It’s officially fall now and that means the release of report cards for schools, districts and the state. I’m getting a lot of questions about the report cards and assessments, so I wanted to take a few moments to try and provide some answers for you.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will not release school and district report cards until the morning of October 31. At that time, the report cards will be posted on our website. In the meantime, we will make report card information available to members of the media at a secure website location, which they will be able to access this week. Media, however, are barred from reporting on any of the information until the morning of October 31.

Schools and districts must make their report card information available to the public no later than October 31. You may release your information anytime between now and then. Many school districts choose to provide their boards with a report on scores and then release the results to the public and media after reporting to their boards.

As many of you know, this was the first year that the majority of our English language learners (ELLs) have taken the same test as their English-speaking peers. This change allowed our Illinois Assessment System to be approved by the federal government. On statewide results, the impact of this change was minimal. The most noticeable difference in scores from the previous year was in the lower grade levels where there is a greater concentration of ELLs. On the local level, schools and districts that have a significant concentration of ELLs may have seen a greater impact. ISBE is committed to providing high-quality assessments for all of its students, including ELLs. A five-year plan has been developed addressing ELL assessment, a summary of which may be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/implementation_schedule.pdf.

Two weeks ago State Board members participated in a work study session on assessment. You may find a PowerPoint of the highly informational session of interest, as it touches on a number of topics, including reasons for re-equating the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). The PowerPoint can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/board/meetings/sept8/work_study_presentaton.pdf.

A question that comes up every year concerns the scoring of the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). Some people mistakenly believe that the individual ACT and WorkKeys scores are used to compute the PSAE score that a student receives. ACT is a college readiness assessment; WorkKeys a workplace readiness assessment. Items from these two tests, taken together with the items developed for the PSAE, provide an adequate representation of the Illinois Learning Standards. In other words, the PSAE only borrows the items of the ACT and WorkKeys tests – not the student’s final scores on each – to determine results. Instead, the PSAE has its own scoring. The numbers of students that meet
standards depend only on the cuts set by Illinois teachers and educators. There is no limit on the percentage of students that can meet standards. PSAE scores should be reviewed from that perspective.

Currently, we’re reviewing our learning standards as part of the Board’s decision to join the American Diploma Project (ADP). ADP is an initiative of Achieve, Inc., a non-profit organization created in 1996 by the nation’s governors and leaders in the business community. It currently has 33 states as members.

States that join ADP agree to develop high school learning standards, using national benchmarks as a guide, designed to prepare students for success. Illinois will be going through this process with California and Florida, and this group will be the first to use international models in reviewing and revising state standards.

The process is expected to take about 18 to 24 months and will include working groups of Illinois secondary educators, postsecondary educators and members of the business community. As we revise the high school learning standards, we also will be re-working the elementary standards so that they better align with high school and postsecondary expectations. When this work is complete, we then will have to study how well the ISAT and PSAE reflect these new standards.

The ultimate goal is to have coherence among our standards, what is taught, what is assessed, and what is required upon entry into higher education. We will likely see fewer, clearer and higher Illinois Learning Standards than currently are being used.

I am often told that not all students will be successful in higher education and, in particular, I am asked about students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are a diverse group and the majority of them can achieve at high levels. Certain students with more severe disabilities may not be able to achieve the expectations the federal government has set for all students. It is important to identify who these students are in your district and ask how you are preparing these students to be successful after high school. It is important to articulate your expectations for these students and communicate these expectations with parents and students.

On a final note, the Illinois General Assembly has proclaimed October 1 as Methamphetamine Awareness Day in Illinois. I would urge you to work with your staff to include appropriate messages about this deadly drug in an age-appropriate manner on this date.

Have a great week.

Chris

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**Upcoming Dates & Deadlines**

- **PSAE AYP Appeals** – October 6
- **Annual Superintendents’ Conference online registration** – October 10
- **Annual Financial Reports** – October 15
- **Teacher Salary Study form on IWAS** – October 15
- **Fall Housing enrollment counts from SIS** – October 15
- **Capital Needs Assessment Survey** – October 17
- **Thomas Lay Burroughs award nominations** – October 17
- **NCLB Performance Report submitted in IWAS** – October 20
- **Deadline for Public Comment on Proposed New Part 75 (Incentive Grants for Agricultural Science Teacher Education)** – October 20
- **Annual Superintendents’ Conference** – October 23 – 24
- **SGSA Expenditure Plans due in IWAS** – October 30
Funding & Disbursements

**Final FY 2009 Allocations Available for NCLB Consolidated Application**

Final FY 09 Title I, IIA, IID, and IV allocations for all eligible local education agencies are complete and summarized at: [http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/nclb_final_alloc09.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/nclb_final_alloc09.pdf).

