March 24, 2008

Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Many of you are enjoying or have just returned from a well-deserved spring break. It doesn’t seem possible that the end of the school year is only a few months away.

Last week U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced a program that will allow up to 10 states to pilot “differentiated accountability”. This method of measuring progress would not lessen the focus on all students reaching grade level in math and reading by 2014. However, Illinois’ participation in the pilot would allow us to target resources and interventions to those schools most in need of improvement and provide us with an opportunity to vary the interventions for those schools that face challenges meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) because of a particular subgroup of their student population.

I am awaiting additional details from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) so that we can make an informed decision as to whether this would best meet the needs of Illinois schools and students. If so, our application will be due to the federal government no later than May 2, 2008. Illinois would not have been eligible to apply for this type of flexibility had we not delivered our 2007 scores on time and made the necessary changes with regard to assessing our population of English Language Learners (ELLs) in 2008. I will be seeking input from the field as we research the appropriateness of this program.

At last week’s meeting in Springfield, the Board approved our plans for testing ELLs next year. We will continue to offer the accommodations for both the PSAE and ISAT, but we will be reaching out to teachers throughout the state to gauge the effectiveness of the accommodations and listen to suggestions for improvements that we can make for next year. We will translate the 2009 PSAE math and science portions into Spanish. We will also linguistically modify the math and science portions of the ISAT, making these questions “read” similar to the items that were on the IMAGE test. In addition, we will translate and/or “transadapt” into Spanish the short answer and extended response items on the ISAT math and allow for translation of students’ native language responses for math and science short answer and extended response.

Making these changes will require us to work with the USDE to ensure that our modifications will pass validity checks, and we will need to work with the field to build capacity in item development, review and content areas.

The Board requested a five-year assessment plan for ELLs be presented at its April 16-17 meeting, as well as a cost and resource proposal for translating and/or “transadapting” the science and math tests into Spanish. Any variations of the ISAT or PSAE would still require approval by USDE.

I want to thank you all for working with us on this issue and look forward to your continued cooperation in the future as the No Child Left Behind Act continues to morph, requiring additional adaptations from the field.
Thanks and have a great week.

Chris

Upcoming Deadlines

- 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
- Migrant Education Program Summer 2008 Application – April 15, 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
- Prevention Initiative Birth to Age 3 Years RFP – May 6, 2008
- Deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2008 – August 8, 2008

Student Assessment

PSAE Testing Information

For 2008, the initial test dates are April 23-24 with make up test dates of May 7-8. This results in PSAE scores being available for the Assessment Correction Period in August, when most schools are either closed or may just be opening for the new school year. It also delays any AYP calculations and production of the school report cards until early fall. For 2009, we are considering moving the test administration dates to March 10-11. Make-up dates would be March 24-25, 2009. Not only would this assist with getting report cards out earlier, but it would also allow us more opportunity to take advantage of Michigan’s activities in relation to translating the ACT. If you have any concerns about moving these dates, please email psae@isbe.net.

PSAE Modifications

In order to comply with the recommendations of the third peer review, it is necessary to modify the scoring methodology of the PSAE beginning with the April, 2008 test administration. The components of the PSAE, including the ACT, WorkKeys, and state specific Science questions will remain exactly the same. There will be no change in the number of test items or the cut scores used to determine individual student progress toward meeting state standards.

Since 2001, when we first administered the PSAE, some items on the test counted more than others when calculating a PSAE student score. In an effort to better align the test scores to the Illinois Assessment Framework for Math, Reading and Science, the federal peer review team recommended that we modify the calculation process so that every item tested has equal weight when figuring an individual student’s PSAE score.

For example, for Math, the normalized score on the 60-item ACT Math test and the normalized score on the 30-item WorkKeys Applied Math test, each counted for half of the overall score, giving greater weight to the WorkKeys items.

Starting with the 2008 test, each of the 90 items will contribute equally to the overall score. A psychometric process was used to equate the 2007 results from the old methodology to the new methodology. This minimizes the impact on the percentage of students meeting standards.

