take this opportunity to reintroduce these board members to you now.

Chairman Jesse Ruiz — Jesse is a lawyer by profession, and to be quite honest with you, I don’t know how he has time to earn a living, because this man puts in more hours for education than many people would put into their full-time jobs. He has served as a commissioner of the Chicago Board of Education, the Chicago Public Schools Desegregation Monitoring Commission, and also serves as the chief counsel to the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus. He is a past president of the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois and past chairman of the Hispanic Lawyers Scholarship Fund of Illinois.

Dr. Chris Ward — Chris is active in the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) and was recently named to the organization’s Board of Directors. He retired in 2004 as the Lockport Township High School District (THSD) #205 superintendent after having served in that position for more than 13 years. At Lockport THSD, he led a team of staff and community volunteers to pass two referenda to increase the education fund to renovate and expand the district’s education facilities. He used creative leadership and strategic planning skills in guiding the district into a systemic approach of professional development designed to improve curriculum and student learning in an environment in which the student population was increasing at an average of 100 students per year.

Dr. Vinni Hall — Vinni is also active with NASBE having served on the English Language Learners, Early Childhood Education, and Career Technical Education study groups. She has served in both instruction and administrative positions, and most recently, she served as a consultant to Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and the Illinois Center for Education and Rehabilitation. She is a former associate professor at Chicago State University and was director of the Inclusive Schools Project for CPS. She began her teaching career at CPS in 1967, where she taught Headstart, grades 2 through 12, adult education, special needs students, library science, music and drama.

Dr. Andrea Brown — Andrea served as regional superintendent for Alexander-Johnson-Massac-Pulaski-Union counties from 1994 to 2003. She also served at the district level working in Cairo Unit School District #1, first as a special education and elementary teacher and later as superintendent. She was also a special education supervisor for Johnson, Alexander, Massac and Pulaski (JAMP) Special Education Services. Her dedication to education is a lifetime commitment, as she began her career in 1957 in Olmsted. She has served on a number of statewide committees, including the Illinois Finance Study on

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upcoming Deadlines</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum &amp; Instruction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Superintendents’ Conference</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Assessment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Business &amp; Support Services</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules &amp; Waivers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator Preparation &amp; Recertification</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding &amp; Disbursements</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Grants &amp; Programs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Resources</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant &amp; Award Opportunities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Opportunities</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Opportunities</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the News</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dean Clark — Dean is a successful businessman, serving as president and chairman of the board for Graphic Chemical and Ink Company. He serves as a member of the NASBE Governmental Affairs Committee and also served on the NASBE 2005 Financial Literacy Study Group. Dean served on the Glen Ellyn School District #41 school board, and his broad knowledge of school finance and the business of education resulted in his appointment as a member of the Education Funding Advisory Board (EFAB) on which he served from June 2000 through December 2002. He received his bachelor's degree from Maryville College and is a graduate of the Defense Language Institute East Coast in Washington D.C.

Dr. David Fields — David serves on the NASBE Distinguished Service Award committee and has served in the past as president of the Illinois Large Urban District Association (LUDA) and spent a decade on the board of directors of the Illinois Association of School Administrators. David began his education career in 1960 as a social studies teacher and was superintendent of the Danville Community Consolidated School District #118 from 1991 to 2001, where he demonstrated his fiscal responsibility when faced with a $3.5 million deficit by developing a plan to reduce costs with minimal impact on students. David is extremely active in the Danville community, receiving numerous awards, including an African American Achiever Award from the NAACP, First Citizen Award from the American Business Club, and Volunteer of the Year Award from the Vermilion County Volunteers Association.

Brenda Holmes — Brenda is a commissioner for the Education Commission of the States. She began her career in education as a government and history teacher at Pawnee High School in central Illinois. Brenda left the classroom to pursue the policy side of education. Prior to joining the staff of the Illinois State Board of Education, she was a staff member for the Illinois Senate for 3 ½ years and worked directly with that chamber’s Elementary and Secondary Education Committee. From 1987-2000, Brenda served in a number of staffing capacities at the State Board, chief of which was the Director of Governmental Relations. She was a key contact for legislators, legislative staff, the Governor’s office, constitutional officers, educational organizations, and civic groups. In September of 2000, Brenda joined the Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance as a legislative consultant and lobbyist. From 2003-2004 she served as the Governor’s Deputy Chief of Staff for Education. In 2001, she was inducted into Illinois Issues’ Samuel K. Gove Illinois Legislative Internship Hall of Fame being recognized for her distinguished public service. Brenda also proudly holds an honorary membership in the Illinois FFA organization.