The allocations are also available on the NCLB Consolidated Grant Application allotment page for each local education agency (LEA).

Final FY 09 Title I allocations for all LEAs are complete and can be accessed at: [http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/title_I_final_alloc09.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/title_I_final_alloc09.pdf).

Title I funding is based upon LEA eligibility for the four statutory formulas—Basic, Concentration, Targeted and Education Finance Incentive Grants; and upon a variable hold harmless. These figures replace the earlier projected allocations.

If you have already received ISBE approval for your NCLB Consolidated Application, you can amend your application for the changes in Title I, IIA and IID funds. Carryover funds may also be available to your district if your final FY08 expenditure reports have been submitted. If you have not applied yet, or your application is still within the approval process at the district level, you may apply for your additional funds.

Questions regarding the Title I, IIA, IV and V (only carryover funds available) programs should be directed to staff in the Grants and Programs Division at 217-524-4832.

For questions about the Title IID Technology - Enhancing Education Through Technology formula grant, contact Kathy Barnhart at 217-557-7323 or kbarnhar@isbe.net.

Grants & Programs

**NCLB Performance Report Available**

The NCLB Performance Report for FY08 will be available for data entry in the IWAS system on **Wednesday, October 1**. Each school district that received funds from the NCLB Consolidated Application (Titles I, II, IV and V) must complete this report and submit it via IWAS. The deadline for completing and submitting the report is **Monday, October 20**.

This report is extremely important as it contains the data questions that ISBE must report to the U.S. Department of Education. Please make this a top priority. It is part of the required reporting that districts agree to through the annual assurance process submitted electronically for receiving federal funds.

For questions, e-mail Gail Buoy at gbuoy@isbe.net or call the Grants and Programs Division at 217-524-4832.

**IIRC E-Plans Section Available**

School districts can now log into the e-Plans section of the Illinois Interactive Report Card (IIRC) website to enter this year’s e-Plans data. Although the report card information is embargoed to the general public until **Friday, October 31**, ISBE has made the e-Plans site available to districts so they can enter their information earlier than in past years.

Reminder: the IIRC site is password protected and only accessible to schools or districts via their password.

For questions on accessing the e-Plans on the IIRC, contact Grants & Programs staff at 217-524-4832.

Special Education

**2007-2008 District Special Education Profiles**
In a continuing effort to disseminate data to local education agencies and the public, the State Board of Education will again post District Special Education Profiles on its website. These Profiles allow readers to access all special education performance information in one location. This includes a district's progress toward improving results on critical performance indicators in student performance, educational environment and school completion.

While ISBE anticipates final release of the 2007-2008 District Special Education Profiles next spring, preliminary Profiles are now available for district superintendents to review through the IWAS District Admin user login name at https://sec1.isbe.net/iwas/. The Profiles system can be found under the Reporting category on the IWAS "System Listing" page.

The preliminary 2007-2008 Profiles provide district administrators with verified data regarding the student demographics and educational environment for students with IEPs. Data regarding 2008 assessment, high school completion and the Illinois State Performance Plan are still being analyzed. These data will be included in the 2007-2008 Profiles before they are released publicly. As in prior years, district administrators will be given a two-week notice before the finalized 2007-2008 District Special Education Profiles are released to the public this spring.

Questions regarding the District Special Education Profiles may be directed to Scott Beever or Gwen Williams at 217-782-5589.

**Educator & School Development**

**New Division Created**

In July, ISBE combined the Educator Preparation and Recertification Division with the Accountability Division to form Educator and School Development.

