



Jan. 4, 2010

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Happy New Year! I know this is a hectic time for all of us as we try to meet some very tight timelines, but I hope you were at least able to get some time for yourself, to spend with family and friends, over the holiday break.

The quarterly jobs reporting for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is due tomorrow. The federal Office of Management and Budget issued clarifying guidance late last month that I know has been communicated to you already. More information about that guidance follows later in this Weekly Message. I ask you to please review this and submit your report to us as soon as possible.

We are in the process of preparing Illinois' Race to the Top (RT3) application, which is due in Washington on Jan. 19, 2010. As part of the evaluation process, the U.S. Department of Education will consider the commitment of local districts to participate in RT3 and whether that commitment will allow for the State's reform plan to have sufficient impact. As part of this application process, we are asking you to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to show your district's willingness to partner with us, which we will in turn submit to Washington with our application.

At a minimum, the Superintendent for each district must sign on. But we will receive additional consideration if local board presidents and local union leaders sign on as well. We are asking that you return the signed and completed MOU's to rt3mou@isbe.net by Jan. 11, 2010. We know this is a very tight timeline and may require you to call a special board meeting this week to review the MOU. Please know that I, along with several other state school chiefs, asked for additional time from the feds, but were denied.

I want to thank those of you who joined us for the Race to the Top Webinars on Dec. 18. Several hundred of you were able to go over the application and MOU in greater detail. For those of you who were unable to participate, you can review the Webinars at <http://www.isbe.net/racetothetop/>. Whether or not to sign the MOU is a local decision. But as many of you have already noted to me, most of these reforms are ones to which we as an education community have already committed. The additional RT3 funding simply allows us to move much more quickly to implement them.

The Race to the Top is a highly competitive grant process open to all states. Secretary Arne Duncan has said most states will not receive funding in this first round. However, we are still developing an application because if we're not initially successful, we will gain valuable feedback for a second round application.

If selected, Illinois could receive in excess of \$400 million, half of which would be distributed to participating districts and the other half would be retained by ISBE for implementation of statewide reforms. RT3 funds may only be used for those purposes specifically spelled out in our application and may not be used for other purposes such as General State Aid.

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Have a great 2010! Remember to date all checks and other documents with the new year.

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 252 (Driver Education)** – Public comment period ends Jan. 4.
- **IAAE Service Recognition Awards nomination deadline** – Jan. 4
- **School Year 2011 Annual Commodity Order Period** – Jan. 4 through Feb. 1
- **ARRA data for the period ending Dec. 31 deadline** – Jan. 5
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Spring 2010** – Jan. 8
- **Request for Proposals for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Enhancing Education Through Technology Competitive Grant: Illinois School Reform Through Technology Initiative** – Deadline for proposals, Jan. 8.
- **Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding deadline** – Jan. 11
- **Immigrant Education Program Student Report deadline** – Jan. 15
- **Illinois Association for Gifted Children Convention** – Feb. 7-9
- **Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education) and Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant)** – Public comment period ends Feb. 15
- **Part 35 (Mentoring Program for New Principals) and Part 145 (Temporary Relocation Expenses)** – Public comment period ends Feb. 22.
- **Non-Certified Staff Salary Study survey deadline** – March 1
- **Illinois Young Authors' Conference in Bloomington-Normal** – May 15
- **2009-10 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30

Board News

Quinn Appoints New Members As Joyce Karon Completes Term

James Baumann of Lake Bluff, Steven Gilford of Evanston and Melinda LaBarre of Springfield were appointed last month to the Illinois State Board of Education by Gov. Pat Quinn. They fill two vacancies on the board and replace board member Joyce Karon.

Baumann is the president and chief executive officer of American Recreation Products Inc. He has served on the Board of Directors for the Golden Apple Foundation since 1992, a non-profit organization that honors and supports excellence in teaching.

Gilford is a senior partner in the Litigation and Dispute Resolution Department, co-head of the Insurance Recovery and Counseling Group, and head of the Chicago office of Proskauer Rose. He served as a member of Evanston Township District 202 School Board from 1993 to 2005, including a term as president from 1996 to 1998.

LaBarre started as a teacher in Springfield District 186, where she went on to serve as a principal for two schools in the district and later as a consultant for the Ball Education Foundation. LaBarre served as a member of the Springfield School Board from 2003 to 2009.