Joyce Karon — Joyce has served on several study groups sponsored by NASBE and brings to her service on the Board a wealth of experience in many aspects of education. As a library-media specialist in the Barrington schools, she designed and implemented library media curriculum, created staff development activities to integrate technology into classrooms, chaired local and state committees that focused on education and technology, served on state library task forces, and worked on numerous referenda. She is a former adjunct faculty member at Northern Illinois University and an independent consultant for school and public libraries. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa and her master’s degree from National-Louis University.

These talented, experienced individuals work extremely well together, pushing for increased funding, as well as pushing agency staff to deliver for students. I do not believe you could choose a better collective board of education in any state of the union and I am honored to serve them.

Thanks.

Chris
Upcoming Deadlines

- Reading Intervention Professional Development to Support Response to Intervention (RtI) RFP – Letter of Intent – March 12, 2008
- Illinois Textbook Loan Program Orders Due – March 15, 2008
- Reading Intervention Professional Development to Support Response to Intervention (RtI) RFP – Application – April 3, 2008
- Preschool for All Children Ages 3 to 5 Years RFP – April 7, 2008
- Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) RFP – April 14, 2008
- Deadline for proposed amendments to rules regarding Driver Education (23 Ill. Adm. Code 252) – April 21, 2008
- Even Start Family Literacy RFP – April 25, 2008
- Student Advisory Council applications for 2008-2009 – April 30, 2008
- Charter Planning Grant applications & Charter Implementation Grant applications – April 30, 2008
- Deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2008 – August 8, 2008

Curriculum & Instruction

RFP for Reading Intervention Professional Development to Support Response to Intervention (RtI)

The Illinois State Board of Education has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Reading Intervention Professional Development to Support Response to Intervention (RtI). School districts, charter schools, and public university laboratory schools approved by ISBE are eligible to apply. As a part of ISBE’s effort to encourage school districts to incorporate a RtI approach to teach reading, ISBE would like to provide training to teachers in the implementation of the “Anna Plan.” The “Anna Plan” is a small group reading intervention model that enables teachers to differentiate instruction.

A letter of intent is due Wednesday, March 12, and the application is due by Thursday, April 3. If you have any questions, please contact Sarah McCusker, Curriculum & Instruction, at 217-557-7323 or by e-mail at smccuske@isbe.net.

To access the RFP look under What’s New:

Special Opportunity for Elementary and Secondary Mathematics and Science Teachers

The Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships (IMSP) Program is expanding its format for helping K-12 teachers meet the endorsement requirements for their teaching assignments. Twenty-four partnerships are focusing on creating new or revitalizing existing graduate programs that will incorporate specific endorsement areas through graduate degree programs for cohorts of approximately 25 teachers. Not all of the 600 openings in these 24 cohorts are filled at this point.

Please review the details for these innovative programs, found at http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/Default.htm, under What’s New, for consideration at your classroom, building, or district level.

If you have further questions, contact Gwen Pollock, Curriculum & Instruction, at 217-557-7323 or by e-mail at gpollock@isbe.net.

Annual Superintendents’ Conference

Important Update: Annual Superintendents’ Conference Date Change

The dates for the Annual Superintendents’ Conference have been changed. The conference will be held on Thursday and Friday, October 23-24, 2008 – http://www.isbe.net/supts_conf/date_saver.pdf. Please make the change on your calendars.
The conference will still be held at the Crowne Plaza Springfield. Information will be posted on our website at www.isbe.net as it becomes available.

**Special Education**

**2006 Annual State Report on Special Education Performance**

The 2006 Annual State Report on Special Education Performance is now available in the “What’s New” section of the Special Education webpage at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/default.htm.

