



March 21, 2011

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week the Board released the 2011 annual financial profiles which show that despite the recession that has gripped our country, the vast majority of our districts are financially healthy. This shows sound fiscal planning on the part of our local district administrations in some very difficult times.

The number of districts that were rated in the top category, Financial Recognition, increased from 550 last year to 571 this year based on Fiscal Year 2010 data. (i.e., nearly 66 percent of districts are in this top category). The percentage of districts in Financial Recognition increases to nearly 70 percent when we use revised data that does not penalize districts due to late payments from the state. Additionally, 24 districts were in the lowest category, Financial Watch, down from 29 last year. I recognize that times are still tough for all of you, but wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate local administrators and boards for this responsible stewardship.

I believe part of this fiscal health is a direct result of the more than \$3 billion of dollars in federal aid that we have received over the past couple of fiscal years through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This federal funding is running out and we'll need to plan even more conservatively as our nation moves forward in its economic recovery.

Please review the grants that you have received or are eligible to receive under ARRA. Several of the ARRA funds have obligation due dates of September 2011, which is only six months away. A summary of the ARRA grants, obligation expiration dates and current unobligated balances is below.

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Table with 6 columns: ARRA Program Name, Rev Code, CFDA, Grant Award, Obligated, Obligation Expiration. Rows include Title I Low Income, Title I School Improvement, Sp Ed IDEA Part B, Title II D Technology, McKinney Vento, and Education Jobs Fund Program.

If you have not submitted an amendment to fully obligate the ARRA funds due to your district, please do so as soon as possible. Final amendments for grants with a Project End Date of June 30, 2011, must be received by ISBE no later than May 31, 2011. If you have questions regarding the obligation of grant funds please contact your ISBE program consultant.

The College Board has released the AP Achievement List, which recognizes districts that have either maintained or improved their participation and performance on AP exams. Twenty-seven Illinois districts have been named to this list, including Chicago Public Schools, which was also ranked as the largest district winner. Congratulations to the students and staff at these districts. This is a wonderful honor for our schools, especially as we move to implement more rigorous standards. You can see a list of all the AP Achievement List schools at <http://www.isbe.net/news/2011/mar21.htm>.

Finally, I'd like to share some research on Illinois' progress on the ACT. Steve Cordogan with Township High School District 214 did a study on the performance of our students over the past 20 years on the ACT. The data itself is very impressive and shows what many of us know; if we challenge students they will raise their achievement. In fact, since Illinois became a universal ACT state our students have shown improvements three times greater than the national average. You can access the entire report at <http://www.d214.org/research/>.

I think this study reaffirms the philosophy that, in order to see improvements, we must challenge ourselves and our students, whether it's universal testing with the ACT, moving to the new more rigorous Illinois Learning Standards or even increasing cut scores on the Basic Skills Test. We can't expect to compete in a global economy if we stand still while the world keeps moving.

Have a great week.

Chris

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## Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **ARRA FTE jobs and vendor data for the reporting quarter ending March 31, 2011, deadline** – April 5
- **Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision) and Part 350 (Secular Textbook Loan)** – Public comment period ends April 18
- **Illinois School Wellness Conference in Decatur** – May 3
- **Illinois Young Authors' Conference** – May 21
- **2010-11 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30
- **Prekindergarten At-Risk Program Record and the Preschool For All Program Record deadline** – June 30
- **2010-11 Early Childhood – Parent Evaluations/Demographics survey deadline** – July 15
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2011** – Aug. 12
- **2010-11 High School Students Taking Community College Courses system district-level data submission deadline** – Sept. 15

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## Illinois Arts Education Week

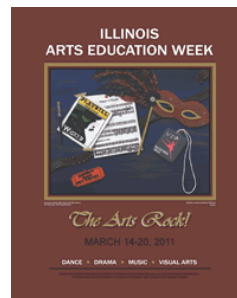
### Students and Arts Educators Recognized for Their Work

The Illinois State Board of Education joined the Illinois Alliance for Arts Education to honor student winners of a statewide poster contest and arts educators during the 29th annual Illinois Arts Education Week held March 14-20.

Students across the state competed to create posters reflective of this year's theme, "The Arts Rock!." Nicole Maslow, a senior at Hinsdale South High School in

Hinsdale School District 86, was chosen as the winner of the 2011 statewide poster contest.

