



Illinois State Board of Education

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Weekly Message

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State Superintendent (Interim)

January 8, 2007

Editor's Note:

Interim Superintendent Christopher Koch is traveling this week and making presentations to Committees of the General Assembly.

He asked that you make special note of the article below on **Evaluation of Principals**.

Have a great week.—Editor

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Upcoming Deadlines

- **AYP Appeals: Elementary, Middle, Junior High** – January 10
- **Waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Spring 2007** – January 12, 2007
- **Preschool Social and Emotional Consultation Services RFP** – January 25, 2007
- **ICLCS Grant Applications** – January 31, 2007
- **Coming Up Taller Grant Applications** – January 31, 2007
- **Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Assistance Planning Grant** – February 1, 2007
- **21st Community Learning Center RFP** – March 16, 2007
- **Non-Certified Staff Salary Study** - March 31, 2007

Teacher Certification

Evaluation of Principals

Public Act 94-1039 requires Illinois public school districts (except those serving cities of 500,000 or greater) to establish a principal evaluation plan in accordance with the law and to conduct principal evaluations by February 1 of each year if the principal is covered by a single-year contract or by February 1 of the final year of the contract if the principal is covered by a multi-year contract. The effective date of the legislation requires that principals with a single-year contract must be evaluated by February 1, 2007.

The evaluation must include a description of the principal's duties, responsibilities, and the standards to which the principal is expected to conform. The evaluation must be performed by the district

superintendent, the superintendent's designee, or (in the absence of the superintendent or designee) an individual appointed by the school board who holds a registered Type 75 State administrative certificate. The evaluation must be in writing and must at least 1) consider the principal's specific duties, responsibilities, management, and competence as a principal, 2) specify the principal's strengths and weaknesses, with supporting reasons, and 3) align with the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards or research-based district standards. The evaluation must be included in the principal's personnel file and the principal must be provided with a copy.

Failure by the district to evaluate a principal and provide a copy of the evaluation to the principal at least once during the term of the principal's contract will be considered evidence that the principal is performing in a satisfactory manner and will automatically extend the

principal's contract for a one year period beyond the contract expiration date.

Details of Public Act 94-1039 are available online at <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=094-1039&GA=094>.

The Illinois Professional School Leader Standards are online at http://www.isbe.net/profprep/CASCDvr/pdfs/29100_ILprofschleader.pdf. In addition, the Illinois Principals Association has materials related to this requirement online at <http://www.ilprincipals.org/>.

English Language Learning

Assessing English Language Learners (ELLs): A Collaborative Invitation for Educators

As part of a collaborative project, the ISBE Divisions of Assessment and English Language Learning (DELL) and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) are seeking the assistance of local educators to suggest improvements for the ACCESS for ELLs © Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs and Kindergarten W-APT test. Specifically, we will be adapting the current tests to the new Pre K-K WIDA standards.

Local educators are invited to facilitate future test development in any of the five ways described below.

1. Respond to a survey on how you currently use the K-WAPT test, what you use it for, and your reaction to individual items and to administration procedures. This information will guide us in framing the next version of the K-WAPT and maximize use for teachers and administrators. (The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.)
2. Allow a representative of ISBE/CAL to view the administration of the Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs during the IL test window opening January 15, 2007. This will allow us to gather observational data about the strengths and weaknesses of the current test administration protocol and record test samples. This option will require local districts to obtain parental release forms for the recordings. A brief interview with the kindergarten teacher(s) administering ACCESS will follow the observation.
3. Serve as an item writer for the new instruments. While the level of effort may vary, CAL will reimburse experienced kindergarten teachers for their time at \$30.00 per hour. In addition to item writing, participating kindergarten teachers will participate in one-day training to be held in Illinois at a time and date still to be determined.

4. Serve on an item basis and content review panel in early April 2007. This will be a day long effort held at a still to be determined location. Transportation and per diem expenses will be paid by CAL and the effort will qualify for professional development units.
5. Allow ISBE Student Assessment/CAL to field test the new test instruments in your district schools during May 2007. These tests will be conducted by staff from CAL.

Educators willing to participate in any of the options described above should contact **Emily Evans** at CAL by email cevans@cal.org or by phone at 202-355-1551.

Grant Opportunities

Grant for chemistry teachers in rural high schools announced



The Institute for Chemistry Literacy and Computational Science (ICLCS) has announced a new grant, sponsored by the National Science Foundation, to assist chemistry teachers in rural high schools throughout Illinois. Program information is available at: <http://iclcs.uiuc.edu/program/index.html>.

ICLCS is a program of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Department of Chemistry, the College of Medicine, and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, in partnership with A-C Central School District #262 and the Regional Office of Education #38.

ICLCS encourages teachers to apply by January 31, 2007, at <http://iclcs.uiuc.edu/application/>.

President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities announces grant opportunity

The President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities has announced the Coming Up Taller Awards. These awards seek to promote a creative, engaged, skilled, and confident generation of young people. Each year the Coming Up Taller Awards recognize and reward excellence in after-school and out-of-school arts and humanities programs for underserved children and youth.