The governor appointed Karon to the P-20 Council, an advisory panel that will make recommendations to Quinn about strengthening Illinois' education system, including working on Race to the Top. Karon was appointed to the Illinois State Board of Education in 2003.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Dec. 31 ARRA Reporting Deadline Jan. 5

All local education agencies (LEAs) must report American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) data for the period ending Dec. 31, 2009, on or before Tuesday Jan. 5, 2010.

Reporting must be completed for all LEAs that have applied for and/or received ARRA funds. Required ARRA data includes two primary elements: the number

of jobs created/retained reflected as full-time equivalent and any vendor payments that were \$25,000 or more. ARRA data must be reported regardless of whether any jobs were created/retained or a payment was made to a vendor of \$25,000 or more.

Significant modifications have been made to ARRA reporting through the Electronic Expenditure Reporting System since Sept. 30. Please read the updated detailed instructions and procedures which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf.

The two major changes include:

ARRA data can be reported separately from expenditure data. This modification allows LEAs to submit quarterly ARRA data only without having to prepare and file expenditures at the same time. LEAs have the option of submitting ARRA data and expenditures at the same time if they are prepared to do so. But expenditures are not required to be submitted by the five calendar day deadline following the end of the reporting period. If the LEA elects to file ARRA data only, an expenditure report must be submitted within 30 days from the end of the reporting period (i.e. Dec. 31 expenditures due Jan. 31, 2010).

ARRA data can be submitted even if ARRA funds have not been received. LEAs that have applied for ARRA funding but are waiting for final approval of their grant can report ARRA data. LEAs that may have hired/retained a staff person and/or made a vendor payment of \$25,000 or more with local funds in anticipation of the ARRA funding can report this information prior to actually receiving funds. This capability is only available for ARRA grants contained within the electronic Grants Management System (i.e. Title I and IDEA Part B Flow Through and Preschool).

Questions regarding ARRA reporting can be directed to the Funding and Disbursement Services Division at 217-782-5256.

Other Important ARRA Reminders

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) is an unprecedented effort to stimulate the economy in the short term and invest in education and other essential public services to ensure the long-term economic health of our nation. Illinois will receive over \$3 billion in stimulus funds for education. State and local education agencies are charged with ensuring that all ARRA funds are spent prudently with an extraordinary level of transparency. With that in mind,

please be mindful of the following information and critical issues:

ARRA Allocations and Disbursements: ISBE updates ARRA allocations as they are determined. Disbursements are updated each month.

Allocations can be accessed at

http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_summary_allocations.pdf.

FY 2009 disbursements can be accessed at

http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/fy09_arra_disbursements.pdf.

FY 2010 disbursements can be accessed at

http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/fy10_arra_disbursements.pdf.

Proper Segregation: All ARRA funds must be accounted for separately on the revenue and expenditure side of the ledger. All Federal grant programs, including ARRA programs, are assigned a unique Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number (CFDA). In accordance with ARRA requirements, ISBE has assigned a unique four digit revenue code for all ARRA funds. A summary of all ARRA programs, total grant award, ISBE revenue code and CFDA number can be found on our ARRA home page at

<http://www.isbe.net/arra/default.htm>. Expenditures by all local education agencies (LEAs) must be documented by Fund, Function, Object and ARRA Revenue Code. LEAs are required to follow Part 100 administrative regulations (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing) which can be accessed at

http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/23IAC100EmergAmnd_Code.pdf.

Cash Management: Federal regulations prescribe basic standards and methods under which Federal payments are distributed from the Illinois State Board of Education to LEAs. Although reimbursement is the preferred method, federal regulations allow for LEAs to be paid in advance as long as the time elapsed between the receipt of the federal funds and actual expenditures at the LEA are minimized. It is imperative that all LEAs examine the monthly payment schedules on their Federal grant programs to ensure that the receipt of Federal funds correspond as closely as possible to anticipated expenditures to avoid excess cash. While this standard applies to all Federal programs, it is especially important for LEAs as ARRA funds are received. If the LEA

anticipates that receipt of Federal funds will exceed anticipated expenditures, please contact the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256 for procedures on making a payment schedule adjustment.