While celebrating Arts Education Week, ISBE also recognized Adlai E. Stevenson High School, SD 125, Lincolnshire, one of five schools in the country to win the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts National Schools of Distinction Award for their work during the recent 2009-10 school year.



Posters can be requested by contacting ISBE's Curriculum and Instruction division at (217) 557-7323; arts@isbe.net; or via mail at 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL 62777-0001. The back of the poster contains references to the Illinois Learning Goals and Standards for the Fine Arts, upcoming art events for 2010, Internet resources and more. To view all the winning artwork, visit [http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/html/arts\\_week.htm](http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/html/arts_week.htm). A complete list of arts educators honored is at [http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/arts\\_week/2011/program.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/curriculum/arts_week/2011/program.pdf). Visit the Illinois Alliance for Art Education's website at <http://www.illinoisalliance4artsed.org/>.

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## Data Analysis and Progress Reporting

### High School Students Taking Community College Courses System Open in IWAS

The 2010-11 High School Students Taking Community College Courses system is open in IWAS for district-level data submission. The deadline to submit is Sept. 15, 2011.

Only unit and high school districts need to submit the required data, per Section 2-3.144 of the Illinois School Code. Each district needs to submit a report, even those that did not have any high school students taking community college courses during the 2010-11 school year. In this instance, the district should access the system, click on "No," and submit the report by Sept. 15.

Questions about the IWAS system should be referred to the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600, and questions about the information to be entered for this data collection should be referred to Niann-Tsyr Chern in the Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at (217) 782-3950.

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## Nutrition

### Illinois School Wellness Conference Scheduled for May 3 in Decatur

The fourth annual Illinois School Wellness Conference at the Decatur Conference Center is just around the corner. Attend the conference on May 3 to learn about the latest school wellness strategies and resources. The conference is ideal for school administrators, school nurses, educators, food service staff, wellness committee members, parents, students and anyone else who wants to learn more about encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy food at school. Other topics will include Food

Trends in Schools, Fuel up To Play 60, The New P.E., Wellness Success Stories from Illinois, Ways to Host Healthy Fundraisers and active discussion that will include healthy food options in school stores and concession stands.

Dr. Toni Yancey, author of "Instant Recess: Building a Fit National 10 Minutes at a Time," has been selected as keynote speaker. Yancey played basketball for Northwestern University and is a professor in the UCLA Department of Health. She is also a national board member for Action for Healthy Kids. Her presentation will be based on her book, which provides "doable" solutions to encourage students to get moving.

Register by April 19 to take advantage of the early bird rate of \$45 for adults and \$25 for students. Go to <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>, click on the "In Your State" tab and select Illinois to find more information about the conference.

The conference is presented jointly by the Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Action for Healthy Kids Team to fulfill Public Act 094-0190, House Bill 1541 School Health Recognition Program.

### Workshops on National School Lunch Programs Coming Up

**Developing a School Food Safety Plan:** Beginning with the 2005-06 school year, all schools were required to have a food safety plan in place. The Developing a School Food Safety Plan workshop will help schools satisfy this requirement by assisting schools in the revision of a current food safety plan, or in the development of a new food safety plan. Participants will be introduced to the Process Approach, which allows for a more simplified application of food safety procedures. Participants will also receive information on the overall format of a school food safety plan, writing or revising Standard Operating Procedures, and will work with hands-on activities that can be taken back to schools and immediately used in the training of additional food service staff. Workshop check-in will begin at 8:30 a.m., and the workshop will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The following dates and locations are available:

- April 12, Carterville, IEA Building
- April 14, Charleston, Charleston School District Board Office
- April 20, Schaumburg, Courtyard Marriott
- April 21, Crestwood, Eisenhower Cooperative

Space is limited to 40 participants at each site. Register at <http://webprod1.isbe.net/cns/calendar/asp/EventList.asp>.

**Certification and Verification:** Gain a solid understanding of the process for certifying and verifying Household Eligibility Applications for school meal programs. This workshop will include information on use of the Direct Certification option available through the IWAS/ACES website, to directly certify and directly verify Household Eligibility Applications. Workshop check-in will begin at 8:30 a.m., and the workshop will run from 9 a.m. to noon.

The following dates and locations are available:

- July 26, Marion, Williamson County Pavilion
- July 27, Bloomington, Doubletree
- Aug. 10, Schaumburg, Courtyard Marriott
- Aug. 11, Kankakee, Hilton Garden Inn

Space is limited, so please register now at <http://webprod1.isbe.net/cns/calendar/asp/EventList.asp>.

