February, 2012

Dr. Christopher Koch
State Superintendent
100 N. 1st Street
Springfield, IL 62777

Dear Superintendent Koch and Illinois State School Board Members:

In the final week leading up to the submission of your application for the Flexibility Waiver under No Child Left Behind, I urge you and your waiver committee to reconsider your position on making SES after-school tutoring optional. I have personally witnessed the positive impact this after-school program has had on my constituents in our public schools and recognize how this program can help narrow the achievement gap between low-income minority students and their higher income peers.

Tutoring is not an option for all families. Parents of students in so many of our State’s schools, especially our lowest performing schools, desire the ability to provide their children with supplemental educational opportunities that are simply out of their economic reach. These are the students most at risk, both in terms of their academic skills and their future role in society. The SES component of NCLB has provided these families with options and has empowered them to be able to make significant decisions affecting the performance of their children in school. SES programs help foster confidence and motivation. The result of optional SES tutoring programs will effectively result in eliminating them as an option all together. This is disturbing considering the various obstacles already facing students who could benefit from this program, potentially creating an excessively disparate impact on those in our lowest performing schools.

I am an advocate for the inclusion of a provision requiring high-quality SES tutoring programs in your application as a requirement for mandatory SES. Parents have come to rely on after-school tutoring to assist in advancing their students’ academic abilities. Over the last 10 years, SES providers have developed relationships with parents and school administration and staff, all in an attempt to increase educational opportunities for our most needy students. It makes sense to build upon programs in which we have already invested time and money.

I know we agree that all students should have an equal chance for educational success. For that reason, I respectfully urge you to consider the outcome a waiver of the SES requirement could have on our state’s children.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please call me at 630.264.6855 anytime. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Linda Chapa LaVia
State Representative
August 30, 2011

Mr. Christopher Koch
Superintendent of Education
via facsimile: 217-785-3972

Dear Superintendent Koch:

Centro Romero, a community based non-profit agency serving the low income latino immigrant and refugee community on the far northeast side of Chicago, has a long history of successful academic and after school programming. Since 1995, their after school program has maintained high standards of success, with significant gains in reading comprehension since 2006.

It is with these successes in mind that I offer my support for Centro Romero's application for funding for a 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant in partnership with Hayl Elementary School. The three year program will specifically complement and be aligned with Hayl's curricula for grades 5-8 and will specifically work to engage parents in the process to enhance their interest and involvement.

I understand that funding decisions on this program are imminent and hope that the letter of support reaches you in time. I apologize for the delay in reaching out to you in support of the commendably successful programming implemented by Centro Romero.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or if you need further information.

Sincerely,

Kelly Cassidy
State Representative, 14th district
July, 2011

Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I am writing to support the continuation of the Supplemental Education Services Program (SES) within Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). I have personally witnessed the positive impact this after school program has had on my constituents in our public schools, and recognize how this program can help narrow the achievement gap between low-income minority students and their higher income peers.

I am concerned that the administration is considering providing flexibility under the current law that might “waive” the requirement of providing much needed services such as SES. The result of an SES waiver is disturbing considering the various obstacles already facing students who could benefit from this program. Weakening the law’s requirements for free tutoring for the children who need it most will have an excessively difficult impact on minority students.

As Chairman of the Elementary and Secondary Education Committee, I know we agree that all students should have an equal chance for educational success. For that reason, I respectfully urge you to consider the outcome of a waiver of the SES requirement could have on our children in Illinois and across the nation. I also urge you and Congress to support the inclusion of improved and high-quality SES in any reauthorization of ESEA.

I look forward to working with you and Congress to reauthorize ESEA. If you have any questions regarding this request, please call me at 630.264.6855 anytime. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Linda Chapa LaVia
State Representative

Cc: Christopher Koch
May 10, 2011

Superintendent Christopher Koch  
Illinois State Board of Education  
100 North First Street  
Springfield, Illinois 62777-5042

Dear Superintendent Koch:

I write to express my concern regarding a School Improvement Grant that was awarded to Thornton Township District 205.

The grant was awarded based on a proposal submitted by former Superintendent Kamala Buckner which included consolidating the ninth grade classes of three schools into one building. Due to community resistance, a change in the composition of the Thornton Township school board, and the subsequent resignation of Ms. Buckner, I question whether the funds would be spent as intended.