Salaries and fringe benefits are normally expended in equal intervals and should be projected in this manner. When teachers are paid on a 12-month salary basis and the project period is for nine months, the three months' salaries and related fringe benefits paid after the project ends (and after the service has been rendered/activity has occurred) should be included in the last project payment. Equipment, supplies, contracted services and in-service activities should have the payment requested in the month for which the expenditure is anticipated. More detailed information can be found in the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures, which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbook.pdf.

Expenditure reports are required to be submitted for each Federal program on a quarterly basis. Excess cash is determined when expenditures plus outstanding obligations are less than the funds received through each quarter. Any positive balance will be frozen from the next scheduled payment(s) for the LEA until a subsequent expenditure report is submitted with a zero or negative balance.

Accumulated Interest: In addition, Federal regulations address requirements when interest is earned on Federal cash advances. Specifically, the regulation states: “[G]rantees and subgrantees shall promptly, but at least quarterly, remit interest earned on advances to the Federal agency. The grantee or subgrantee may keep interest amounts up to \$100 per year for administrative expenses.”

It is recommended that LEAs create a separate account specific for the receipt of Federal funds. Per the Federal rule, if interest is earned greater than \$100, a check must be remitted “promptly, but at least quarterly”. ISBE is implementing a procedural change in returning Federal interest checks. Effective immediately, all interest checks must be remitted to: Illinois State Board of Education, Division of Funding and Disbursement Services, 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL 62777.

ISBE will return the aggregate amount of all interest checks received to the appropriate Federal agency.

Timely Reporting: Section 1512 of ARRA requires reports on the use of ARRA funding by each agency that awards ARRA funds (e.g. ISBE) no later than the 10th day after the end of each calendar quarter. Due to the short timeline, LEAs must transmit ARRA data within five calendar days to ISBE from the end of each quarter so that the ten day submission requirement is met. Reports not submitted on or before the five day calendar deadline will result in a freeze of future scheduled payments for the respective ARRA program. Please read the updated detailed instructions and reporting procedures which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf.

ARRA reports are aimed at providing transparency and accountability for the use of these funds. In addition to the normal collection of quarterly grant expenditures, ARRA requires that LEAs include the following detailed information:

- The number of jobs created or retained reflected as full-time equivalent (FTE);
- Vendors that receive a payment of \$25,000 or more.

Central Contractor Registration Requirement: Each LEA receiving ARRA funds must register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) site. CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Federal Government. CCR collects, validates, stores and disseminates data in support of agency acquisition missions. There is no cost to registrants. LEAs must secure a D-U-N-S number prior to registering with CCR. Additional information is available at <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/default.aspx>.

Further Guidance: Guidance documents on ARRA Reporting can be accessed at:

June 22, 2009 OMB Guidance
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_fy2009/m09-21.pdf

September 2009 Dept of Education Jobs Guidance
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance-on-jobs-creation.doc>

October 5, 2009 Dept of Education Reporting Guidance
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance-1512-quarterly-reporting.doc>

OMB Reporting Frequently Asked Questions
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/recovery_faqs/

School Level Expenditure Report Requirement

A new school level expenditure report is being required per the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for local education agencies (LEAs) that are entitled to funds under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provided under ARRA (i.e., LEAs that are entitled to ARRA Title I funds calculated under the Targeted Grant and Education Finance Incentive Grant formulas). Such LEAs are required to report school-by-school expenditures from state and local funds for the 2008-09 school year for all of their schools (not just Title I schools). The U.S. Department of Education states that they will use these data to examine the extent to which school-level education resources are distributed equitably within and across LEAs.

To facilitate this required reporting, we are creating a new IWAS application. While the application is not yet available, we did want to alert school districts to this new reporting requirement. Our intent is to have this system available in January, as the report of this data is due to the Department of Education by March 31.

This specific report is focused on only state and local fund expenditures for Regular K-12 instruction, within four categories:

- Personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff.
- Personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only.
- Personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only.
- Non-personnel expenditures at the school level (if available).

An Excel worksheet will be available for download and completion. The specific function and object codes, per Part 100 Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting and Auditing, will be provided to assist in the calculation of reporting data per school.

School level expenditures to be excluded from this report include those:

- From federal program funds.
- From special education funds.
- Not associated with regular K-12 programs, such as preschool and adult education.

- That serve students from more than one school attendance area, such as summer school.
- Expenditures for employee benefits.