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## Funding and Disbursement Services

### March 31, 2011, ARRA Jobs and Vendor Data Due April 5, 2011

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and vendor data for the reporting quarter ending March 31, 2011, is due at the Illinois State Board of Education on or before Tuesday April 5, 2011, for all local education agencies (LEAs) that are operating a project in FY 2011 with ARRA funds. ARRA data reporting includes two primary elements: the number of jobs funded in the reporting quarter with ARRA dollars and a single payment made to a vendor, using ARRA dollars, in the amount of \$25,000 or more. All ARRA data must be reported via the ARRA Reporting System in IWAS.

Please refer to the ARRA Reporting Instructions at [http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra\\_reporting\\_inst.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf) for detailed reporting procedures.

March 31 ARRA data must be reported for the following ARRA programs if your LEA has been awarded or received funds:

- Title I Low Income – Revenue Code 4851, CFDA #84.394, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011

- Title I Low Income Neglected – Revenue Code 4852, CFDA #84.394, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011
- Title I Low Income Delinquent – Revenue Code 4853, CFDA #84.394, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011
- Title I School Improvement – Revenue Code 4854, CFDA #84.394, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011
- Title I School Improvement (1003g) – Revenue Code 4855, CFDA #84.388, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2013
- IDEA Part B Preschool – Revenue Code 4856, CFDA #84.392, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011
- IDEA Part B Flow Through – Revenue Code 4857, CFDA #84.391, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011
- Title II D Enhancing Education Through Technology – Revenue Code 4861, CFDA #84.386, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011
- McKinney Vento Homeless Education – Revenue Code 4862, CFDA #84.387, Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2011
- Education Jobs Fund Program – Revenue Code 4880, CFDA #84.410 (If compensation and/or benefits have been or will be requested for employees from January through March), Final Obligation Date Sept. 30, 2012

If you have any questions regarding this information please contact Funding and Disbursement Services at (217) 782-5256.

**IMPORTANT:** Please note the obligation expiration dates indicated for each program above. Many ARRA programs are coming to the end for obligating funds this September. If you have not submitted an amendment to fully obligate the ARRA funds due to your LEA, please do so as soon as possible. As a reminder, final amendments for grants with a Project End Date of June 30, 2011, must be received by ISBE no later than May 31, 2011. For grant applications in the electronic Grants Management System (eGMS), the deadline is also referenced on the Program Overview page under “Amendment Due Date.”

### EDUCATION JOBS ARRA REPORTING

**REMINDER – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY:** If the LEA has submitted or plans to submit an expenditure report requesting reimbursement of qualifying expenditures (i.e. compensation and benefit costs) between Jan. 1 and March 31 the full-time equivalent

(FTE) jobs and vendor data must be reported for the period ending March 31 even if an expenditure report for reimbursement has yet to be filed for that reporting quarter. For example, if the LEA is going to submit in mid-April an Ed Jobs expenditure report requesting reimbursement of compensation and benefits expended during the reporting quarter ending March 31, the LEA is required to report FTE jobs and vendor data to ISBE on or before the required ARRA reporting deadline of April 5 even though the expenditure report has not yet been submitted by the LEA. This is true for any subsequent quarter.

Further, once the LEA begins to request Ed Jobs expenditure reimbursement they are obligated to report ARRA FTE jobs and vendor data via the ARRA Reporting System every subsequent quarter until all Ed Jobs Funds have been requested and reported, even if no expenditure reports for reimbursement have been submitted in the current ARRA reporting quarter. For example, if the LEA requested reimbursement and reported ARRA data through Dec. 31 but has no Ed Jobs expenditures between Jan. 1 and March 31, they must still submit ARRA FTE jobs and vendor data for the March 31 ARRA reporting quarter that reflects that 0 FTE jobs or vendor payments were funded with Ed Jobs dollars during the reporting quarter. Again, the LEA must continue to submit ARRA data reports for each reporting quarter, beginning with the quarter in which the compensation funding start date occurs until all Ed Jobs funds have been requested and reported.

If you have further questions or concerns with the Ed Jobs program, contact Jim Mathes at [jmathes@isbe.net](mailto:jmathes@isbe.net) or Marj Beck at [mbeck@isbe.net](mailto:mbeck@isbe.net). Both can be reached by telephone at (217) 782-5256.