As the education needs are great in Chicago's south suburbs, I am hopeful that either the funds be closely monitored in School District 205 or reprogrammed for another school district in the area.

Thank you in advance to your attention toward this matter. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me have staff contact my Director of Grants and Special Projects, Ms. Mimi Mesirow, at (708) 798-6000.

Sincerely,

Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Arne Duncan  
United States Department of Education
February 16, 2011

State Superintendent of Schools Chris Koch
Illinois State Board of Education
100 N. First St.
Springfield, IL 62777-0001

Dear Supt. Koch:

Enclosed please find a letter and supporting documents sent to our offices from Scot Reynolds, Superintendent of Spoon River Valley CUSD #4, regarding a problem Spoon River Valley is attempting to address about their use of Title 1 and Transportation Funds.

We are forwarding this letter to your attention with a sincere desire that you may be able to assist in finding an equitable solution to the problems Superintendent Reynolds attempts to address in his correspondence.

If it would be helpful to discuss these issues further over the phone, we would all be amenable to a conference call with you and your staff and the proper administrative officials at Spoon River Valley CUSD #4. If you think this would be helpful, please do not hesitate to contact us about scheduling such a call.

Thank you for your attention and follow-up on this important issue affecting a school with our legislative districts.

Sincerely,

Sen. Dave Koehler

Sen. John Sullivan

Rep. Mike Unes

Rep. Norine Hammond

cc: Supt. Scot Reynolds
Ethelene Ferdinand, MBA
Division Administrator
External Assurance
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, IL 62777-0001

11 February 2011

Dear Ms. Ferdinand:

Re: 22-029-0040-26

Thank you for your correspondence of 26 January 2011. My administrative staff has examined the findings of your external assurance staff and the enclosed monitoring report of January 26, 2011 for Title I and Transportation Funds. A comprehensive listing of corrective actions taken by Spoon River Valley CUSD #4 for both Title I and Transportation Funds are enclosed in the form of attachments. These attachments represent the collective response of Spoon River Valley CUSD#4 to ISBE auditor findings.

That being said, as a district we take strong issue with Finding #6 disallowed costs in the Title I audit for FY 2010. Although supplanting is alleged this simply is not correct; we have extensive documentation of teacher activities. When offered supporting documentation, the auditor disallowed its entry, serious review or consideration. We find it frustrating and simply wrong to force the district to expend additional funds to repay $43,766 by 30 September. These line items/descriptors were approved by ISBE personnel in the Grants Division over a period of four calendar years. Why were ISBE Grant Review administrators permitted to approve such a program if there indeed was a concern relating to supplanting? Were they not properly in-serviced? This, in my professional opinion, is simply not acceptable. While we are taking all of the corrective actions listed by your EA staff in the enclosures, we will be in contact with others to receive, if possible, more appropriate redress to Title I, Finding #6.

We appreciate your thorough, honest assessment of our NCLB program implementation. If you have any questions regarding any of our corrective actions please contact our Grant Coordinator Julie Deignan at (309) 778-2207.

Sincerely,

K. Scot Reynolds
Superintendent
Spooner River Valley CUSD #4
35265 North IL Hwy 97

cc: Honorable Louise Bassett
London Mills, IL 61544
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Recommended Corrective Action</th>
<th>SRV Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Finding #1                | The grant recipient must have the required plans in place for NCLB Programs                  | SRV has carefully gone step by step through the NCLB/Title I grant requirements and has put the plans in place. Plans include:  
  - Highly qualified records  
  - Assessment of local needs for professional development and hiring.  
  - Performance measures for drug and violence prevention programs and activities.  
  - Plan for keeping schools safe and drug-free.  
  - Team plan to review the progress of Title I students and revise our program to enable identified students to meet state academic standards. |
| Finding #2                | The grant recipient must comply with the requirements of the "Steven's Amendment". All documents funded in whole or in part with Federal money must clearly state the percentage and dollar amount of activities finance with federal funds. | SRV has added the "Steven's Amendment" clearly stating the percent and dollar amount financed to events/items funded in whole or part with Federal money. |
| Finding #3                | The Title I school must jointly develop and distribute to parents of Title I children a school parent involvement policy that includes the required components. | SRV did jointly develop and distribute to parents of Title I children a parent involvement policy that:  
  - Involves parents in the joint development and the process of school review and improvement of the Title I plan.  
  - Builds the school’s and parents’ capacity for strong parental involvement. |
Finding #4  The grant recipient did not comply with the requirements for educating homeless children and youths. The grant recipient did not maintain procedures and guidelines for identifying and enrolling homeless children and youths.