This new division seeks to ensure educator and school compliance with all relevant Illinois laws, rules and regulations. Specific functions of the Division include: granting recognition to public, nonpublic and charter schools; coordinating public school compliance with regional offices of education; granting certificates of approval to private business and vocational schools; implementing and monitoring the professional development and growth of Illinois teachers, administrators and school service personnel; ensuring educator compliance with NCLB; and overseeing the approval and monitoring of university professional preparation programs for educator certificates.

For more information on Educator and School Development, go to: http://www.isbe.net/esd/default.htm or call 217-782-2948.

**SGSA Expenditure Plan Due**

The majority of Illinois school districts receive Supplemental General State Aid (SGSA) due to the percentage and number of disadvantaged, low income students attending the district. Districts receive SGSA funding through the Poverty Grant Calculation, which is part three of the General State Aid claim.

SGSA payments are included as a portion of General State Aid payments. School districts with average daily attendance over 1000 are required by the school code to file an SGSA Expenditure Plan electronically using the ISBE IWAS system.

All pertinent SGSA information is contained on the district's screen in IWAS. A brief narrative is required on the first page and a budget breakdown must be listed on the second page. SGSA funding may be expended in numerous ways, but must primarily benefit the disadvantaged, low income students who generate funding for the district without supplanting other types of funding already in place. For questions contact Richard Loman at rloman@isbe.net or 217-782-2948.

**Data Analysis & Progress Reporting**

**2008-2009 Teacher Service Record**

The 2008-2009 Teacher Service Record will be available for online data entry via IWAS starting Wednesday, October 1. This fall data collection period will close January 30, 2009. There will also be a spring data collection period (dates to be announced) for educator updates and salary submissions.

Questions about this year’s Teacher Service Record may be directed to the ISBE Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at TSR@isbe.net or 217-782-3950.
2008-2009 Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment & Staff Report

Starting Wednesday, October 1, the Nonpublic Registration, Enrollment, and Staff Report (87-01) for school year 2008-2009 will be available in IWAS at https://sec1.isbe.net/iwas. Completed reports must be received by ISBE no later than June 30, 2009.

Nonpublic schools that have registered with ISBE at least once in the past must submit their data online via IWAS. Nonpublic schools that have never registered with ISBE must submit their data using the paper form 87-01 that is available at http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/87-01_np_report.pdf.

Public district administrators should communicate with administrators of nonpublic schools within their district boundaries and encourage them to submit registration, enrollment and staff data. A portion of the public district funding allocation calculated for the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) uses nonpublic enrollment data that is reported voluntarily by nonprofit elementary and secondary schools.

Questions may be directed to Md. Shafiqul Azam in the Data Analysis and Reporting Division at 217-782-3950.

2008-2009 Non-Certified Staff Salary Study

Starting Wednesday, October 1, the Non-Certified Staff Salary Study survey will be available in IWAS for submission of 2008-2009 school year data. URLs for two survey documents are provided below.

Example for completing the survey: http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/2007_ncss_instruct.pdf

The deadline for submitting the survey is February 28, 2009. Districts with student enrollments of less than 1000 as of the last school day in September 2008 may ignore this message.

Questions may be directed to Md. Shafiqul Azam in the Data Analysis and Reporting Division at 217-782-3950.

Student Assessment

New ISAT Writing Reports Issued

District ISAT Test Coordinators and Chicago 299 ISAT Test Coordinators will be receiving new Student Performance Profile reports to replace School Performance Profile reports previously sent by Measurement Incorporated.

In the original reports, all numbers were correct as reported; however, the bar graphs indicating meets+exceeds in the Performance by Student Group category at the bottom of page two did not accurately represent the actual percent of those meeting and exceeding. The bar graphs in the replacement reports correctly represent this number.

For questions on the ISAT Writing Reports, call Student Assessment at 217-782-4823.

Interactive Writing CDs Coming

Within the next few weeks, schools will be receiving PC and Mac compatible Interactive Writing CDs. These CDs are intended to increase teachers’ familiarity with the ISAT Writing assessment. They contain the ISAT writing rubrics, scoring guidelines, student samples, and an interactive feature that allows teachers to practice scoring. The CDs may be duplicated.

For questions about the CDs, call Student Assessment at 217-782-4823.

Curriculum & Instruction

Education and Technology Conference

The Illinois Education and Technology Conference is scheduled in Springfield on Thursday, November 20, and Friday, November 21, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

This conference offers educators, technology coordinators, administrators, and others interested in improving the quality of education an opportunity to gain information and exchange ideas on the application of educational technology in our schools.