As in previous years, this report summarizes key performance data for students with disabilities that the Illinois State Board of Education regularly reports to the U.S. Department of Education. These performance areas include high school completion, student performance on statewide assessments and educational environments. Each of the three performance areas is introduced by providing the desired results as related to the Illinois State Performance Plan followed by overall observations. In addition, a background information section is provided to give an overall picture of students with disabilities in Illinois. The Illinois State Board of Education publishes this report annually to ensure that parents, teachers, administrators, legislators and the public remain informed of the current performance and progress in improving results for students with disabilities.

**Student Assessment**

**2008 Applications for 1% Cap Exceptions for AYP Purposes**

If more than one percent of students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11 are identified as significantly cognitively disabled, districts should prepare a request for an exception to the one percent cap. If the conditions for the exception are approved, then all proficient and advanced scores earned by students taking the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA) in reading and math will be counted as passing scores in making determinations for school, district and state AYP.

- **K-8 districts** may apply after ISAT testing is completed in those districts.

- **High school and K-12 districts** should apply after the PSAE makeup test dates (May 7-8, 2008).

Applications are due Friday, June 2. The form may be mailed or faxed to 217-782-6097, attention Pearl Schneider. For additional information please contact Pearl Schneider, Student Assessment, at 217-782-4823 or by e-mail at pschneid@isbe.net.


**School Business & Support Services**

**Rule Changes – Illinois Program Accounting for School Districts and Joint Agreements**

Rule Changes – (23 Illinois Administrative Code – Parts 100, 110, 125)

Please be advised that the new rules and regulations for the Illinois Program Accounting Manual (IPAM) will go into effect on July 1, 2008 (for FY09). Currently in effect are the Parts 110 and 125 Rules. Beginning **July 1, 2008;** these rules will no longer be in effect and Part 100 will become effective.

- To access revisions to IPAM, please go to: http://www.isbe.net/finance/htmls/rule_changes.htm.

- To view the IPAM rules, go to: http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/default.htm.

The Regional Superintendents have been very helpful in assisting ISBE with coordinating training sessions in each of the six areas of state. Please plan to attend one of the training sessions. Please inform your school district’s accounting software provider of these sessions and invite them as well.

To access locations, dates and times of the training session, please go to http://www.isbe.net/finance/htmls/rule_changes.htm.

If you have any further questions, please call the School Business Services Division at 217-785-8779.
Rules & Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Proposed amendments to the rules governing Driver Education (23 Ill. Adm. Code 252) were recently reviewed by the State Board of Education and are currently available for public comment. These amendments respond to P.A. 95-310, which eliminated the option to use practice driving methods other than behind-the-wheel instruction in a dual control car on public roadways. The proposal also defines “enrollment” for the purpose of receiving an instruction permit. The proposed amendments have been posted on the agency’s web site at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions you may have to rules@isbe.net.

Deadline for Public Comment: April 21, 2008

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that a certification rulemaking recently adopted by the State Board of Education is now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s web site at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to the relevant Part number. If you print the affected Sections, please be sure to include the table of contents, which changes each time a Part is revised.

Part 25 (Certification)

New provisions for the “master principal” designation; definition of “accredited institution”; acceptance of master’s or higher degree for certain school service personnel credentials; miscellaneous updating.


Effective Date: February 22, 2008

Educator Preparation & Recertification

Teacher Leader Endorsement Update

The Educator Preparation and Recertification Division is currently accepting applications from higher education institutions interested in offering the Teacher Leader endorsement.

Each institution’s “specially designed strand of Teacher Leadership courses” must include a range of graduate level courses addressing:

- subject-specific content knowledge,
- subject-specific content pedagogy,
- professional development in curriculum design, and
- subject-specific curriculum implementation.

An application form and instructions are available online at:

Master Principal Update

Applications are now available for entities interested in applying to be a provider of the Illinois Master Distinguished Principal Institute leading to a Master Principal Designation. Applications are available for download from the following website:
http://www.isbe.net/certification/default.htm

Nutrition

Westland Meat Company Recall

For clarification regarding the Westland Meat Company recall, Illinois received one truckload of the A608 beef subject to the recall. That truckload was received in the Lanter warehouse in January 2007 and subsequently delivered to approximately 200 Illinois schools in March 2007. If you were one of these 200 schools, you would have received an email notification regarding this United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) beef on January 31, 2008, from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Also, Illinois received five trucks of the A594 beef which was diverted to three processors: Advance Foods, Kings Command, and JTM Food Group. If you were one of those schools that diverted beef to these processors, you would have received an email notification regarding this USDA beef on February 6, 2008, from ISBE. If you diverted A594 beef to Pierre Foods, due to the comingling of meat within the processing plant, there are products that contain Westland Meat Company meat. A list of those Pierre products can be found at the website below.