The grant recipient must develop procedures/guidelines for identifying and enrolling homeless children and youths.

While the procedures and guidelines are clearly understood and developed by SRV faculty and staff, they were not written down in a form understood by the reviewer. Improved step by step procedures and guidelines are now developed that can be understood by any person not affiliated with SRV.

Finding #5  The grant recipient did not comply in writing to annually attest to compliance with the highly qualified NCLB requirements.

1. The grant recipient and school principals of Title I schools must annually attest in writing, their compliance with the NCLB highly qualified requirements of their teachers and paraprofessionals.

2. The grant recipient and school reports must document the percentage of teachers and paraprofessionals at

A letter of attestation is now signed and on file.

All teacher and paraprofessional highly qualified documentation is on file and
Finding #6  Allocated expenditures were not allocated on a reasonable basis and/or were not supported by verifiable documentation. One Title I Teacher and one Title I Teacher's aide who were paid under the Instructional Salary and benefit categories were Full Time Teachers in a Non-Title I capacity that the allocable time spent for Title I Low income related activities were not determinable. Supplanting envisaged. Therefore, the Salaries and Benefits claimed in the amount of $28,633 and $15,133 respectively totaling $43,766 remains disallowed as noted below:

Title I schools who meet NCLB requirements. The documentation must be made available to the general public. Allocated expenditures must be supported by appropriate and verifiable source documentation. Employees paid in two or more different grant programs or costs objectives must support their time and efforts in each program by verifiable time distribution records, class schedules or other valid and verifiable documentation. In addition a teachers' aide must work under the direct supervision of a bona fide classroom teacher.

Title 1 related activities were documented and supported. We respectfully disagree with this finding. Faculty in rural schools often have dual roles, as is the case in this situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function/Object Code</th>
<th>Description of item Disallowed or Questioned</th>
<th>Amount disallowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000-100</td>
<td>Salary Paid to a Full time Third Grade Teacher under this category as Consultant</td>
<td>$13,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-100</td>
<td>Salary Paid to an Art Teacher as a Title I Teacher's Aide who also was unsupervised</td>
<td>$15,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-200</td>
<td>Benefits paid to the teacher consultant and teacher's aide combined</td>
<td>$15,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Disallowed Costs:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$43,766</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questioned Costs:** $43,766
| Finding #7 | The district maintained an unexpended grant fund in the amount of $1,305 by comparing the revenue received to the expended amount before any adjustments for questioned costs but verified that all obligated funds have been liquidated. | All unexpended grant funds, not approved as a carryover balance or prepayments for the next fiscal year, upon notification from the Division of Funding and Disbursements must be returned to the Illinois State Board of Education. | Rule noted. Encumbered bills will be reconciled in correct fiscal year. |
## Transportation – Regular and Vocation – Special Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Recommended Corrective Action</th>
<th>SRV Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding #1</td>
<td>The LEA must only claim those expenditures that are claimable for transportation reimbursement.</td>
<td>Get copies of IEP to prove a bus monitor is required. Otherwise, monitor will not be coded to transportation fund.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding #2</td>
<td>The LEA must claim depreciation expense correctly. The district must maintain an amortization schedule denoting the principal lease payment and the interest component. The depreciation allowance claimed by the district for a given leased bus must be restricted to twenty percent of the principal cost of the bus or the lease payments excluding interest whichever is lower.</td>
<td>Maintain bus schedule with amount paid (after trade in), years of lease, and the amount allowed for depreciation (20% of principal cost).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding #3</td>
<td>The LEA must not understate revenues as reconciled with the Annual Financial Report. All revenues to be accounted for must be recognized in accordance with the pupil transportation claim provision.</td>
<td>Tort revenue is not a factor for error as all tort funds go thru a separate account currently. Any other revenue reported in the transportation fund will be recorded on the transportation report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Audit Adjustment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Code</th>
<th>Per Audit</th>
<th>Per Claim</th>
<th>(Over Claim) Under claim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3500-00</td>
<td>$151,559</td>
<td>$183,525</td>
<td>($31,966)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3510-00</td>
<td>$69,767</td>
<td>$81,832</td>
<td>($12,065)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$221,326</td>
<td>$265,357</td>
<td>($44,031)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routing Slip</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Due Date:</strong> 3/8/11</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CC:</strong> [Signature]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Log Date:</strong> 2/22/14</td>
<td><strong>Number:</strong> 5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Executive Staff Member:</strong> [Signature]</td>
<td><strong>Date:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Division Administrator:</strong> [Signature]</td>
<td><strong>Date:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- [ ] Please Draft a reply for Superintendent Signature - Send copy of signed response to Connie Werts S-405
- [ ] Needs Superintendent's Signature
- [ ] Please Draft a reply for your Executive Staff Member - Send copy of signed response to Connie Werts S-405
- [ ] Please Draft a reply for Division Administrator Signature - Send copy of signed response to Connie Werts S-405
- [ ] Information Only - Please inform Connie Werts if there is a Response Needed.
- [ ] This pertains to your Division/Center please handle - Please inform Connie Werts of any action you take.
- [ ] Urgent - Needs immediate attention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proofreader Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division Admin. Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Staff Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If response will take longer than due date please inform Connie Werts of the situation.*
September 22, 2010