Award recipients receive \$10,000 each, an individualized plaque, and an invitation to attend the annual Coming Up Taller Leadership Enhancement Conference. We encourage programs initiated by museums, libraries, performing arts organizations, universities, colleges, arts centers, community service organizations, schools, businesses, and eligible government entities to consider

participating. In its tenth year, the Coming Up Taller Awards support after-school and out-of-school programs that are tangible examples of the power of the arts and the humanities to encourage young people's creativity and to provide them with learning opportunities, chances to contribute to their community, and ways to take responsibility for their own futures.

Coming Up Taller programs reflect a broad range of goals and serve youth and communities in various important ways: job training, improved school performance, community development, and cultural preservation and rejuvenation. For more information visit:

<http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do?mode=VIEW&oppId=11898>

Legislative Update

Fall Veto Session

The fall Veto Session of the 94th General Assembly wrapped up on Thursday, November 30, 2006. The legislature resumed Sunday, January 7, 2007 to finish final business for the 94th General Assembly. On January 10, new members of the General Assembly will be sworn in and the 95th General Assembly will officially begin.

Veto Session Update

The following legislation passed in Veto Session and is now awaiting further action:

- **SB 380** –Allows Lincoln-Way Community Unit School District 210 to increase its general obligation bond debt limitation above the statutory allowance; allows Ford Heights School District 169 the authority to levy a supplemental tax for three years without voter referendum that will provide the district with a total of \$3.2 million; amends the definition of "public infrastructure" in the Municipal Code to include public school buildings in the Village of Forsyth, thereby allowing the village to impose referenda-approved sales taxes in order to fund school construction and maintenance; permits Oak Park River Forest Community High School District, Oak Park School District 97 and River Forest School District 90 to withdraw from the jurisdiction and authority of the Proviso and Cicero Township Trustees of Schools and Township School Treasurer. This would be allowed to be done by School Board Resolution, not by referenda, as is currently required - Vetoes by Governor; Senate voted to override; awaiting vote in House on override motion

The following legislation passed the General Assembly in Veto Session and has gone to the Governor for action:

- **SB 1856** - Repeals obsolete and duplicative sections of the School Code
- **SB 2762** - The statute on physical education was amended a couple of years ago to allow a school board to excuse students in grades 9 through 12 from physical education if that time was needed to receive special education services. SB 2762 expands the grade range from grade nine to grade three and states that it is not a school board determination - that the parents or guardian must agree. It also sets up parameters for situations where there is no agreement between the school and parent/guardian.
- **SB 2796** - Makes changes to Due Process Hearing Procedures for Special Education

This legislation has been enacted into law:

- **SB 2477 (Public Act 94-1071)** - Changes the definition of "municipal corporation" until July 1, 2011 to include a school district that (i) was organized prior to 1860, (ii) is located partly within a city originally incorporated prior to 1840, and (iii) entered into a lease with a Public Building Commission prior to 1993, and its board of education. The Governor amendatorily vetoed this bill in July. During Veto Session, the General Assembly overrode the veto and it has now become law.

Proposed ISBE Legislation for Spring 2007

To view legislation proposed by Agency staff for the Spring 2007 legislative session, go to http://www.isbe.net/gov_relations/default.htm and click on the link titled "ISBE Proposed Legislation Summary". This chart will show all staff proposals and the proposal updates as the Board instructs the agency in moving forward or not moving forward with the initiatives.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Wills nwills@isbe.net or Josh Jacobs jjacobs@isbe.net in the Governmental Relations Division.

National Weather Service

Register weather radios

During the past several months, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Weather Service (NWS) have sent weather radios purchased through a FEMA grant to every public school in the country. These weather radios were sent with instructions for schools to register them upon receipt. To date, only about 14 percent of the schools have done this.



NWS requests that schools register their weather radios by visiting: <http://public-alert-radio.nws.noaa.gov/>

Federal Grants and Programs

21st Century Community Learning Centers Request for Proposals

The Federal Grants and Programs Division announces the release of the Fiscal Year (FY) 08 21st Century Community Learning Centers program Request for Proposals (RFP) that can be accessed at <http://www.isbe.net/21cclc>. The FY 08 grant will provide funds in the amount of \$12 million for quality, out of school programming for Illinois students attending low performing, high poverty schools.

These centers provide students with academic enrichment opportunities, as well as artistic, cultural, and recreational activities to complement their regular academic programs. Eligible applicants include local education agencies, charter schools, area vocational centers; community based organizations, including faith-based organizations; or other public and private entities. ROEs/ISCs may apply for funds to coordinate and carry out activities for LEAs, participating organizations, or a consortium of eligible applicants. Proposals are due March 16, 2007 by 5 p.m.

Current grantees from FY 04, 05 and/or FY07 cohorts may apply for new funds if the funds will be used to expand or enhance current activities, e.g., to serve additional grade levels or establish programs in schools within the district that are not now participating in the program. Current grantees (FY 03 cohort) in their fifth year of funding may apply for funds as if they were a new applicant provided that the proposed use of funds meets the requirements of the program.