Further information will be made available to you. If you have any questions, please contact Sally Cray of the Division of Funding and Disbursements, at 217-782-5256 or scray@isbe.net.

Funding and Disbursements

Final FY 2010 Mandated Categorical Prorations

Final prorations and payments have been calculated for all 2008-09 school year categorical claims that will be vouchered in FY 2010. Payments for the final three quarters except for Special Education Orphanage have been loaded in FRIS Inquiry <http://webprod1.isbe.net/FRISInquiry/> for reference. If you have questions regarding this information, contact the Division of Funding and Disbursements at 217-782-5256.

- Special Education Personnel – 100 percent
- Special Education Private Facility – 99.6 percent
- Special Education Funding for Children Requiring Special Education Services – 100 percent
- Special Education Summer School – 100 percent
- Special Education Orphanage – 100 percent
- Special Education Transportation – 100 percent
- Regular/Vocational Transportation – 100 percent

Estimated Best Three Months Average Daily Attendance IWAS Application

The annual "Estimated Best Three Months Average Daily Attendance" application is available on IWAS. We request that the estimate be provided to the Illinois State Board of Education on or before Jan. 15. The figure you will report is the estimated best three months average daily attendance for the 2009-10 school year.

The estimates you provide will be used as a resource by the General Assembly to determine the General State Aid (GSA) appropriation level for the 2009-10 claim year payable during Fiscal Year 2011. Accurate estimates are critical for district level budget purposes, as projected GSA entitlements will be based on these estimated figures.

Any questions regarding this system can be directed to Toni Waggoner (twaggone@isbe.net) or Jason Hall

(jhall@isbe.net) at 217-782-0249 or Jim Mathes (jmathes@isbe.net) at 217-782-5256.

New Census Estimates Released for FY11 Title I Low Income

The U.S. Department of Education has released the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for income year 2008. These estimates will be used to calculate FY11 Title I Allocations. A file of 2008 Poverty Data, by Local Education Agency (LEA) is provided in an alphabetical listing of LEAs, Poverty Count, 5-17 Population, Poverty Percentage and Total Population at http://www.isbe.net/funding/excel/census_poverty.xls.

With this data, LEAs can determine their potential eligibility for Basic, Concentration, Targeted and Education Finance Incentive Grants (EFIG).

Basic Grant eligibility: An LEA must have at least 10 poverty children and the number of poverty children must be greater than 2 percent of the LEA population of children ages 5-17.

Concentration Grant eligibility: An LEA must have at least 6,500 poverty children or the number of those children exceeds 15 percent of the total 5-17 population.

Targeted and EFIG grant qualifications: An LEA must have at least 10 poverty children and that number must be at least 5 percent of the 5-17 population.

The following link to the Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/index.html>, provides various aspects of the SAIPE count. We will be using the 2008 data to calculate SY 2010-11 Title I, Part A allocations because they are the most recent available data.

Superintendents, business managers and Title I directors should carefully examine the data for their LEA as this will be the first indication as to whether your LEA may be gaining or losing in eligibility for Title I funds in FY11. ISBE neither controls nor generates the data.

Note that this preliminary data does not include other non-census information, such as foster, neglected or delinquent counts that may be used to calculate Title I allocations.

If you have questions on the information provided in this message, please contact Sally Cray or Kim

Lewis in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

Legal

School Bus Communication Device Changes – Public Act 96-0818

Senate Bill 0932 was recently signed into law as Public Act 96-0818 with an effective date of Nov. 17, 2009. This Public Act makes changes to the Illinois Vehicle Code regarding pre- and post-trip school bus inspections and school bus driver communication devices.

A number of inquiries have been received regarding the new provision in Section 12-813.1(e) of the Vehicle Code [625 ILCS 5/12-813.1(e)], which requires school buses to contain and utilize two-way radios while the bus is in possession of a school bus driver. Inquiries have focused on whether this two-way radio requirement can be satisfied by the bus driver's possession and utilization of a cellular radio telecommunication device that has digital two-way radio service capability.

In light of these inquiries, ISBE staff members have reviewed the new requirement in consultation with Illinois Department of Transportation. Based on legislative intent and given that the changes to this Section do not modify or eliminate the permissibility of cellular radio telecommunication devices with digital two-way radio service capabilities, we have concluded that school buses that contain and utilize such cellular devices with two-way radio capabilities will be in compliance with the new requirement.