More than 100 concurrent sessions will be offered, many of which will be hands-on. Vicki Davis and Hall Davidson will be the keynote luncheon speakers. For keynote and session information, go to:
Registration is available online at http://www.il-edtech.org. Participants who register and pay conference fees by **Friday, October 10**, will receive a reduced rate. Visit the conference website at http://www.il-edtech.org for current conference information.

### Nutrition

#### Higher Commodity Prices

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has alerted states that due to higher commodity prices schools will have significantly less purchasing capabilities for school year (SY) 2009.

Schools are still entitled to the same amount of Planned Assistance Level (PAL); however, that same PAL value will only buy 80 percent of what it would before the escalating commodity prices. The USDA has already started to delete commodity orders and schools should expect a 20 percent reduction in commodity food they will receive.

For questions or concerns, contact Food Distribution Program staff at 217-782-2491.

#### National School Lunch Week

With the presidential election in November, plan now for a school election during National School Lunch Week (NSLW), **October 13–17**. Let your students vote on your school’s lunch menu items.

The School Nutrition Association has provided information to plan, prepare and implement special events all week at: http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/nslw2008/.

Remember to recognize your school nutrition staff’s contributions to the school district during this week.

#### Illinois Awarded Team Nutrition Training Grant

Illinois has received a 2008 Team Nutrition Training Grant to provide school food service staff with the knowledge and skills to prepare meals that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPyramid. The grant’s three components are:

- **The Color My Meals Healthy initiative** will provide regional and onsite training to increase awareness and commitment of child care administrators and food service staff through planning and preparing healthy meals and snacks.

- **The Nutrition A3 (Anytime, Anywhere, Anyplace) initiative** will empower secondary education students to make healthy food choices and be physically active through online lessons.

- **The Move & Crunch Planning Guide initiative** will encourage parents, teachers/caregivers and food service staff to serve as role models for students at school and at home.

#### FY 2009 Child Nutrition Applications Due

**Reminder:** Fiscal year 2009 School-Based Child Nutrition Program applications covering **October 1, 2008, through September 30, 2009**, were due electronically through the Child Nutrition ACES (Application and Claim Entry System). **If you have not submitted your application, please do so as soon as possible.**

It is important to remember that fiscal year 2009 begins **Wednesday, October 1**, and your October Claim for Reimbursement will not be processed if the application has not been submitted and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Detailed instructions to assist in completing the annual application for participation in the School-Based Child Nutrition Programs are available online at: http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/nslp_app_instructions.pdf.

For questions, contact the Nutrition Programs Division at 800-545-7892 or 217-782-2491.

### Board Services

#### Annual Superintendents’ Conference Registration Reminder

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will hold the Annual Superintendents’ Conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield on **Thursday, October 23**, and **Friday, October 24**.
The last day to register is **Friday, October 10**. All registration will be done online through the ISBE website at: [http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/](http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/).

Complete registration information can be found at: [http://www.isbe.net/supts_conf/Registration_08.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/supts_conf/Registration_08.pdf).

**Thomas Lay Burroughs Award Nominations Reminder**

The State Board of Education invites you to nominate your local board president for the Thomas Lay Burroughs Award for the State's Outstanding School Board President.

This award was created in 1991 in memory of the late ISBE chairman and is presented each November at the IASB/IASA/IASBO conference in Chicago. This year the conference will be held **November 21-23**, and the award will be presented **Sunday morning, November 23**. Nominations should be submitted by 5 p.m. on **Friday, October 17**.

Please e-mail your nomination to Jean Ladage at jladage@isbe.net. Indicate in the subject line of the e-mail: Burroughs Nomination. For questions, call Jean Ladage or Marsha Moffett at 217-557-6626.

For nomination information and format please go to: [http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/pdf/burroughs_award.pdf).

**Legal**

**Missing Children Records Act Updates**

The State Board of Education has received questions from school districts and other entities as to whether new state legislation requires the retention of an original birth certificate of a child enrolling in that school district or other entity for the first time. We want to clarify that retaining an original birth certificate is not required. Instead the school district or other entity is to make a photocopy and retain that photocopy.