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## Common Core

### Workshops on College and Career Readiness Standards Scheduled

Registration is open for the eight regional workshops on the Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards. All workshops are scheduled from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

For a list of the workshops and more info, visit [http://www.isbe.net/common\\_core/pdf/wkshps\\_spring\\_1\\_1.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/common_core/pdf/wkshps_spring_1_1.pdf). Register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/IllinoisWorkshopRegistration>.

For questions regarding the workshops, contact Brian Durham at [brian.durham@illinois.gov](mailto:brian.durham@illinois.gov) or Debbie Meisner-Bertauski at [meisner-bertauski@ibhe.org](mailto:meisner-bertauski@ibhe.org).

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## Innovation and Improvement

### Preparing for a Parent Survey

The Center for Research in Educational Policy (CREP) at the University of Memphis conducts an annual evaluation on behalf of ISBE of Supplemental Educational Services (SES). As many of you are aware, SES is a component of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act, which provides extra academic assistance for students from low-income families attending designated Title I schools (those in their second year of school improvement, in corrective action, or in restructuring status).

The evaluation conducted by CREP assists ISBE in monitoring the effectiveness of providers approved to offer SES in the state of Illinois. The primary components of the evaluation are: SES student achievement outcomes, SES student attendance and the perceptions of parents with children attending SES. Parental feedback plays a critical role in the evaluation of SES providers. Increasing the level of input from parents, through increasing the survey response rate, will ensure the evaluation contains accurate, reliable information.

In April, schools that are designated SES-eligible will begin receiving boxes containing parent surveys in English and in Spanish and instructions for returning surveys. Please be aware that the SES parent surveys will be arriving in April at SES-eligible schools. Please share this information with your schools and emphasize the importance of the survey distribution and return in an effort to increase the rate of survey submissions.

For questions or additional information regarding the parent survey, contact Beth Murphy, Research Assistant, Center for Research in Educational Policy, The University of Memphis at [kmurphy3@memphis.edu](mailto:kmurphy3@memphis.edu) or (866) 670-6147. For general SES questions, contact Gary Greene at (312) 814-3989 or [ggreene@isbe.net](mailto:ggreene@isbe.net).

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## Special Education

### Office of Special Education Programs Response to Intervention Memorandum

The recent memo from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)

that reinforces the fact that local education agencies may not delay or deny a special education evaluation on the basis of a student not having participated in a response to intervention (RtI) process can be located at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/OSEP\\_RtI\\_memo11-07\\_012111.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/OSEP_RtI_memo11-07_012111.pdf).

The memo's message is consistent with 23 Illinois Administrative Code 226.130(b), which states "...When a district implements the use of a process of this type [RtI], the district shall not use any child's participation in the process as the basis for denying a parent's request for an evaluation."

The content of the memo is also consistent with information contained in the March 2010 Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) document titled "Frequently Asked Questions [FAQ] about Special Education Eligibility and Entitlement within a Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework," which is available at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/rti\\_speced.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/rti_speced.htm).

### Request for Proposals for Illinois IHE Partnership Issued

In October 2010, ISBE received a five-year grant award under the federal State Personnel Development Grant program to implement professional development, technical assistance and coaching activities to support statewide implementation of a multi-tiered system of instruction, intervention and assessment, including response to intervention (RtI). One of the components of this federal grant project is the Illinois Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) Partnership. In order to establish and carry out this component, ISBE has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) titled "State Personnel Development Grant: Illinois IHE Partnership." As detailed in the RFP (see link below), the Illinois IHE Partnership will work directly with teams at Illinois IHEs to incorporate critical RtI elements (e.g., differentiated instruction; a multi-tiered system of scientific, research-based instruction, intervention, and assessment) into educator preservice and graduate program curricula and to develop and implement a replicable process for identifying and placing undergraduate and graduate students in field experiences where RtI practices are in place. The IHE Partnership will also have responsibility for the provision of professional development opportunities for IHE faculty.

The RFP, application forms, and other pertinent materials are posted at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant\\_info.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm). Applications must be received

by ISBE no later than April 25, 2011. Questions about the RFP may be submitted to the Online Bidders' Forum at [ihfrfp@isbe.net](mailto:ihfrfp@isbe.net) (preferred) or by contacting Kathryn Cox at (217) 782-5589.