Dr. Christopher Koch  
State Superintendent  
State Board of Education  
100 N. First Street, S-405  
Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001

Dear State Superintendent Koch:

In order to meet our statutory mandate to provide federal grant-in-aid information, we are conducting our annual federal aid survey. The information requested concerns your agency's use of federal aid programs for FY 2010 (actual amounts) and FY 2011 (estimated amounts).

The survey asks for additional information about state services supported by these federal programs (see Part IV on the second page of the enclosed form LRU 191). Thanks to past efforts, we have been able to provide the appropriations committees and others with information on specific programs funded by each grant program and the populations served. The information collected this year will be incorporated in our publication, Federal Funds to State Agencies: Annual Report to the Illinois General Assembly, which will be distributed in the summer of 2011.

Enclosed are the LRU 191 survey forms. The forms and instructions for completing the forms are also available on our web site at www.ilga.gov/commission/lru/Lru_home.html. Federal Aid forms are on the rightmost column under the heading "Federal Aid Tracking."

Please provide Kathleen Hazielwood with the name and phone number of a contact person by Friday, October 8, 2010, either by phone, or e-mail at kathym@ilga.gov. Return the completed forms to our office at 222 S. College, Suite 301, Springfield, IL 62704 by Monday, November 1, 2010. If you have any questions, please contact Kathleen at (217) 782-6851. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Jonathan P. Wolff  
Associate Director

JPW:kh

Enclosure

Form LRU 191, survey for federal aid information.
### IDENTIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □</td>
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</table>

Agency: Division(s) Receiving/Administering Funds

CUSAS/SAMS # - Division #

Federal Public Law No.:

Program Title:

Administering Federal Agency and Office:

### DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Program:**
   - [ ] Formula Grant
   - [ ] Project Grant
   - [ ] Contract
   - [ ] Other (specify):

2. **Type of Payment Mechanism:**
   - [ ] "Draw down" as required
   - [ ] Reimbursement – portion of expenditures
   - [ ] Lump sum in advance
   - [ ] Other (specify):

3. **Federal funds are deposited in the following State Treasury Fund(s):**
   - Treasury Fund No. __________ Treasury Fund Name __________________________
   - Treasury Fund No. __________ Treasury Fund Name __________________________

4. **Were federal funds appropriated by the General Assembly?**
   - [ ] FY 2010 Yes □ No □
   - [ ] FY 2011 Yes □ No □

5. **Under what authority does your agency receive and expend these funds?**
   - ILCS: Chapter __________ Section __________ Other __________________________

6. **Matching Requirements:**
   - State match required?
     - [ ] Yes □ No □
   - If Yes, specify:
     - [ ] Federal % □
     - [ ] State % □

   - State match required to be
     - [ ] Cash □ In Kind □

   - Source of State match:
     - Treasury Fund No. __________ Treasury Fund Name __________________________

   - If no local match is indicated, does the program allow use of local funds in lieu of State match?
     - [ ] Yes □ No □

7. **Indirect Costs:**
   - Is your agency operating under a federally approved indirect cost reimbursement plan?
     - [ ] Yes □ No □

   - If YES, will the reimbursement amount be set by:
     - [ ] an indirect cost rate?
     - [ ] a cost allocation plan?
     - [ ] a negotiated lump sum for overhead costs?