**Public Act 95-0439**

- Effective **January 1, 2008**, amended Section 5 of the Missing Children Records Act (325 ILCS 50/5) to require any person enrolling a child for the first time in any preschool educational program, child care facility and day care home or group day care home licensed under the Child Care Act of 1969 to produce a certified copy of a child’s birth certificate or other reliable proof of the child's identity and age. This includes a passport, visa, or other governmental documentation.

Prior to **P.A. 95-0439**, this requirement applied only when enrolling a child in a public or private elementary or secondary school, but now the Act encompasses more programs and entities.

**Public Act 95-0793**, effective **August 8, 2008**, further amended Section 5 of the Missing Children Records Act (325 ILCS 50/5) to provide that when the person enrolling the child provides the school or other entity with a certified copy of the child's birth certificate, the school or other entity shall promptly make a photocopy of the certified copy for its records and return the original certified copy to the person enrolling the child. ISBE suggests that schools place the copy of the birth certificate in the child’s permanent records file.

The Act also describes specifically the steps to follow when the documentation is not provided to the school or other entity.


The full text of the **Missing Children Records Act** [325 ILCS 50/1] is available at: [http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/iles/iles3.asp?ActID=1469&ChapAct=325%26nbsp%3BILCS%26nbsp%3B50%26nbsp%3B5%26nbsp%3B5&ChapterID=32&ChapterName=CHILDREN&ActName=Missing+Children+Records+Act%22&%22](http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/iles/iles3.asp?ActID=1469&ChapAct=325%26nbsp%3BILCS%26nbsp%3B50%26nbsp%3B5%26nbsp%3B5&ChapterID=32&ChapterName=CHILDREN&ActName=Missing+Children+Records+Act%22&%22)

**Activities Counted for Title IX Compliance**

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U.S. Department of Education issued the attached guidance in order to provide postsecondary institutions, state educational agencies, and local educational agencies with information about how OCR determines which athletic activities can be counted under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure that male and female students are provided equal opportunities to participate in intercollegiate and interscholastic athletics programs consistent with Title IX and its implementing regulations in 34 CFR Part 106. We encourage you to
share with your staff the information in the letter linked below:

Select this link for the Dear Colleague Letter: Athletic Activities Counted for Title IX Compliance.

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Rules & Waivers

Less Red Tape

In October 2004, the agency created an e-mail account system so that its constituents could submit ideas for streamlining agency rules and processes. The Less Red Tape account has fielded more than 500 e-mails since that time that have resulted in improvements to the agency’s data collection systems, changes in administrative rules, and proposals for amendments to the School Code. If you have suggestions for improvements to the agency’s rules, processes or procedures that you would like us to consider, please submit them to lessredtape@isbe.net.

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Several sets of proposed rules recently reviewed by the State Board of Education are currently available for public comment. These items have been posted on the agency’s website at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions you may have to rules@isbe.net.

Repeal of Part 110 (Program Accounting Manual)
Repeal of Part 125 (Student Activity Funds and Convenience Accounts)
Repeal of Part 500 (Replacement of Required Rules)
Elimination of three complete sets of rules that are no longer necessary.

Part 130 (Determining Special Education Per Capita Tuition Charge)
Updating to eliminate outdated cross-references to Part 110.

Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant)
Extension of Preschool for All through June 30, 2010, in accordance with P.A. 95-724.

Part 245 (Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program) (New)
Implementation of new grant program included in FY 2009 state budget. Eligibility requirements, applications procedures and content, criteria for review and award of proposals, and process for continuation awards for funds to support school district in facilitating the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth.

Part 525 (Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Services)
Updating to eliminate outdated cross-references to Part 110; other technical updates.

Deadline for Public Comment: November 17, 2008

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please also be advised that two rulemakings recently adopted by the State Board are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s website 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 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing)
Updating to accommodate new sources of funds.

Affected Sections: 100.20, 100.70, 100.Table A, 100.Table C, and 100.Table E.

Effective Date: September 24, 2008

Part 245 (Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program) (EMERGENCY RULES)
Implementation of new grant program included in FY 2009 state budget to assist school districts in facilitating the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth. Eligibility requirements, application procedures and content, criteria for review of proposals, and process for continuation of funding.