## Rules and Waivers

### Notice of Completed Rulemaking

Please be advised that four sets of amendments recently adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education are now in effect. These rules have been posted on the agency's website at <http://www.isbe.net/rules>. Please choose "Rules Currently in Effect" and scroll to affected Part.

**Part 25 (Certification):** Makes numerous changes to conform the rules to recently enacted legislation; streamlines the process for institution and educational unit recognition and preparation program approval; and defines "dispositions" for the purposes of clinical experiences and candidates' assessments.

*Affected Section: 25.65, 25.67, 25.115, 25.125, 25.127, 25.130, 25.140, 25.142, 25.145, 25.155, 25.160, 25.165, 25.335, 25.345, 25.360, 25.610, and 25.875*

*Effective Date: Feb. 23, 2011*

**Part 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education):** Defines "instructional costs" for the purposes of bilingual education funding under Article 14C of the School Code (see P.A. 96-1170, effective January 1, 2011).

*Affected Section: 228.50*

*Effective Date: Feb. 17, 2011*

**Part 235 (Early Childhood Block Grant):** Repeals references in the rules to the Prekindergarten Program for Children at Risk of Academic Failure, as per P.A. 96-944 and P.A. 96-948; eliminates funding for separate parental training programs; and increases from 51 percent to 80 percent the proportion of at-risk or low-income students proposed to be served in a Preschool for All program in order for the applicant to receive priority consideration in the proposal review process.

*Affected Sections: 235.10, 235.20, 235.30, 235.55, 35.60, 235.70, 235.100, 235.110, 235.120, 235.130, 235.140, 235.200, and 235.210*

*Effective Date: Feb. 17, 2011*

**Part 575 (School Technology Program):** Pursuant to P.A. 96-783, effective August 28, 2009, establishes procedures for nonpublic schools recognized under Part 425 of State Board of Education rules to participate in the Technology Revolving Loan program, including the process to be used to recover any loan principal and

interest due when a nonpublic school closes or otherwise defaults on a loan agreement.

*Affected Sections: 575.100, 575.300, 575.500, 575.600, and 575.700*

*Effective Date: Feb. 17, 2011*

## Illinois Student Assistance Commission

### Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as early as possible is the first step for students and families to obtain postsecondary education financial assistance. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission has set a goal of 800,000 applications for 2011-12, with more than 273,000 already filed.

Go to <http://www.collegeillinois.org/> for more information and to fill out the FAFSA. The site includes additional resources, including a list of local financial aid workshops.

## Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation

### Buying Cosmetic Contact Lenses From Unlicensed Merchants Poses Big Risks

The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation issued a reminder about the dangers of buying colored contact lenses from unlicensed merchants. These cosmetic contact lenses, which are popular among teenagers and young adults, are often purchased at malls and flea markets without proper examinations and proper fittings, leaving consumers at risk for infections and potential blindness. All contact lenses should be purchased from licensed eye-care professionals. IDFPR has partnered with the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education to get the message out about the risks.

“Some students may see these as harmless, part of a costume or a fashion accessory, but that’s clearly not the case,” said State Superintendent of Education Christopher Koch in IDFPR’s recent news release. “We’ll be working with Public Health and Professional Regulation to get information to school districts so that they can make sure their students understand the risk of serious infection that these can pose.”

To read IDFPR’s entire press release, go to <http://www.idfpr.com/NEWSRLS/2011/03072011ContactLens.asp>. Illinois residents are encouraged to notify state officials if they see lenses for sale at retail outlets that do not require a prescription from a licensed eye-care professional. Consumers can file complaints at <http://www.idfpr.com> or by calling IDFPR’s consumer hot line number at (800) 280-4149.

## Illinois House of Representatives

### Resolution Aims to Spread Message About the Dangers of Ice-Covered Water

On March 2, the Illinois House of Representatives passed a resolution to warn people about the dangers of ice-covered water. The resolution promotes Project SKiPPeR, which stresses those who fall in the ice to “stay calm, kick like a swimmer, aim for ice edge, prop arms onto ice opening, pull yourself up onto ice, exit the water, roll away.”

According to the resolution, Project SKiPPeR was created after Kathy Kohler Baxmeyer, her son, Kadin, and Kadin’s best friend, Austin, all drowned on Feb. 19, 2010, after ice gave way on a frozen pond. Baxmeyer died trying to save the two boys. The educational program will go into schools to teach children about the dangers of ice-covered water. Read the resolution at <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/97/HR/PDF/09700HR0020lv.pdf>.