The full text of this Public Act is available on the Illinois General Assembly Web site at <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=096-0818&GA=096>.

Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

2009-10 Teacher Service Record – Re-opened for Missing Data

The deadline to submit 2009-10 Teacher Service Record (TSR) data was midnight Dec. 15. We wish to acknowledge and sincerely thank the 1,000-plus district-level entities that submitted on time. Unfortunately, more than 100 entities did not submit data, which creates a problem for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) in terms of required federal reporting and other data uses.

ISBE has therefore re-opened the fall data collection through midnight Jan. 8. Entities that have not yet submitted MUST do so by this new (and final) deadline. We ask that you submit as soon as you can and not wait until the last day.

Questions about completing the 2009-10 TSR may be directed to the ISBE Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at tsr@isbe.net or 217-782-3950. On Jan. 8, staff will be available to respond to e-mails and take calls until 4 p.m. CST.

Charter Schools

Illinois Network of Charter Schools Offers Charter Starter Webinar

Registration is under way for the Illinois Network of Charter Schools' webinar titled "Designing a High-Quality Charter School." It is set for 3:30-5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21. Register at <http://www.incschools.org>.

The Charter Starter Webinar will provide information to begin planning a charter public school in Chicago's suburbs or Greater Illinois.

- Understand the process and requirements for charter school start-up in Illinois.
- Gain a roadmap for designing an excellent school.
- Learn about common stumbling blocks and how to overcome them.
- Get answers to your pressing questions.

This session is designed to complement "Paving a New Path: A Guidebook for Illinois Charter Public School Development." To download or order "Paving a New Path," visit <http://www.incschools.org>.

For more information, contact Anne Levy Brown at alevybrown@incschools.org or 312-235-0798, ext. 18.

Longitudinal Data System

Illinois Longitudinal Data System Data Advisory Committee

Illinois Longitudinal Data System Data Advisory Committee was established as a result of the Cooperative Agreement that ISBE has with the Department of Education under the Institute for Educational Science.

The committee is comprised of representatives from the Illinois Association of School Boards, Illinois Board of

Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Education Research Council, Illinois Federation of Teachers, Illinois Education Association, Illinois Principal Association, Illinois Student Assistance Commission, Legislative Research Unit, Large Unit District Association, The Illinois Business Roundtable, The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Chicago Public Schools and the Illinois Early Learning Council.

This committee will provide advice to ISBE as we build the Illinois Longitudinal Data System and the data warehouse. It will meet monthly and all meeting material and information regarding the Longitudinal Data System will be posted to the ISBE Web site.

Innovation and Improvement

Illinois Association for Gifted Children Convention Scheduled for Feb. 7-9

The 15th annual Illinois Association for Gifted Children Convention will be held Feb. 7-9 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown.

The convention will offer a variety of sessions on Feb. 8 and 9. There are quarter-day sessions organized around the following strands: program development and social and emotional needs. In addition, Feb. 7 will have special parent and educator workshops in the afternoon, as well as a Sunday evening session.

For more information, including the schedule and registration brochure, visit <http://www.iagcgifted.org> and click on "convention."

Illinois Association for Gifted Children is an organization of parents, educators, and others committed to the education and development of children with diverse gifts and talents. They educate, support and influence those who touch the lives of children and focus our energies to meet the needs of children with gifts and talents in Illinois through: advocacy, standards, and networking.

Curriculum and Instruction

Guide Offers Ways to Prevent and Respond to School Violence

The Office of Justice Programs' Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), in coordination with the International Association of Chiefs of Police, published a new edition of its "Guide for Preventing and Responding to School Violence." Designed to assist local communities, the

guide describes the roles of the school, community, families, law enforcement and justice system in working together to take effective action to address school violence. The guide is available online at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/IACP_School_Violence.pdf.

Top Rankings Awarded to Illinois Schools With School-based Health Centers

For the third year in a row, the U.S. News and Report has ranked the nation's best high schools and included 70 Illinois schools. Of the 30 Illinois high schools who received the Bronze ranking, three have school-based health centers (SBHCs) and of the 37 Illinois schools with a Silver ranking, two host SBHCs. Evanston Township High School and Lake View High School in Chicago received the Silver ranking and South Beloit High School, Carbondale High School and Urbana High School received the Bronze ranking. Nearly 300 Illinois high schools were eligible for full analysis.

