



Jan. 11, 2010

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

This week the Board will meet in Springfield. The main topic they will be focusing on will be the Fiscal Year 2011 budget recommendation that goes to the Governor and General Assembly. The primary budget discussion will take place Wednesday afternoon, with final recommendations and adoption expected Thursday morning. You may listen in to this discussion at <http://www.isbe.net>.

By adopting a budget recommendation, the Board will complete what has been an especially long and difficult budget development process. I want to thank Joyce Karon for her leadership of the Finance and Audit Committee during these trying financial times. She took the agency through the steps of budget preparation, attending hearings throughout the state and overseeing this committee during a time in which we have seen revenues decrease and the need for services increase. It's a tough job, but she handled it well.

Joyce is stepping down as a member of the State Board and will continue to be involved in education policy development on the state level by joining the Illinois P-20 Council. Joyce has been a dedicated member of the Board who attended 99 out of a possible 101 meetings during her seven years. She served the children of Illinois with dedication, enthusiasm for education and a love for the people with whom she worked. She will be greatly missed.

As Joyce steps down, we welcome three new members to our Board this week: James Baumann of Lake Bluff, Steven Gilford of Evanston and Melinda LaBarre of Springfield.

James Baumann was most recently president and chief executive officer of American Recreation Products and spent 15 years with Follett Higher Education Group, serving six years as president and CEO. He was vice president of his local school board, Lake Bluff District 65 from 1995 to 1999 and was president of the District 65 education Foundation from 1989 to 1992. In addition, he was chairman of the Golden Apple Foundation and also served on the Board of Advisers for Catholic Charities of Chicago and was on the Board of Directors for the Mothers Trust Foundation.

Steven Gilford is the head of the Chicago office of Proskauer Rose, where he is a senior partner in the litigation and dispute resolution department and is also co-head of the insurance recovery and counseling group. He was a member of the Evanston Township District 202 School Board from 1993 to 2005, including a term as president. Since 2005, he has served on the board of directors of his local YMCA and the Metropolitan Family Services.

Melinda LaBarre has spent more than 40 years in education, beginning as a teacher in Springfield District 186. During her career she also served as a principal at two Springfield schools and later as a consultant for the Ball Education Foundation. She was also a member of the Springfield School Board from 2003 to 2009. She has had numerous honors and distinctions during her career, including being named as Horace Mann Educator of the Year in Springfield in 1989 and receiving the Bob Goldman Friend of Education Award from the Springfield Education Association in 2009.

They bring a great deal of additional expertise to our board and I look forward to working with them.

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Finally, the deadline for sending in a Memorandum of Understanding to partner with ISBE in our Race to the Top application is close of business today. Please, be sure to get your MOU in as soon as possible.

Have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding deadline** – Jan. 11
- **Immigrant Education Program Student Report deadline** – Jan. 15
- **Illinois Network of Charter Schools' Webinar** – Jan. 21
- **School Year 2011 Annual Commodity Order Deadline** – Feb. 1
- **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
- **Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award nomination deadline** – March 15
- **Illinois Young Authors' Conference in Bloomington-Normal** – May 15
- **2009-10 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

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/

Rules and Waivers

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that a set of rules recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education is 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 425 (Voluntary Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Schools)

These new rules set forth the process and timeline for registration and recognition of nonpublic schools wishing to apply for school safety and educational improvement block grant funds.

Affected Sections: 425.10, 425.20, 425.30, 425.40, 425.50, 425.60, 425.70, and 425.80

Effective Date: Dec. 7, 2009

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

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

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>.

Curriculum and Instruction

Nominations Sought for History Teacher of the Year Award

The Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award presents \$10,000 to the best history teacher in America. The national winner is chosen from outstanding history teachers in each state, district and U.S. territory. State winners receive \$1,000 and an archive of books and other resources for their schools. The award is co-sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute, Preserve America and the History Channel.

Nominations for the Preserve America History Teacher of the Year can be made by a department or division head, school director, social studies director, principal, superintendent, colleague, student or parent. In 2010, the Gilder Lehrman Institute will honor a middle or high school teacher of grades seven through 12. K-6 teachers are honored every other year. To nominate a teacher and learn more about the award, visit <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/htoy.html>.

You may also contact the Gilder Lehrman History Teacher of the Year coordinator at htoy@gilderlehrman.org or via phone at 646-366-9666 x28.

The Illinois State Board coordinator is Mike Hatfill. He can be reached at dhatfill@isbe.net or 217-557-7323.

The nomination deadline is March 15.

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.

Helping Unaccompanied Youth Access College Financial Aid

Unaccompanied youth are young people who are not in the care of a parent or guardian who may lack safe, stable housing. These students can apply for financial aid should they choose to attend college. Recent federal law changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) eliminated unnecessary barriers for those students applying for aid for the 2009-10 school year and future years.

School personnel are encouraged to access the Resources Section available at the Curriculum and Instruction page for Homeless Education on the ISBE Web site at <http://www.isbe.net/homeless/default.htm#rfp>.

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.

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.

Professional Development

NAAAS Plans Conference in Orlando

The National Association of African-American Studies & Associates will hold its 2010 Teacher Summer Conference June 27-30 in Orlando.

The conference, which will be held at the Swan and Dolphin Hotel at Walt Disney World, is titled “How to Teach Students Who Don’t Look Like You: Culturally Relevant Teaching Strategies.” Educators can earn two continuing education units.

To register and for more information, visit <http://www.naaas.org> or contact Leona Johnson at johnsonleonam@aol.com or 703-869-8097. Early-registration prices are available until Feb. 28.

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.

Conference on Financial Literacy Slated

Registration is under way for the second annual K-12 Teacher Conference on Financial Literacy, which is organized by Econ Illinois, a non-profit organization that provides professional development and resources to K-12 teachers.

The free conference is set for Jan. 22 at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, 230 S. LaSalle St.

Registrations are accepted via e-mail only. Go to http://econed-il.org/icee/prog_pd_w_cofl.shtml. Participation is limited to 100 attendees. For more information, visit <http://econed-il.org> or call 815-753-0356.

Student Opportunities

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Offers Paper Models

New models from the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission offer students a chance to build a piece of history.

Lincoln's home and tomb in Springfield join a long list of historic building models that can be printed out on card stock. The models are available for free at <http://www.lookingforlincoln.com> and <http://www.Illinoi-History.gov>.

The models range in difficulty and scale and require scissors and glue to assemble after printing.

Build Your Own Lincoln Sites is a project of the commission and the Old Capitol Foundation, with assistance from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. The models were designed by artist Michael Goebel-Bain.

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>.

Econ Illinois Offers Contests for High School Students

Econ Illinois, a non-profit organization that provides professional development and resources to K-12 teachers, is offering two competitions for high school students.

The Illinois Personal Finance Challenge targets consumer education and personal finance students that compete in teams. Twenty teams advance to the state finals in Chicago and a state championship team will compete at the national stage in Kansas City on May 20. Registration deadline for the preliminary online competition is Feb. 1. Go to <http://econed-il.org/icee/ipfc.shtml> to register.

Econ Illinois' other contest is the Illinois Economics Challenge, an online only competition for high school students. Registration for the preliminary round will be accepted through Feb. 1. For more information, visit <http://www.econed-il.org/icee/econchal.shtml>.

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/2010/newsclips/100108.htm>.