ISAT Assessment Correction Window for Demographic Data is now open
The ISAT Assessment Correction window is now open for correcting all demographic data. Please check your SIS data to ensure completeness and accuracy. To identify data that needs to be added or corrected, utilize the SIS Assessment Correction Summary and Detail reports to review the students in your district. Missing information must be added through the Assessment Correction Batch or On-Line process. Failure to populate this information will result in errors displayed next to the student that has missing information on the Assessment Correction Detail Report. Please double check all data for accuracy. We encourage you to review and correct the demographic data now, prior to receiving the individual student scores.

**Illinois Response to Intervention (RtI)**

**Illinois Response to Intervention (RtI) District Self-Assessment Template**

With the development of the State RtI plan, the next step for the stakeholder group was to develop a district self-assessment template. The stakeholder group reviewed self-assessment tools from multiple technical assistance projects, such as ASPIRE, PBIS, and CHOICES. Additionally, the group reviewed RtI self-assessment tools from several different states.

The purpose of this self-assessment template is to assist districts in determining their initial readiness toward implementation of RtI to meet the learning needs of ALL students. This template will assist districts in gathering baseline information regarding current resources and practices addressing scientific research-based instruction, progress monitoring, ongoing assessment and levels of intervention and problem-solving. The template will be available later this week at [http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm).

The ISBE will provide training the week of April 7, 2008. We will offer the training by teleconference with presentation materials available online for viewing and printing. Further information will be provided via this publication.

**Rules & Waivers**

**Notice of Emergency Rulemaking**

Please be advised that a set of emergency amendments 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](http://www.isbe.net/rules); choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to the separate posting below Part 401. [Note that a public comment period will soon occur on the same text as a regular proposed rulemaking.]

**Part 401 (Special Education Facilities Under Section 14-7.02 of the School Code)**

Prohibits the use of aversive behavioral intervention techniques that rely on inflicting pain as an intentional method of control; provides for immediate nonapproval of a program where this is found to occur.

**Affected Sections:** 401.10, 401.30, and 401.210

**Effective Date:** March 21, 2008, for a maximum of 150 days

**Notice of Completed Rulemaking**

Please be advised that a rulemaking recently adopted by the State Board of Education is now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s website at [www.isbe.net/rules](http://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 675 (Providers of Supplemental Educational Services)**

Strengthens code of ethics; qualifications of tutors; criminal background checks; annual approval process; approval of notification to parents; reports of agreed-upon procedures.

**Affected Sections:** 675.30, 675.40, 675.50, 675.60, 675.65, 675.70, 675.150, 675.175, 675.230, and 675.240

**Nutrition**

**Proposed Rules Regulating Food Sales in Elementary and Middle School — Comment Period**

During the March 2008 State Board of Education Meeting, the Board voted to release for public comment rules that govern the sale of food and beverages in participating schools with grades 8 and below. The proposed rules regulating the sale of foods outside of the federal food programs will be published in the Illinois Register soon. The public comment period will run for 45
calendar days. Comments about the proposed amendments can be submitted by e-mail to rules@isbe.com or by regular mail to Sally Vogl, Agency Rules Coordinator, 100 North First Street, S-493, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001. Please check the Illinois State Board of Education’s (ISBE’s) website at http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/default.htm for further information.

Illinois School Wellness – From A to Z Conference

The Illinois School Wellness – From A to Z Conference will be held on Tuesday, May 6 at the Decatur Conference Center in Decatur.

This exciting one-day workshop is designed to showcase and highlight successful Illinois wellness policy implementation. Physical education expert Dr. Robert Pangrazi will deliver the morning keynote, followed by a choice of breakout sessions on wellness winning ways, 24/7 curriculum, and successful nutrition and foodservice practices. Browse the exhibit room for free resources, ideas, and networking.

Early bird registration is available through Tuesday, April 15, at $25 or after Tuesday, April 15, at $35. The registration fee includes lunch, refreshments, and materials.

More information, including registration materials can be found online at http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/StateSpecificInfo.php?state=IL.