At this point in time, these are the only known trucks and products of beef subject to the recall that Illinois received.
Print and Save Your April Bulletin Report

All schools are audited each year by their own independent auditors. Part of this audit includes the value of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) commodities allocated to your school. It is the responsibility of each school to provide the needed information for the auditors, including the information regarding USDA commodities and the amount received from the Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

The needed information for commodities is easy to locate, and we suggest this information be given to the school bookkeeper by the end of each school year. The information is available on the Monthly Commodity Bulletin for April, which is located on the Illinois Commodity System (ICS) website under Reports, then select Bulletin Report.

In the Contract Summary for School Year 2008 section, the value of commodities allocated for that year will be the total of the amounts shown as Total PAL (Planned Assistance Level) Deductions plus Total Bonus Deductions. If you received DoD fresh fruits and vegetables, you will need to include that value as well. You need to calculate this from your DoD invoices.

We ask that schools provide this information to auditors when requested.

New NET Training Program Provides Recipe for Success

How do you get students to select more whole grain foods, opt for low-fat milk options or choose more fruits and vegetables?

As you know, adding more healthful food items to your menus may not be enough. New food options require proper promotion to ensure student acceptance. A new workshop focusing on marketing healthful foods is being developed by the Illinois Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program and will be available this May. The workshop will help you positively promote nutrient-rich menu options and create a more eye appealing serving line. You will also discover classroom and home nutrition connections to reinforce these healthy food choices.

Youth Gardening Funds Available-Deadline: Varies Per Grant

The National Gardening Association and sponsoring companies are offering funding to schools with children ages 3-18 for youth gardening projects. Check out this grant opportunity at www.kidgardening.com/grants.asp.

Early Childhood

Even Start Family Literacy RFP Released

The Even Start Family Literacy FY 2009 Request for Proposals (RFP) has been released. School districts, Regional Offices of Education, approved public university laboratory schools, charter schools or area vocational centers, in partnership with a community-based organization, public agency, institution of higher education, or not-for-profit organization may submit a proposal. The purpose of Even Start Family Literacy grants is to help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving the educational opportunities of low-income families through the integration of early childhood education, adult literacy, parenting education, and interactive parent and child literacy activities into a unified family literacy program for parents and children, primarily from birth through age 7. All four of these components must be present in each Even Start program in order to meet the goals of the program, which are to:

- help parents improve their literacy or basic educational skills,
- help parents become full partners in educating their children, and
- assist children in reaching their full potential as learners.

A bidders’ conference will be held by conference call on Wednesday, March 12 at 2 p.m. See the RFP for details. Should the conditions of this RFP change as a result of the bidders’ conference, the State Board of Education will notify all recipients of the RFP of the changes.

The RFP is available online at http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/even_start_family_literacy.htm.
The RFP can also be obtained by contacting Cindy Zumwalt, Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835 or by e-mail at czumwalt@isbe.net.

**Preschool for All Children Ages 3 to 5 Years RFP Released**

The Preschool for All Children Ages 3 to 5 Years – 09 Request for Proposals (RFP) for new funds has been released. Applicants eligible to submit a proposal for this preschool education program serving 3 to 5 year olds include public school districts, community-based agencies, child care centers and others. Applicants other than public school districts must provide evidence of existing competencies to provide early childhood education programs. The Preschool for All Children program expands the number of young children able to receive high-quality preschool education by focusing not only on children who are determined to be at risk of academic failure but also by serving families of low to moderate income whose children are not considered to be at risk academically and other families that choose to participate. Continuing providers will find the application process for this year’s expansion very similar to the process of applying for expanded grants in years past.

The RFP is available online at http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/block_grant.htm. The RFP can also be obtained by contacting the Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835.

Preschool for All Children Bidders’ conferences will be held for this RFP. Attendance at a bidders’ conference is recommended but is not required. Registration prior to the bidders’ conference is not required. Security procedures require photo identification for entry at the location. A conference was held in Decatur on Monday, March 10.