   - Estimated indirect costs to be recovered by the federal government:
     - FY 2010 $ ________
     - FY 2011 $ ________

8. **Source of Funds:**
   - [ ] Direct from the federal government
   - [ ] Indirect through an intermediary (specify agency):

9. **What would be the total cost to the State if federal funds available under this program were discontinued and the State assumed full financial responsibility?**
   - FY 2010 $ ________
   - FY 2011 $ ________

10. **Are some of these funds subgranted to other STATE agencies?**
    - [ ] Yes □ No □

    - If YES, list probable State agency CUSAS/SAMS #s and amounts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>$</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

11. **Are some of these funds subgranted to local governments?**
    - [ ] Yes □ No □

12. **Planning and Reporting Requirements:**
    - Does the granting agency require a planning document?
      - [ ] Yes □ No □
    - Does the granting agency require other reports?
      - [ ] Yes □ No □
      - If YES, complete items below:
        - a. Evaluation Report □ Annual □ Quarterly □ Monthly □ Other □
        - b. Financial Report □ Annual □ Quarterly □ Monthly □ Other □
        - c. Performance Report □ Annual □ Quarterly □ Monthly □ Other □
        - d. Other (please specify)
### III. FISCAL INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM FISCAL INFORMATION (in thousands of dollars)</th>
<th>FY 2010 (Actual)</th>
<th>FY 2011 (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Formula Allocation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of funds legally available from allocation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Enter NA if not a formula grant.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Available Awards:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Amount of federal funds awarded</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Amount of federal funds carried over from previous years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. TOTAL federal funds available for expenditure (A + B).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Federal Funds Expenditures:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Amount of federal funds expended for your agency’s activities.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Amount of federal funds subgranted to other states, local, or private agencies.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C. TOTAL federal funds expended (A + B).</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. State Expenditures:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Amount of state funds expended as matching requirement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Other state funds expended for support of program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. TOTAL state funds expended (A + B).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Cash Receipts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Cash receipts deposited in first trust fund listed in Part II, No. 3, page 1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Cash receipts deposited in second trust fund listed in Part II, No. 3, page 1.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### IV. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Please provide information on the State programs and services provided with these funds. For example, the Preventive Health Services Block Grant supports programs for hypertension, rape crisis centers, and grants to local health agencies. Area served might be “statewide” or a particular target area such as a city or county. Also provide an estimate of the number of participants served by each program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Program Name</th>
<th>No. of Persons Served</th>
<th>Area Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Survey completed by:

Name & title: ____________________________  Phone: (Business & Fax) _______________________

Agency and address: ________________________________  E-mail address: _______________________

Comments: ________________________________
May 19, 2010

Honorable Pat Quinn, Governor
State of Illinois
207, State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Mr. Christopher Koch, State Superintendent
Illinois State Board of Education
James R. Thompson Center
Floor 014, Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Governor Quinn and Superintendent Koch:

Last year, the General Assembly authorized a Capital Plan that included $1.5 billion in School Construction Grant funding. Over the past year, the four legislative leaders agreed that the remaining 23 school districts on the School Construction Grant Program’s FY2002 Entitlement List would be paid before the FY2003 school district rankings and entitlements are released by the State Board of Education.

The May 14th release of funds to the 23 school districts on the FY2002 Entitlement List fulfills our remaining commitment under the program. Going forward, the reactivation of the program should be a priority and, like in past years, remain an open process that is devoid of politics.

The Illinois General Assembly passed the School Construction Law in December 1997 primarily to address the shortage of classroom space due to population growth and aging buildings. Since its inception, it has been a highly successful program that has benefited 497 school districts in every region of the state and provided over $3.1 billion in state funds to build and renovate local public schools.