Federal Grants & Programs

Training for FY 09 NCLB Application (Title I, II IV and V grants)

Training for all grant coordinators for the completion of the FY 09 NCLB Application (Title I, II IV and V grants) will be conducted via teleconference from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22, and repeated from 9 – 11 a.m. on Tuesday, April 29.

A Power Point presentation along with telephone and confirmation numbers can be found online at http://www.isbe.net/htmls/egrants_workshop.htm.

This training will be more effective if you have access to the Power Point presentation during the training. Each district will be able to make as many copies of the presentation as necessary to share with colleagues.

For questions, contact Amy Eskew, Federal Grants & Programs, at 217-524-4832 or by e-mail at aeskw@isbe.net.

Understanding and Selecting Evidence-based Programs for Your 2008-2009 – Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Application

SDFSCA Workshop Purpose & Target Audience: To provide Safe and Drug Free Schools’ coordinators and administrators with core strategies, practices and frameworks necessary for implementing quality evidence-based programs.

Selecting and implementing quality prevention programs that meet the needs of your school is critical for effectiveness. However, locating and utilizing data to develop an effective Safe and Drug Free Schools’ application can be challenging. This workshop is designed to help you utilize data and the Principles of Effectiveness to implement evidence-based prevention programs. Workshop topics will include locating existing and meaningful data, developing reasonable objectives and tailoring research-grounded programs to your school’s needs.

Workshop Time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Dates/Locations:

- **Tuesday, April 8**
  South Cook Intermediate Service Center (SCISC4)
  253 W. Joe Orr Road
  Chicago Heights, IL 60411
  708-754-6600

- **Thursday, April 17**
  Department of Human Services
  333 Potomac Blvd
  Suite F, PO Box 1607
  Mt. Vernon, IL 62864-0032
  618-242-8460

- **Thursday, May 15**
  University of Illinois Extension
  Champaign County
  801 N. Country Fair Drive, Suite D
  217-333-7672
Additional information can be found online at www.safeschoolsill.net. For questions, contact Albert Holmes, Federal Grants and Programs at 312-814-3618 or by e-mail at aholmes@isbe.net.

21st Century Community Learning Centers Spring Workshop Planned

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Statewide Spring Workshop, “Growing Strong Programs,” will be held on Tuesday, April 8, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Select Convention Center, 18501 S. Harlem Ave, Tinley Park, Ill.

This is a mandatory, day-long meeting for all Illinois grantees, particularly Project Directors and Site Coordinators. Registration is free and can be found online at http://www2.learningpot.org/21stcclc. Check in on the day of the meeting begins at 8 a.m., with the meeting commencing at 8:30 a.m. and concluding at 3 p.m.

Highlights of the day will include keynote presentations by the Illinois Teacher of the Year, Ruth Meissen, and USDE 21st CCLC Team Leader, Shawn Susan Stelow. Grantee-led workshops on varied topics related to quality programming will provide opportunities for networking and learning from one another. Statewide updates will include information by the statewide evaluator to assist grantees with completing the 21st CCLC Continuation Application for FY09 Funding.

For additional information about the meeting, please contact Gail Meisner, Federal Grants and Program Division at at 217-524-4832 or by e-mail at gmeisner@isbe.net.

Funding & Disbursements

Have You Checked The New Census Estimates Affecting Your FY09 Funding?

The U.S. Census Bureau has released the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for income year 2005. The estimates will likely be used to calculate FY09 Title I allocations as well as other funding sources for your district.

The SAIPE program produces estimates of median household income and poverty for states, counties and school districts. These estimates are based on statistical models that use decennial census data, household survey data, administrative records data and population estimates. Income year 2005, which drives the funding for Fiscal Year 2009, is the first year SAIPE has used a new survey, the American Community Survey, to fill in the gaps between each 10-year census.