**Chicago Heights**
- **Thursday, March 13**
- 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Prairie State College
- 202 South Halstead
- Auditorium
- Park in lot D

Should the conditions of this RFP change as a result of the bidders’ conference, the State Board of Education will notify all recipients of the RFP of the changes.

**Introduction to the Preschool for All Children Implementation Manual**

The Preschool for All Children Implementation Manual has been released. The manual is available online at http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/default.htm. The implementation manual is designed to serve as a guide for administrators, teachers and other staff of Illinois Preschool for All programs. Programs must adhere to the program guidelines as outlined in the implementation manual.

An introduction to the implementation manual is planned for:

**Thursday, March 13, 2008**
- 10 a.m. to Noon (before the PFA 3-5 Bidder’s Conference)
- Prairie State College
- 202 South Halstead
- Chicago Heights, IL
- Auditorium
- Park in lot D

Please review the Implementation Manual on the ISBE website, print the manual (242 pages), and bring a hard copy to the Implementation Manual training. If you have questions contact the Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835.

**Funding & Disbursements**

**Public School Calendar issues regarding Interrupted, Delayed Start, Emergency and Act of God days**

Recent severe weather has been a major cause for many districts throughout the state to alter the approved proposed calendar. The information below is being provided as a reminder for completing an Amended Public School Calendar via the IWAS system.

Section 18-12 of the School Code requires that an Amended Public School Calendar be completed and submitted for approval within 30 days of the occurrence for an Interrupted or Delayed Start Day. Approval is granted by the respective regional office of education as well as the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Section 10-19 of the School Code states, “The calendar for the school term and any changes must be submitted to and approved by the regional superintendent of schools...”
before the calendar or changes may take effect.” Although there is no specific deadline for submitting changes other than Interrupted or Delayed Start Days, the ISBE recommends that an Amended Public School Calendar be completed and submitted within 30 days prior to the occurrence of an anticipated calendar change (e.g. changing the date for a half-day school improvement, parent-teacher conference or teacher institute day) or within 30 days after an unanticipated calendar change (i.e. Emergency or Act of God Day). Timely completion of an Amended Public School Calendar ensures that the most up-to-date approved Public School Calendar is on file and reflected in the ISBE School Calendar Inquiry website that can be accessed by external constituents.

An Interrupted Day occurs when the district has provided a least one hour of instruction but must close due to adverse weather conditions or a condition beyond the control of the school district that poses a hazardous threat to the health and safety of pupils prior to providing the minimum hours of instruction required for a full-day of attendance (i.e. 300 minutes). When completing the Amended Public School Calendar, the calendar code for this day is XID and requires completion of the student attendance time for the interrupted day and a brief explanation describing the circumstances for the Interrupted Day. Interrupted days may be counted as a full-day of attendance for students enrolled full-time who were present for the full instruction provided for such day. Students enrolled part-time or who were not present for the full instruction time provided must have their attendance reported accordingly for the actual instructional time received (e.g. 1/6 for each 40 minute period attended).

An Emergency Day is used at the discretion of the district for a circumstance locally determined as an emergency. The calendar code for this day is ED and does not require student attendance or a brief explanation, but does require that a Proposed Emergency Day built into the Proposed Public School Calendar be converted to a Pupil Attendance Day.

An Act of God Day may only be used after all Emergency Days (ED) have been coded on the Amended Public School Calendar and proposed Emergency Days (XED) have been converted to Pupil Attendance Days (X). The calendar code for an Act of God Day is AOG and requires a brief explanation when completing the Amended Public School Calendar.

Guidelines for completing the public school calendar can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/ps_guidelines.pdf. If you have further questions regarding completion of the Amended Public School Calendar please contact your Regional Office of Education for assistance or you may contact Marj Beck, Funding & Disbursements Division, at 217-782-5256 or mbeck@isbe.net.

**Accountability**

**Release of the Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) Request for Proposal (RFP)**

The TAOEP RFP is available at www.isbe.net/accountability/html/.htm. Click FY 2009 Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) RFP. The deadline for submission of the RFP is Monday, April 14. If you have questions about the TAOEP RFP please contact Sally Veach, Accountability Division, at 217-782-2948 or sveach@isbe.net.