The School Construction Law has, to date, remained untouched by politics and favoritism. When the previous governor proposed to make changes to the program in 2004, the General Assembly worked together to protect its integrity with statutory language prohibiting the State Board of Education and the Capital Development Board from making any material changes to the program standards, unless both agencies are specifically authorized by law.
Governor Quinn  
State Superintend Koch  
May 19, 2010  
Page two

It is my expectation that the School Construction Grant Program will continue to be a fair and impartial program that ranks school district applications based on need and eligibility criteria outlined in law and through Administrative Rules, instead of political expediency. Further, it is imperative that you provide the members of the General Assembly regular updates regarding the status of the grant applications being considered.

The integrity of grant awards under the School Construction Law is critical as the General Assembly begins to approve funding for the Illinois Jobs Now capital construction program.

Sincerely,

[Redacted]

Tom Cross  
House Republican Leader

C: Mike Madigan, Speaker of the House  
John Cullerton, President of the Senate  
Christine Radogno, Senate Republican Leader
May 17, 2010

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education
Illinois State Board of Education
100 N. 1st Street, S-405
Springfield, Illinois 62777

Re: Letter of Support for State of Illinois Race to the Top Application

Dear State Superintendent Koch:

We are writing to express our strong support for the comprehensive reforms outlined in the State of Illinois’ Race to the Top (“RTTT”) application.

We believe that the RTTT competition presents a unique opportunity for Illinois to continue advancing its education agenda, which closely aligns with the RTTT priorities of high standards, data-based decision making, improving human capital, and intensive support for the lowest-performing schools and districts. If awarded a grant in the RTTT competition, Illinois will be able to accelerate and intensify critical work that is already underway.

Illinois has a demonstrated commitment to advancing education reform in RTTT priority areas. Despite the challenges faced by Illinois, strong leadership and collaborative support among key stakeholders have enabled the state to undertake implementation of bold reforms. Within the last eighteen months, the General Assembly has passed and Governor Quinn has signed legislation that:

- Establishes a comprehensive state longitudinal education data system;
- Allows for alternative certification programs to operate independently from higher education;
- Creates new, rigorous teacher and principal evaluation systems that incorporate student growth as a significant factor; and
- Doubles the number of charter schools in Illinois and formally explores the concept of an independent charter school authorizer.

We are confident that the education reform initiatives facilitated by RTTT funding will positively impact Illinois students well beyond the grant period. The Illinois General Assembly has a proven track record of bipartisan support for education reform, and we will provide our continued support to ensure that every child in Illinois is prepared for success in postsecondary education and employment.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

The Honorable John J. Cullerton
Illinois Senate President

The Honorable Christine Radogno
Illinois Senate Republican Leader

The Honorable Michael J. Madigan
Illinois House Speaker

The Honorable Tom Cross
Illinois House Republican Leader
March 26, 2010

Dr. Christopher Koch
State Superintendent
Illinois State Board of Education
101 N. First Street
Springfield, IL 62777

Dear Dr. Koch,

I’m writing to ask for your support of the reallocation of savings achieved upon the approval of SB 3608 (Demuzio/McAuliffe) directly to the Illinois Economic Education line within the State Board’s budget. As you know, this line was not funded in the FY2010 ISBE budget, but had been funded in the past at the $250,000 level to support the programs of the Illinois Council on Economic Education (dba Econ Illinois).

I commend the Board for its proposal to eliminate the ICEPT test and use those funds ($120,000) for the development of a standards-based framework of expected student outcomes for the consumer education course in Illinois. By allocating those funds directly into the economic education line, Econ Illinois can not only develop the framework according to ISBE standards and guidelines, but it can also maintain many of its programs that support the consumer mandate and the economics learning standards. That continued support for professional development and curriculum consulting will be important for the implementation of the finished framework product. Without regaining some minimal support from the State, the core programs of Econ Illinois are at great risk of being eliminated.

In addition, Econ Illinois has been selected to host the Annual Conference of the Council for Economic Education (CEE), the National Association of Economic Educators (NAECE), and the Global Association of Teachers of Economics (GATE) in Chicago in 2011. More than 500 top economic educators, industry thought-leaders, and K-12 teachers from across the U.S. and around the globe attend the conference each year. The Mississippi State Tourism Office estimates the conference increased revenues to the State by approximately $1 million when it was the host in Biloxi. This would be a welcome return for a $120,000 investment at a time when state revenues continue to falter. It is vital that Econ Illinois remain a strong and vibrant Council – it has gained a reputation over the years as one of the best in the nation – as host of this major event.
Finally, Econ Illinois works diligently to obtain private sector donations to support student programs. These funds greatly multiply the impact of our state investment. But, the state funds also help attract the private sector funds, and are thus even more important to maintaining this program.