The 2005 PRELIMINARY Poverty Data by Local Education Agency (LEA) as compared to 2004 Final Poverty Data can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/poverty_comparison08-09.pdf. The 2004 Final Poverty Data was used to determine your LEA’s Title I eligibility and funding for FY08, and likewise, the 2005 PRELIMINARY data will likely determine potential eligibility and funding for FY09. 2004 Final data includes foster pupils. Those pupils have yet to be included in the 2005 PRELIMINARY data – please note that this inclusion may change your eligibility status.

When reviewing your LEA’s data, please be aware of the following parameters which determine eligibility for Title I. An LEA must have at least 10 pupils deemed to be in poverty (by SAIPE guidelines) and a poverty percentage of at least 2% to be eligible for Basic Title I funding. If a district has at least 10 pupils deemed to be in poverty, and a poverty percentage of at least 5%, the LEA is eligible for two additional funding streams; Targeted and Education Finance Incentive Grant (EFIG). When a district has at least 10 pupils deemed to be in poverty and a poverty percentage greater than 15%, or at least 6,500 in poverty, then that LEA is eligible for a fourth funding stream; Concentration funding.

The following link to the Census Bureau, www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/, provides an explanation of various aspects of the SAIPE count including information on challenge procedures for estimates. It is insightful to compare the current year poverty estimate to prior year estimates to gauge the fluctuation of poverty, which in turn, affects funding. If you choose to question or challenge the Census Bureau data, the challenge period ends on April 7, 2008.

Please be aware that the Illinois State Board of Education neither controls nor generates the data. State Superintendent Koch sent a formal letter of appeal to the United States Census Bureau in March, but it was determined that no changes will be made to the Illinois data.


As a reminder, a couple of the new laws require a district policy to be in place to ensure compliance.

Public Act 95-0260, effective August 17, 2007, requires each school district and contractor in Illinois to have a policy in place by January 1, 2008, that requires the driver to shut off the ignition, activate the interior lights and walk to the rear of the bus to check for children still on board. If an electronic device is used, that device must activate the interior lights when the ignition is shut off.

**PROPOSED Policy:**

As required by Public Act 95-0260, the School Bus Driver shall at the end of each run, turn off the ignition of the vehicle, activate the interior lights and walk to the rear of the bus to check for children still on board as well as articles left behind.

Public Act 95-0176, effective January 1, 2008, requires each school bus operated in Illinois to display a telephone number on the rear of the bus to be used to report erratic driving. Requires school districts and contractors to have a policy in place to investigate reports of erratic driving and to report what action was taken to the complainant.

A white decal with black one inch letters and numbers displaying, "TO REPORT ERRATIC DRIVING (AREA CODE-SCHOOL BUS OWNER’S TELEPHONE NUMBER)" must be displayed on the rear of the bus. The decal shall be located on the rear window glazing below the seat back or on the bus body below the window line. The decal cannot be located on any emergency door glazing or any emergency window glazing. The decal must be visible to the motoring public from the rear of the bus and cannot obstruct any required lettering or numbers. Magnetic signs are not acceptable.

It is recommended that the district have a dedicated phone line and require the complainant to provide their name, phone number, address, and location of incident. A post card can be mailed to the complainant to report what action was taken. A form that may be used to record reports of erratic driving can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/erratic_callin_form.pdf.

**PROPOSED Policy:**

As required by Public Act 95-0176, the district will display signage located in accordance with the law stating “TO REPORT ERRATIC DRIVING (DESIGNATED PHONE NUMBER TO CONTACT)”. The District will investigate the reports and report back the complainant.

School District Transportation - Charter Coach Requirements

Please be advised that all school districts that contract with a charter coach transportation company to transport students to and from an event or field trip should require the following information from the charter coach company at minimum:

- Date of Event or Field Trip
- Proof of Insurance
- Full Name of Charter Coach Driver(s) Assigned to Drive for the School District
- Driver’s License Number Including State of Issue
- Illinois File Number for Out-of-State Drivers

This information will ensure compliance by the charter coach company and avoid potential liability issues with the school district. If the school district does not have a form in place, it is suggested that you use the Charter Coach Requirement Form which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/charter_requirements.pdf.