**Federal Grants & Programs**

**Local Gifted Education Program data**

The Illinois State Board of Education has developed a brief survey via IWAS to collect local gifted education program data. This requested data includes:

1. whether the district currently provides a gifted education program, and
2. If the district offers a gifted program, the numbers of students served, grade levels served, curriculum areas, and program delivery format(s).

Please complete this survey by **Friday, March 28.**

If you have questions regarding this gifted survey, please contact the Federal Grants and Programs Division at 217-524-4832. If you need technical assistance, please contact the helpdesk at 217-558-3600.

---

### Teacher Resources

#### Illinois Arts Education Week – March 10 – 16

Governor Blagojevich has proclaimed March 10-16 as *Arts Education Week* in Illinois. During this week many national and state professional associations will hold celebrations focused on students’ participation in the arts.

Through these celebrations, Illinois schools have an opportunity to focus on the value of the arts for all students to foster cross-cultural understanding, to recognize the state’s outstanding young artists, to focus on careers in the arts available to Illinois students, and to enhance public support for this import part of the curriculum.


The poster contest was sponsored by ISBE in coordination with the Illinois Alliance for Arts Education (IAAE) and the Office of Governor Blagojevich.

---

#### ‘Pi Day’ – Friday, March 14

Pi Across America is challenging students of all ages to celebrate one of math’s most intriguing and storied numbers. **Friday, March 14** is “Pi Day” (3:14 equals pi’s 3.14...).

Pi Across America’s website — [www.PiAcrossAmerica.org](http://www.PiAcrossAmerica.org) — has a wealth of pi information including: pi facts; pi bibliography; pi activities at schools across America; word problems and puzzles; a link to search any number string in the first 200 million digits of pi; and other information.

---

### Professional Development

#### Educational opportunities at Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum

The Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum in Chicago continues to offer a variety of educational offerings — from interactive demonstrations to graduate level coursework — that are designed to equip participants with the skills and desire to learn more about our Universe.

This spring, National-Louis University, Adler Planetarium, and Chicago Math and Science Initiative (CMSI) have partnered to offer "Astronomy for Teachers." The graduate level course will explore selected topics in astronomy and cosmology relevant to the K-8 science curriculum using a laboratory-based approach and can be applied to a science endorsement. The class will meet from 4:30 – 7:20 p.m. on Wednesdays from April 9 – June 18. Registration for the three semester hour class is $1,200. And up to $700 tuition reimbursement is available for Chicago Public School teachers through CMSI.

For more information, contact **Dr. Michael Mott**, Associate Director for Curriculum and Instruction, at 312-322-0514 or by e-mail at mmott@adlerplanetarium.org.

The Adler Education Department’s additional programs include professional development workshops for teachers and administrators, standards-based curricula and resources to use in the classroom, distance learning sessions that bring Adler experts to schools and libraries, and focused gallery guides and standards-based programs that enhance a field trip to the Adler. Information about these education programs can be found online at [http://www.adlerplanetarium.org/education/index.shtml](http://www.adlerplanetarium.org/education/index.shtml).

For questions, contact **Demi Brand**, Senior Educator, at 312-322-0510 or by e-mail at dbrand@adlerplanetarium.org.

---

#### Kids Count Symposium – Building Better Lives for Generations of Illinois Children

The Illinois Kids Count Symposium will feature numerous policy experts, advocates and academics who
will discuss how public policy has profoundly changed children's lives. Speakers will reflect on the well-being of children over the last 20 years and will look forward to how public policies will impact the lives of the next generation of kids.

The Symposium is from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Friday, March 28, at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, 230 S. LaSalle St. in Chicago.

The keynote speaker is Mike Lawrence, director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University. Other speakers include: Harriet Meyer, president of the Ounce of Prevention Fund; Sylvia Puente, director at the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame; Jesse Ruiz, chairman of the Illinois State Board of Education; and Maria Whelan, president of Action for Children.

More information is available online at [http://www.voices4kids.org/getinvolved/attendanevent.html](http://www.voices4kids.org/getinvolved/attendanevent.html). Registration information is available online at [http://action.voiceshub.org/ct/Ud3tCZp1ORqG/](http://action.voiceshub.org/ct/Ud3tCZp1ORqG/).