U.S. News analyzed how schools educate all their students; how schools educate their disadvantaged students; and finally, how schools educate their college bound students. Analyses are based on statewide test scores, Advanced Placement tests and International Baccalaureate tests.

It is an undeniable fact that a healthy child is a teachable child, and, today, students are facing a myriad of health challenges that compromise academic potential, such as obesity, asthma, risky sexual behaviors, substance abuse and lack of access to health care.

School-based health centers (SBHCs) function like a doctor's office in a school and provide quality health-care services like immunizations, asthma care and mental health services to students on school grounds or in close proximity to a school. They are predominantly located in communities where student populations experience both health and educational disparities. There are 58 SBHCs in Illinois. Forty school-based health centers reported serving 98 schools in 15 counties across Illinois.

It's no wonder that SBHCs would be present in the list of schools awarded U.S. News' top rankings. They play an integral role in the overall well-being and academic success of students, their families, their schools and their communities. They increase school-connectedness for students and create a learning friendly environment.

To learn more about Illinois school health centers please contact Divya Mohan Little at dmohanlittle@ilmaternal.org.

To view the full report on America's Best High Schools, visit: <http://www.usnews.com/sections/education/high-schools/>.

Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant

This competitive grant program allows teachers in Illinois to take their students to study natural and cultural diversity in the state. The maximum award amount per teacher is \$500. To access the application, visit <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/grants.htm>. The deadline for submission is Jan. 31.

Register Now for Earth Day in the Parks

Get your students involved through the Earth Day in the Parks program from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Participating state parks will offer students the opportunity to get their hands dirty and experience nature as they perform such duties as removing invasive exotic plants, planting native trees and wildflowers and building and installing bird nesting boxes. Instructions and the application, along with a list of participating state parks and associated projects, can be found at <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/EDITPinstructions.htm>. Applications must be received by Feb. 28.

Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest

Students in grades kindergarten through 12th can learn about waterfowl and wetland conservation as they design artwork depicting North American waterfowl species. The application deadline is March 15. The entry form and guidelines for the contest are available at <http://www.fws.gov/juniorduck/ArtContest.htm>.

Teaching East Asian Literature

A "must" workshop for literature teachers interested in the literary works, history, religion, culture, family and language of China, Japan and Korea is set for July 11-16 in Bloomington, Ind. Participation includes free housing and at least one meal per day, certificate of completion, option to purchase three graduate credits at in-state rate and more. If you would like more information, visit <http://www.iu.edu/~case/outreach/educators/literature>. The deadline for submission is March 8.

Nutrition

Food Allergy Guidelines Committee – Public Act 96-0349

By July 1, 2010, the Illinois State Board of Education, in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Public Health, shall make available to each school board guidelines for the management of students with life-threatening food allergies developed by an ad hoc committee. By Jan. 1, 2011, each school board shall implement policy based on these guidelines. Also, at least every two years, an in-service training program for school personnel who work with students must be conducted by persons with expertise in anaphylactic reactions and management.

The committee will hold its first meeting on Jan. 20, 2010, in Lombard. For more information on the structure of the guidelines, committee members and meeting, go to http://www.isbe.net/food_allergy/default.htm.

School Year 2011 Annual Commodity Order Period Is Here

The Illinois Commodity System (ICS) has started accepting orders for next school year. The deadline for placing your SY2011 order is Monday, Feb. 1.

Schools that choose to divert commodities to processors need to watch the ICS Message Board carefully starting in February for important news regarding processors who are receiving trucks of commodities and those that are not. Orders placed with processors that do not receive trucks can be changed to those processors that are receiving trucks from Feb. 6 through Feb. 14. If you placed an order with a processor that did not get a truck, that order will be deleted.

You can call Food Distribution Program staff at 217-782-2491 if you have any questions regarding the annual order process.

Volunteer With Action For Healthy Kids Now

Visit <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>, click on “In Your State” to learn more on how to make a difference in schools to help students eat healthier and become more physically active. The Illinois teams’ goals are:

- Educate students on healthy living and how to make changes in their school to impact health.

- Train schools to use Fuel Up to Play 60 to increase awareness of wellness programs in schools.
- Recruit community members to become change agents for health in their school communities.