You are encouraged to access the following statutes and administrative rules to provide further detail on this topic:

- 625 ILCS 5/6-104 - Classification of Driver - Special Restrictions
- 625 ILCS 5/6-508 - Commercial Driver's License (CDL) - qualification standards
- 92 Il Adm. Code Section 1030.81 - Endorsements
Early Childhood

**FY 09 Prevention Initiative Birth to Age 3 Years RFP Released**

The Prevention Initiative Birth to Age 3 Years: 09 Request for Proposals (RFP) for new funds has been released. This RFP is for Prevention Initiative programs offering coordinated services to at risk children and their families. Public school districts, university laboratory schools approved by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), charter schools, area vocational centers, and other entities are eligible to submit a proposal. Applicants other than public school districts must provide evidence of existing competencies to provide early childhood education programs.

The RFP is available online at [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/block_grant.htm](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.

Prevention Initiative Bidders’ conferences will be held for this RFP. Attendance at a bidders’ conference is recommended but is not required. Security procedures require a photo identification for entry at each location.

There is a form on the Early Childhood website for submitting questions prior to the Bidders’ Conference entitled Submit Questions Regarding the PI RFP by April 2, 2008. Questions that are submitted will be answered during the Bidders’ Conferences.

**Springfield**
IEA - Professional Development Center
3440 Liberty Drive
Tuesday, April 8, 2008
9 a.m. to Noon

**Chicago**
State of Illinois Building (Bilandic Building)
160 North LaSalle (Across from James R. Thompson Center)
Thursday, April 10, 2008
9 a.m. to Noon
5th Floor, Room C-500

If you would like to attend, please respond to Yaya Madrigal by e-mail at ymadrigal@ounceofprevention.org and indicate which location you will attend.

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.

**Prevention Initiative Pre-Bidders’ Conference**

An overview of Prevention Initiative (PI) research-based program models will be provided at a pre-bidders’ conference session scheduled prior to each of the Prevention Initiative Bidders’ Conferences. This session will provide an opportunity for both Program Directors of existing PI Programs, and those wishing to apply for new funding to get important information about Parents As Teachers, Healthy Families America, Baby Talk and Early Head Start/Center-Based models. A flyer with details is available on the Early Childhood Block grant website at [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/block_grant.htm](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/block_grant.htm).

**Additional Resources for Preschool for All RFP Available**

The Preschool for All Children Ages 3 to 5 Years – 09 Request for Proposals (RFP) for new funds was released on Tuesday, February 26. The RFP is available online at [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/preschool/default.htm). The RFP can also be obtained by contacting the Early Childhood Division at 217-524-4835. The following resources have been added to the website.

- FY 09 Preschool RFP Review Rubric
Resource Document for Responding to Statement of Need in FY 09 Preschool RFP

Two PowerPoint Presentations from the Bidders’ Conferences

PFA Bidders’ Conference

DCFS Licensing Information

Data Analysis & Progress Reporting

Teacher Service Record

The 2007-2008 Teacher Service Record (TSR) opened Friday, March 14, for salary submission. The deadline for submitting salaries is Tuesday, July 15. The deadline for adding teachers and/or changing teaching assignments in the 2007-2008 TSR is the close of business Tuesday, April 1.

Any questions about the 2007-2008 TSR salary submission can be directed to the Illinois State Board of Education, Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division, at 217-782–3950.

Special Education

State Board seeks public comment on FFY 2008 IDEA Part B Application

The Illinois State Board of Education, Division of Special Education and Support Services has completed the grant application under Part B of IDEA as amended in 2004. Upon receipt and approval of the required assurances, certifications, and information in the Application, the State is eligible to receive Part B funds.

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) requires that States must publish their Part B Application for at least 60 days and accept public comment for at least 30 days. The Illinois State Board of Education’s State Plan may be reviewed by visiting the web site at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/part_b_application.pdf through Friday, May 16. A copy of the plan and comment form may also be reviewed at the Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777 in the Information Center, 1 South.