In closing, I want to thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this issue. Having the desired consumer education framework developed and continuing support of economics/financial literacy education in K-12 schools throughout the state is a win-win for Illinois.

Sincerely,

Linda Chapa LaVia
State Representative-83rd District
January 15, 2010

Christopher Koch, Superintendent
Illinois State Board of Education
100 W. Randolph, Suite 14-300
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Superintendent Koch:

Ensuring that students who have not completed their high school educations is extremely important to low-income neighborhoods.

The Illinois Hope and Opportunity Pathways Through Education (IHOPES) program proposes to re-enroll 18,000 high school dropouts and graduate 8,000 in four years. Programs such as this to re-engage dropout youth are necessary to re-engage dropout youth according to Race to the Top guidelines.

Please include $15-25 million for IHOPES through the Illinois Race to the Top proposal.

Very sincerely,

Esther Golar
State Representative, 6th District
December 3, 2009

Chris Koch, State Superintendent
Illinois State Board of Education
100 N. 1st Street
Springfield, IL 62772

Dear Superintendent Koch:

I am writing to request that the Illinois State Board of Education include $4 million in funding for the Alternative Schools Network Re-Enrolled Student Program in its state budget for 2010—2011, which will be presented at the State Board of Education meeting on December 16 and 17.

Funding for this program is critical to ensure that we continue to re-enroll and graduate students who have dropped out of high school and decided to go back to school. The Program successfully re-enrolled over 2,200 high school dropouts over the past three years, graduated 694 re-enrolled dropouts and saves $3 million annually for Illinois Taxpayers. The program is operated by 21 participating community-based alternative high schools.

The need for these programs to re-enroll dropouts is urgent. The numbers of dropouts in Illinois have increased by 12% in just two years. Chronic truancy in Illinois has increased by a staggering 68% in the past two years, and this will lead to a increasing dropout rate in Illinois. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

State Representative
Maria A. "Toni" Berrios
39th District
-----Original Message-----
From: Mark Walker [mailto:repmarkwalker@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2010 10:24 AM
To: WILLS NICOLE
Subject: Constituent question

Hi Nicole,

Hope all is well.

We have a constituent who is looking for money through education grants for national board certified teachers.

I looked on website under funding opportunities for RFPs or Formula Applications. Does that refer to what he is asking for or are there other agencies I should refer him to?

Thanks.

Cathy Smith
District Director
Representative Mark Walker
66th District Office
847-640-8645 - phone
847-640-8690 - fax
repmarkwalker@gmail.com
Good morning ladies. Hope your summer is going well.

I am writing to ask about the policy for making reductions in preschool funding. It appears that a priority was set for funding rather than simply reducing the grant to all qualified programs. I fear that programs will terminate rather than be scaled back according to funding. This policy (like the vegetable program I inquired about earlier) seems to penalize qualified children who do not live in the most impoverished areas. In the age of valuing every child, shouldn’t this program be available at the funded level?

In particular, Indian Creek CUSD 425 and Somonauk CUSD 432 applied for but did not receive any funding for their preschool program. They had applied as a program serving at least 80% at-risk children.

Thank you for your investigation and response.
Bob
Senator Bivins had a constituent call and they want to know if there is any grant money in the stimulus program to teach nutrition to school kids. She said the First Lady is teaching nutrition. Can you help?

Nicole Besse
Senate Republican Staff
309 Statehouse
Springfield, Illinois 62702
217.782.5049 ph 217.782.0069 fax
nbesse@senategop.state.il.us
Nicole,

I received this request from Sen. Lightford's district office along with the comments below. Please advise.

Thanks.

Mary Alice (782-8505)

If you remember I am filling in for Lightford until she obtains a fulltime assistant.

"The state board of education states she will not receive the grant and she states she has been receiving the grant since 2004.

Can you please check further into this on her behalf?"