September 14, 2009

Freedom of Information Office
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777

ATTN: FOIA Request

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140) Access Living of Metro Chicago through its Education Outreach Coordinator Rodney Estvan requests from the Illinois State Board of Education information relating to ISBE and 105 ILCS 5/1D-1 “BLOCK GRANTS FOR DISTRICTS WITH OVER 500,000 INHABITANTS” of the State School Code. In particular, we are interested in information relating to subsection (c) “Special Education (Personnel, Transportation, Orphanage, Private Tuition), funding for children requiring special education services.”

Subsection (f) states: “A school district to which this Section applies shall report to the State Board of Education on its use of the block grants in such form and detail as the State Board of Education may specify.”

In relation to subsection (f) we would request the form and detail of any required in reports to be made by the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) District 299 in relation to special education (Personnel, Transportation, Orphanage, Private Tuition) or other funding for children requiring special education services. This information may be in the form of a letter, notice, or other communication to the Chicago Public Schools. If ISBE has never issued anything of this type to CPS please advise Access Living of that fact.

Assuming CPS has been required to provide to ISBE reports on its use of the block grant for special education we would request copies of these reports from year 2000 through the most recent report available. ISBE can provide these reports in electronic format including Excel or MS word if it is more convenient and cost effective for ISBE. These can be sent to Restvan@accessliving.org Printed copies of the reports can be sent to my business address listed on this letter.

Pursuant to 5 ILCS 140/6 (b) we would inform the ISBE that the purpose of our request for this information is to allow Access Living to review the educational support CPS students with disabilities that they may or may not be receiving. Our review is part of the work of a center for independent living (CIL). Access Living is a member Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living (INCIL), a statewide organization made up of 24 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in Illinois. Part of a CIL’s work is systemic advocacy to eliminate barriers and allow people with disabilities to fully participate in their community. Access Living is actively involved systemic advocacy in the field of
education for youth with disabilities. Given our role is in the public interest we would request a waiver of fees for copying these materials if they are not available in electronic format. I can be reached at 312-640-2149 if there are any questions related to this request.

Yours,

Rodney D. Estvan

cc: Marca Bristo, CEO Access Living