Mar 16, 2015

Patti Lopuszanski

Dear Ms. Lopuszanski:

This letter is in response to your request for information under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. Your request was received on Mar. 2, 2015.

On Mar. 9, our agency requested a five-day extension until Mar. 16, 2015.

You have requested the following:

Request 1: “A list of the names of all people that received CPDU's for attending the ESEA-NCLB conference in Chicago in February, 2011 broken down by school districts, and the method used to audit attendance. Copies of all signatures received for attendees that received CPDU's and the sessions they attended that they received CPDU's. Include a list for 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 with the number of attendees broken down by school districts that received CPDU's from the ESEA conference in Chicago held in February.”

Response 1: ISBE does not keep attendance records for individuals that receive CPDUs at specific events. Attendees are provided with Evidence of Completion forms upon their arrival which the participants use to verify attendance in the case of an audit. Random audits are conducted on a sample of Illinois educators. Meetings, conferences, seminars and other professional development activities are not directly audited. If an educator is audited, the ROE would conduct the review of documentation and ISBE would only review it if there was a problem. National conferences usually pose no problems as long as the required documentation is submitted in the event of an audit.

Request 2: “The ISBE employee responsible for the auditing of professional development and approving meetings, conferences and seminars that educational/therapy staff are given professional development credits. A copy of the approval given by the ISBE to recognize ESEA, a non-profit organization, as a professional development provider that is licensed and accredited to give out CPDU's from 2011 to today's date.”

Response 2: Please see response 1.

As previously mentioned per an email from ISBE’s Megan Griffin on Mar. 4, 2015, the Illinois Resource Center, which is a program under The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning, is currently an approved professional development provider. Please see our list of
approved providers at the following link: http://www.isbe.net/licensure/requirements/prof-dev-provider-list.pdf.

In 2011, the Illinois Resource Center was not an approved PD provider. The IRC was responsible for the logistical arrangements at the 2011 conference, but the content (professional development) was the responsibility of ISBE. Therefore, ISBE was the approved provider for the 2011 ESEA/NCLB Annual Statewide Conference, as ISBE collaborated with IRC through advising and presenting.

Request 3: "Copies of all forms of communication between the ISBE and Carla Cumblad, Paige McNulty and Susan Caddy from 2010 to today's date."

Response 3: The attached documents (15-245-lopuszanski-doc1.pdf through 15-245-lopuszanski-doc15.pdf) have been provided in response to this portion of your request. These records are from Aug. 2014 through Mar. 2, 2015 as communication records from Jan. 2012 through Aug. 2014 have already been provided to you in a prior FOIA response. Please note we have redacted passwords and log-in information in the documents as private information pursuant to 5 ILCS 140/7 (1) (b).

Request 4: "Copies of all documents in the possession of the ISBE; including policies; Illinois School Code and Illinois labor laws that prohibits bullying and intimidation of employees in a school setting and promotes a healthy workplace environment for all employees in education."

Response 4: Our agency has no documents to provide in response to this portion of your request.

Request 5: "Per Jeff Aranowski of the ISBE, "All teachers of core academic subjects in public elementary and secondary schools must meet the Highly Qualified requirement by the end of the 05/06 school year". Please provide a list of the school districts the ISBE has investigated for not providing factual information when hiring teachers; a list of school districts that have received sanctions for not hiring highly qualified teachers after 2005/2006 as required by State and Federal laws."

Response 5: ISBE does not maintain a responsive document that lists all schools who have received findings related to non-compliance with highly qualified requirements during scheduled district monitoring visits. If during a scheduled district monitoring visit it is determined that the district is not in compliance with highly qualified requirements, ISBE may sanction the district.

Note there are differences between the criteria for being considered "highly qualified" and some of the Illinois requirements for various assignments. The "highly qualified" status of an individual with respect to an assignment shall not relieve any entity that is required to employ certified staff of the obligation to observe the applicable Illinois requirements for that assignment. Please see the following link for more detailed information, resources and documents: http://www.isbe.net/licensure/html/hq_requirements.htm

Request 6: "A list of schools verified by the ISBE that Paige McNulty received degrees when hired by the Kane County ROE as the Assistant Superintendent in 2014 at a salary of $100,000 as noted in the Kane County Chronicle. That position began on July 1, 2014 and Ms. McNulty worked until January 31, 2015. Please provide the attendance records of Ms.
McNulty and how much of the original salary she will receive based on her no longer in that position. The Kane County ROE has no attendance records that they could provide under a FOLA request to their office and on numerous occasions have deferred any accountability to the ISBE. Please confirm what role the Regional Offices of education play in Illinois education and if an entity of the ISBE have funding, salaries, benefits and attendance are reported.”

Response 6: The attached document (15-245-lopuszanski-doc16.pdf) has been provided in response to this portion of your request. Please note we have redacted a Social Security Number, birthdate, home address and signatures in the document pursuant to 5 ILCS 140/7 (1) (b). Additionally, please see Section 5/3-2.5 of the Illinois School Code for information regarding Assistant Regional Superintendent salaries.

Regional and Assistant Regional Superintendent salaries are appropriated annually by the General Assembly in ISBE’s budget. However, they are not ISBE employees; therefore, we do not collect attendance records. We can confirm Ms. McNulty’s start date of July 1, 2014, her resignation as of close of business January 30, 2015 and that she was paid $8333.00 monthly while she was the Assistant Regional Superintendent.

ISBE is the fiscal agent for Regional Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents. The Regional Superintendent appoints their assistant and notifies ISBE’s Human Resources Division of the selection so that our agency can add them to the payroll system. The Assistant Superintendents are paid a percentage of the salary of the Superintendent as defined by the school code. They can elect insurance through CMS. As per the School Code, the Superintendents’ salaries are adjusted annually to reflect the percentage increase, if any, in the most recent Consumer Price Index (CPI) as reported by the U.S. Department of Labor (no annual increase may exceed 2.9%). If the percentage of change in the CPI is a percentage decrease, then the salaries are not adjusted that year.

For information regarding the role of Regional Offices of Education, please see the following link: http://www.isbe.net/regionaloffices/.

Request 7: “List of teachers broken down by school districts released due to decline in enrollment for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Include requirements school districts must adhere to re-hire tenure teachers if released based on enrollment.”

Response 7: Our agency does not collect the names of teachers that have been released due to a decline in enrollment. Therefore, we have no documents to provide in response to this portion of your request.

Regarding requirements to rehire teachers that have been released due to RIF, please see the School Code (105 ILCS 5/24-12) at the following link: http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/iucs/fulltext.asp?DocName=010500050K24-12.

If you have questions, please contact Megan Griffin at (217) 782-4648 or mgriffin@isbe.net.

Sincerely,
Matt Vanover
Director of Public Information

Attachments