Technical assistance conferences will be held from 9 a.m. until noon on January 22 at the University of Illinois Campus in Chicago; on January 23 at the Holiday Inn Select in Tinley Park; and on February 2 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield. For more information, contact **Gail Meisner** at 217-524-4832.

Professional Development

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum Teacher Workshop Series

The Education Department of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM) announced its calendar of complimentary workshops for educators. These hands-on, in-depth workshops provide background content, lesson plans, activities and resources on a variety of topics relating to Abraham Lincoln and Illinois

History. All workshops are geared to the Illinois State Learning Standards.

On Friday and Saturday, January 26 and 27, 2007, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. the Education Department will offer a “Research Colloquium.” In this two-day intensive session, participants will explore and research the vast holdings of the ALPLM. Day one will familiarize educators with the Library collections. Pursuing a topic of their own choosing, educators will learn how to access digital resources from the Library collections, how to utilize the Library for research and how to obtain usable reproduction documents to take back to the classroom.

On day two, working with ALPLM educators, participants will create an effective lesson plan based upon the primary resources they have gathered and tailored to their students’ and their own needs. By workshop end educators will have a workable lesson plan to take back to the classroom complete with primary documents from the Library collections.

To mark Black History Month, the Education Department will offer “Slavery in Illinois” on Saturday, February 17, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Created in conjunction with the upcoming temporary exhibit on Mrs. Lincoln, “Meet Mary Todd Lincoln” will be held on Wednesday, March 7 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. This workshop will explore the fascinating life of Mary Todd Lincoln from her childhood, her courtship with Lincoln, their marriage, family life and the joys and sorrows of life as the wife of a famous politician and president, during one of the most dramatic eras in our nation’s history. Examine primary documents and artifacts, read her letters and step into her world. Classroom activities addressing Illinois Learning Standards will be presented.

On Wednesday, March 28, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and on Saturday, April 14, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. the Education Department will offer its “Teacher Orientation” workshop. This four-hour workshop will introduce educators to the resources available at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. Educators will learn how to schedule a tour, how to prepare their class for a visit and methods for making the most of a school trip to the Museum. In addition, participants will find out how to access digital resources from the Library collections, how to utilize the Library for research and other opportunities for professional development and classroom activities available through the ALPLM Education Department. The session will include a tour of the Museum.

All workshops are free and held in the first floor

classroom of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Professional development units (CPDUs) will be offered for each workshop.

Advanced registration is required. To register, contact **Carol Manning**, Education Coordinator, at 217-558-8929 or via email at Carol.Manning@illinois.gov. For additional information visit the museum website at www.alplm.org/education.

Outreach Opportunities

The “Men in Schools Volunteer Day” Program

The Black Star Project is organizing a *Men in Schools Volunteer Day* on Tuesday, February 27. For this program, volunteer organizers will simply help schools find, screen, train, and schedule men to come to schools on February 27 to read to, tutor, mentor, coach, instruct, or share with students some of their knowledge, wisdom, and skills. Additionally, we are asking volunteers to help support, manage, clean, and improve schools in their communities on this day.

The *Men In Schools Volunteer Day* will channel the energy of men into schools as:

- Visitors who support the schools and who consult with teachers on their child's academic progress
- Board and council members who are involved in governing schools
- Readers who will teach children from pre-school through third grade the value of reading and speaking properly
- Tutors who teach youth in grades three through six new concepts and reinforce necessary skills and knowledge
- Mentors who will encourage, inspire, motivate, and provide career counseling and college awareness to students in grades six through eight
- Finance coaches who will teach youth about business, economics, and entrepreneurship
- Life coaches who will teach high school students how to successfully enroll in college and how to prepare for the world of work after high school
- Volunteer hall and playground monitors who will provide a presence of security and leadership to the schools
- Field trip chaperones who will encourage new learning and the expansion of ideas by seeking out new educational venues
- Volunteer maintenance workers who will help improve the physical condition of schools by cleaning, painting, gardening, repairing the building, and maintaining the school grounds

- Athletic coaches and trainers who will help with soccer, basketball, football, baseball, track, swimming, golf, tennis or other sports
- Parenting instructors who will provide presentations on responsible fatherhood and parenting to students
- Elders who will offer help in a simple rites-of-passage program
- Advocates who will offer new ideas for effective fatherhood, parenting, and family living
- Speakers who will offer their talents at school assemblies on education, fatherhood, community building, and other topics

This program is for elementary schools, high schools, and colleges and universities and will be sponsored by The Black Star Project. Men, women, school principals and teachers who wish to organize a *Men In Schools Volunteer Day* may register by responding to blackstar1000@ameritech.net.

The Black Star Project would like to list your schools and your city in our official directory. We will also provide schools with help in organizing this event. To register for this event please call 312/842-3527 or visit <http://www.blackstarproject.org> or more information.

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/2007/newsclips/070105.htm>

In addition to the regular Weekly Clips, the Public Information Office staff has compiled a number of articles related to the fifth anniversary of the No Child Left Behind Act. This compilation is online at: <http://www.isbe.net/news/2007/newsclips/070108-NCLB.htm>