Affected Sections: All.
Effective Date: September 22, 2008

Lincoln Bicentennial

Looking for Your Lincoln Hero Contest

Those interested in writing about a Lincoln-like hero they admire are encouraged to enter the Looking for Your Lincoln Hero contest. Participants should tell why this person inspires them in an online essay or they can also
create a piece of artwork to illustrate how their hero is like Lincoln.

Essay and artwork categories include elementary, middle or high school students, college and graduate students and adults and professionals.

The entry deadline is Monday, December 1. For complete details on the contest, go to www.MyHero.com and click on “Looking for the Lincolns of Today.”

The contest is sponsored by Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition and the My Hero Project.

**Walk Across Illinois School Fitness Program**

**International Walk to School Day**

Hundreds of schools across Illinois will celebrate International Walk to School Day on Wednesday, October 8. This is a great opportunity to showcase your school’s commitment to active modes of transportation for the trip to and from school.

For more information on events in your community, contact Shana Hazan at 312-427-3325, ext. 291.

**Student Opportunities**

**Arts Education Week Poster Contest**

The 2009 Illinois Arts Education Week has been designated as March 16-22 by Governor Rod R. Blagojevich. Each year, a poster contest is sponsored in cooperation with arts education week by the Illinois Alliance for Arts Education (IAAE) and the State Board of Education.

The poster contest reinforces the importance of the arts in the growth and development of all students. Each year an Illinois student’s artwork is featured on the poster. This year’s winner will be recognized at the Annual IAAE Awards Ceremony and at a State Board meeting.

The 2009 contest deadline is Friday, October 31, which is earlier than in past years to allow posters to be distributed at the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network Annual Conference.

To access contest criteria and entry forms, go to “What’s New” on ISBE’s curriculum page at: http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/default.htm.

**Work Zone Safety Calendar Contest**

The 4th Annual Illinois Work Zone Safety Calendar Contest for elementary students in kindergarten through 6th grade is underway. The contest was started in an effort to reduce work zone-related crashes in Illinois.

The work zone safety calendar contest is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the State Board of Education, the American Traffic Safety Services Foundation (ATSSF) and the Illinois Chapter of the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA).

For more information on the contest, visit: www.dot.il.gov/trafficsafety/WZS/WZScontest.html or contact IDOT’s contest coordinator, Jessica Baker, at 217-785-3062.

**Disaster Preparedness PSA Contest**

The “Ready Illinois High School Challenge” encourages public and private high school students to develop a creative 30-second script that addresses disaster preparedness measures and directs people to the state’s Ready Illinois website at: www.Ready.Illinois.gov.

The winning spot will be professionally produced and aired statewide on radio and/or TV as part of the state’s campaign to encourage people to prepare for natural and man-made disasters. The contest is sponsored by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) in cooperation with the Illinois Broadcasters Association (IBA).

The winning student(s) will see their spot produced and broadcast statewide and receive commemorative plaques. The winners’ school will receive a $10,000 award to be used for school curriculum or instructional supplies and activities. The prize money is being provided by the IBA.

Contest entries can be submitted between Wednesday, October 1, and Wednesday, December 31; the winner will be notified prior to February 28, 2009. Official contest rules and an online entry form are available at: www.Ready.Illinois.gov. Questions can be directed to IEMA at 217-558-1334.
School Business Services

Capital Needs Assessment Survey

Public Act 93-0489 requires the State Board of Education and the Capital Development Board to file with the General Assembly a comprehensive assessment report of the capital needs of all school districts.

We are requesting all districts that have not already done so to complete and submit the Capital Needs Assessment Survey by Friday, October 17. Full participation in this needs assessment will help ensure an accurate portrayal of the capital needs of all districts throughout the state.

A copy of the Capital Needs Assessment Survey, along with a cover letter, were e-mailed to all district and regional superintendents on Friday, September 5. If you did not receive this information, please let us know. Additional forms, if needed, can be accessed on the following websites: www.isbe.net/finance or www.cdb.state.il.us.

Completed forms can be mailed to the Illinois State Board of Education, School Business Services, 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001 or by e-mail to finance@isbe.net.

Additional questions can be directed to Christine Kolaz in School Business Services at 217-785-8779.

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/2008/newsclips/080926.htm