---

**Grant & Award Opportunities**

**American Stars of Teaching Award 2008**

The U.S. Department of Education’s (USDE) Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative is now accepting nominations for its 2008 American Stars of Teaching Award. Nominations for teachers across the United States, at all grade levels and disciplines, are being sought by the USDE to be honored this fall.

Anyone, including parents, students, colleagues, school administrators or others can nominate an exceptional teacher who they believe is making a difference in the lives of their students. If you know a teacher who is using innovative strategies in the classroom and improving student achievement, and who you believe has the qualities to be an American Star of Teaching go to [http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html) and nominate them today!

The deadline for submitting nominations is Tuesday, March 31.

**Outstanding Middle or High School Teacher**

Preserve America and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History are proud to announce the fifth annual History Teacher of the Year Award honoring outstanding teachers of American History across the country. To nominate a teacher send an e-mail to moses@gilderlehrman.org with the teacher’s name, school and a short paragraph describing why the teacher is exceptional.

Winners are selected from each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense schools and US Territories. Each winner receives $1,000.00 and a collection of history books and educational resources is donated to his or her school’s library. These state winners become finalists for the National History Teacher of the Year. This program is sponsored by Preserve America and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

Guidelines can be found on the Illinois State Board of Education’s website at [http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/Default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/Default.htm). For more information please visit: [www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/student8.html](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/student8.html). Contact Mike Hatfill, Curriculum & Instruction, at 217-557-7323 or by e-mail dhatfill@isbe.net for any additional questions.

All nominations are due by Monday, March 17. All teacher applications are due by Thursday, May 15. Mail to Illinois State Board of Education, Attention Mike Hatfill, Curriculum and Instruction, 100 North First Street, Springfield, IL 62777.

**ISLMA/LBSS Endowment Fund Grant**

The Illinois School Library Media Association/Library Book Selection Service (ISLMA/LBSS) Endowment Fund will issue its first set of annual grants in 2008. Public and private school libraries as well as public libraries registered in any of the children’s choice reading awards programs — the Monarch Award, the Rebecca Caudill Young Readers Book Award, and the Abraham Lincoln Illinois High School Book Award — are eligible to apply.

Grant recipients will be awarded one set of books for the 2009 reading campaign for the book award the library indicated on their application. Book set titles are determined by the committees in charge of the reading award programs. One copy of each title is in each set. Sets are 20 or 22 books depending on the award program selected.
Information about the grant is available at the ISLMA/LBSS Endowment Fund website at www.lbssfund.org. The application form is available on the website. All applications must be postmarked by Thursday, May 15.

Questions may be sent to info@lbssfund.org or by phone at 309-649-0916. Applicants must also be registered to participate in the children’s choice program for 2009 by May 15.

### Student Opportunities

#### 2008-2009 Student Advisory Council now accepting applications

The Illinois State Board of Education is currently seeking applications for the Student Advisory Council (SAC) to the Illinois State Board of Education for the 2008-2009 school year.

The students who comprise the Student Advisory Council are very diverse, as they come from different geographic locations, ethnic backgrounds, and types of schools. However, they possess similar qualities, which include a strong work ethic, ability to think “outside-the-box,” the willingness to set aside time from their busy schedules for SAC work and the skill of working well in groups. Members are invited to attend Board meetings and sessions of the General Assembly. As SAC members, students also may review and critique ISBE’s existing or proposed programs, policies and regulations, as well as inform Illinois students of SAC activities.

Eligibility to apply for the 2008-2009 SAC is limited to public high school students who will be either a sophomore, junior or senior during the 2008-2009 school year. Given the need to hear from students on some of the more complicated issues faced by our state, special consideration will be given to applicants from low-performing schools or districts.

An application is now available online at: [http://www.isbe.net/SAC/sac_application.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/SAC/sac_application.pdf). It must be returned to the State Board of Education by 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 30. The mailing address is:

Illinois State Board of Education  
Student Advisory Council  
S-202  
100 N. First St.  
Springfield, IL 62777

Activities of the Student Advisory Council in 2008-2009 are contingent upon final State budget allocation. For more information, contact Andrea S. Wingo at 217-782-6434 or by e-mail at awingo@isbe.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](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/2008/newsclips/080307.htm](http://www.isbe.net/news/2008/newsclips/080307.htm).