Over 350 people have joined to date, as advocates, contributors, to attend ILAFHK events and more.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

Two proposed rulemakings recently reviewed by the Illinois State Board of Education are available for public comment. The proposals have been posted on the agency’s Web site at <http://www.isbe.net/rules>; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

Part 35 (Mentoring for New Principals)

Sets forth the process to determine whether sufficient funds are available to serve second-year principals in the mentoring program; allows only second-year principals to be served if funds are insufficient to serve all first-year principals; and makes numerous other changes to update and streamline the program.

Deadline for Public Comment: Feb. 22

Part 145 (Temporary Relocation Expenses)

Requires school districts to consider other resources and in-kind contributions when estimating both their ability to repay a temporary relocation loan and the expenses they anticipate incurring because of the relocation; provides for annual renewal applications; and makes other procedural requirements necessary for program accountability and management.

Deadline for Public Comment: Feb. 22

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that a set of amendments recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education are in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency’s Web site at <http://www.isbe.net/rules>. Please choose “Rules Currently in Effect” and scroll to the Part number.

Part 120 (Pupil Transportation Reimbursement)

Adds language affecting school districts that choose to provide transportation to and from child care locations; amendments require consistent actions on the part of school districts choosing to provide transportation for students in such locations. Other technical corrections have also been made.

Affected Sections: 120.30, 120.50, 120.90, and 120.110
Effective Date: Nov. 2, 2009

Professional Development

Presenters and Judges Sought For Conference on Biotechnology Education

The Biotechnology Institute is gearing up for its annual Conference on Biotechnology Education, which is held in conjunction with the Biotechnology Industry Organization's International Convention. Go to <http://www.biotechinstitute.org> for all the details and registration for the event set for April 30 through May 6.

Presenters are sought for the conference. Middle school, high school and post-secondary instructors and nonprofit and industry representatives with exemplary programs are invited to submit proposals. The institute would like to highlight and develop a body of outstanding teaching practices and programs available to all educators of biotechnology. All biotechnology educators and those interested in biotechnology education are encouraged to attend the Best Practices Day. There is no fee or cost to present at Best Practices Day on May 2, and the Institute does not provide any funding to cover travel and lodging. However, presenters are offered a one-day pass to the BIO International Convention. Proposals are due by Feb. 1. For more information, contact Tom Keller at 703-248-8681 or tkeller@biotechinstitute.org.

The Biotechnology Institute manages the sanofi-aventis International BioGENEius Challenge. Sixteen high school students who have been recognized at the regional level in the U.S. and Western Australia and nationally in Canada for their research in biotechnology will compete as part of the conference on May 3. Judges are sought for a panel to evaluate the students. For more information, contact Janelle K. Curtis at 703-248-8681, ext. 1774 or jcurtis@biotechinstitute.org.

Student Opportunities

Radon Video Contest Under Way

The 2010 Illinois High School Radon Video Contest encourages high school students to create a 60-second YouTube video that addresses the health hazards of radon and urges people to test their homes for the radioactive gas.

The contest is sponsored by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and the American Lung Association in Illinois (ALA-IL) in an effort to increase

public awareness about radon, which is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S.

The video can be created by an individual student, group of students or classroom. The winning entrants' school will receive a \$2,000 prize to be used for curricular activities, and the winning student or students will receive a \$1,000 prize. The winning video will also be featured on the IEMA and ALA-IL Web sites.

Video entries must be submitted by March 12, and will be judged by a combination of a panel from sponsoring organizations and public online polling. For full details about the contest, including entry and release forms, visit the ALA-IL website at <http://www.lungil.org>.

College Financial Aid Handbook Available from the American Legion

The American Legion's latest college financial aid handbook is available online for free at <http://needalift.org>. The publication features lists of scholarships available at the national and state level. The "Need a Lift?" handbook also features tips on selecting a school, directions on applying for financial aid and many other resources for college-bound students.

A list of American Legion scholarships is also available at <http://www.legion.org/scholarships>. The American Legion is the nation's largest veterans service organization with 2.5 million members.

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

Read highlights from recent education news clips at <http://www.isbe.net/news/2009/newsclips/091225.htm> and <http://www.isbe.net/news/2010/newsclips/100101.htm>.