The plan includes a checklist of assurances that Illinois has policies and procedures in effect to comply with the requirements of the December 2004 amendments to IDEA. Where Illinois is not in compliance with the IDEA amendments of 2004, a date is given by which Illinois assures that policies and procedures will be in effect. The plan for expenditure of state-level IDEA funds by category is also a component of the state plan.

Written comments regarding the State’s plan will be accepted Tuesday, April 1 through Wednesday, April 30, 2008. To submit a written comment, you may utilize the comment form available at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/word/part_b_comment.doc. Public comment may be submitted either by e-mail PartBapplication@isbe.net or by standard mail addressed to:

Ms. Elizabeth Hanselman
Assistant Superintendent
Division of Special Education and Support Services
100 North First Street – N-243
Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001

Professional Development

Third Annual High School Challenge Conference

The Coalition for Illinois High Schools presents the Third Annual High School Challenge Conference: Leadership and Learning: Connecting the Dots – Monday, June 16 and Tuesday, June 17 at the Doubletree Hotel in Bloomington.

This conference is designed for all those involved with and interested in the work of Illinois high schools including: superintendents, school administrators, teachers, school board members, curriculum directors, special education and ELL directors, ROE/ISC/RESPRO staff, business leaders and university personnel. You are especially encouraged to bring a district team.

Conference participants will leave the conference with:

- Practical strategies that have improved student performance in Illinois high schools;
- Tools that can be used for data analysis and decision making;
- Research-based strategies that support student learning;
- Information about practical follow-up support for Illinois high schools.

More information, including registration materials and fees, can be found online at http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/pdf/hsc_leadership_conf_08.pdf. For questions, call the Illinois Principals’
**Association** at 217-391-0848 or e-mail the IPA at sos@ilprincipals.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/).

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**Student Opportunities**

**Slogan contest for 2008 Illinois State Fair**

The theme for the 2008 Illinois State Fair will be "A Family Tradition," and feature a contest inspired by the well-known 1950s advertising campaign for Burma Shave. The Illinois State Fair is scheduled for August 8-17, 2008.

As part of the 2008 State Fair, the contest is modeled after Burma Shave’s advertising campaign and encourages children statewide to submit five-line rhymes that reflect the theme. Winners will be featured on State Fair promotional materials and signs.

Entries are being accepted from the general public, but the committee choosing the winners will set aside several series of sign slogans submitted by children in grades K-8. Each entry must consist of five lines of text with up to four words maximum on each line. A sixth line – "Illinois State Fair August 8-17" – will be added to the end of each rhyme.

Entries will be accepted by mail and online through **Friday, April 11**. The winners will be announced at an event this spring, the same time the Grandstand line-up for this year’s fair will be unveiled.

Those seeking examples of Burma Shave signs can Google search “Burma Shave slogan” or visit [http://www.fiftiesweb.com/burma1.htm](http://www.fiftiesweb.com/burma1.htm). Applications and instructions are available on our website at [www.illinoisstatefair.info](http://www.illinoisstatefair.info).

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**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
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.

**CDC Student Poster Contest – Fight the Bite**

Fifth- and sixth-grade students are encouraged to enter the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s *Fight the Bite* poster contest.

Mosquito bites can be annoying, but more importantly can cause serious diseases. In the U.S., the West Nile Virus is the most common disease from mosquitoes. People who get infected with West Nile virus can get very sick, with anything from feeling like they have the flu to the virus affecting their brain. Although rare, the disease can be fatal, particularly for older people. Tick bites can also cause big health problems with the bacteria or viruses that they may carry. Lyme disease is the most common disease caused by ticks in the United States.

Learn how to fight the bite and more about why it’s important, and enter a poster in the contest. Two winners will be picked from each state (one 5th grader and one in 6th) to receive a $50 bond. Two Grand Prize winners (one from each grade) will get a $1,000 bond and an invitation to an awards ceremony in Atlanta this spring (travel expenses included).

All entries must be postmarked by **Friday, April 4**. More information, including contest rules, can be found online at [http://www.cdc.gov/Features/FightTheBiteContest/](http://www.cdc.gov/Features/FightTheBiteContest/).

**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**