## U.S. Department of Education

### Notice of responsibilities under FERPA and PPRA

Listed below are links to the U.S. Department of Education’s annual notice to SEAs and LEAs of their responsibilities under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).

- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/chiefsea.pdf>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/pprasuper.pdf>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/ferparights.pdf>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/ppraconsent.pdf>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/ppranotice.pdf>

- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/directoryinfo.pdf>

For questions about the requirements of these laws, call the Family Policy Compliance Office at (202) 260-3887 or e-mail [ferpa@ed.gov](mailto:ferpa@ed.gov).

### **Resources on School Attendance for Children of Service Men and Women**

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recently distributed a letter to superintendents about school attendance and children of service men and women. Citing concerns about finding balance between requests for extended absence and educational outcomes, Secretary Duncan offered several examples of districts that have developed successful ways to respond to the needs of military families without adversely affecting academic performance or accountability ratings.

Of course, the best place to start is by reviewing state laws and regulations relating to attendance policies. While state laws and policies may define the parameters of policies on deployment-related absences, local educational agencies (LEAs) are generally responsible for the specific implementation of such policies. A publication released by the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) may be helpful when considering various attendance policies. The publication is available at <http://www.militarychild.org/education/leavepolicies/>.

You can read Secretary Duncan's entire letter at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/110301.html>.

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## **Illinois Liquor Control Commission**

### **Annual Project Sticker Shock Event Fights Underage Drinking**

The Illinois Liquor Control Commission (ILCC) will hold its third annual Project Sticker Shock event this April as part of Alcohol Awareness Month. For the Project Sticker Shock event, stickers, window decals, posters and proof of age signs reminding consumers that providing alcohol to minors is illegal will be posted in liquor establishments across the state.

Community leaders, administrators, teachers, parents and students can help spread the message by placing Project Sticker Shock materials in their community. Visit <http://www.dontbesorry.org> for more information about

the event and free materials. Tips on conducting a successful event in your community are available at <http://www.dontbesorry.org/SSmanual.htm>.

In Illinois, selling or providing alcohol to a minor is subject to a \$2,500 fine; a teen may be sentenced to six months in jail if found possessing alcohol in a public place; and a parent or guardian can spend up to a year in jail for allowing underage drinking to occur in their home.

For questions, call (312) 814-4802 or e-mail [ted.penesis@illinois.gov](mailto:ted.penesis@illinois.gov).

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## **Student Opportunities**

### **Latino Art Beat Offers Competition for High School Juniors and Seniors**

Latino Art Beat, a national not-for profit arts organization, has announced its 14th annual art competition will be themed "What Hispanic Heritage & Culture Means to Me?" The competition is available to all high school juniors and seniors currently enrolled in an Illinois high school. Competition categories include drawing, painting, film and animation.

Scholarship awards will be given to winners of the 2011 competition. To date, Latino Art Beat has awarded more than \$3 million in scholarships to students on a national basis. The Illinois deadline for entries is Monday, May 9, 2011.

For full competition information, applications and the 2011 Rules & Guidelines booklet, e-mail a request to [latinoartbeat@hotmail.com](mailto:latinoartbeat@hotmail.com) or call (773) 291-6901.

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## **School Opportunities**

### **Apply for the Excellence in Science School Award**

The Illinois Science Teachers Association announces an innovative program to recognize excellence in science teaching and learning at the school building level. The Excellence in Science School Award aims to recognize schools whose teachers of science embody a special creativity and dedication in their work, developing a solid understanding of science for their students. The association invites school teams to apply for the 2011-12 awards, with recognition at the Illinois Science Education Conference, Oct. 28, 2011, at the Tinley Park Conference Center.



The ISTA Excellence in Science award program, designed for school-building level teams throughout Illinois, is built on the concept of “Critical Mass.” Critical Mass describes the contributions of each member of the school’s team, all working toward achieving a common goal associated with success in the sciences for their students. Critical Mass depends on the special talents and skills of each member, realizing that the success of science teaching and learning is a shared, common responsibility of the teachers, administrators and the school’s community. The Excellence in Science Award will celebrate holistically envisioned science programs that are designed and implemented by each of the team members. Such a program is driven by the anticipated success of all students and guided by the professional learning community for science teaching.

Interested schools are encouraged to apply at <http://www.ista-il.org>. Deadline for applications is June 1, 2011. Selected schools will be notified by July 1.

For more information, contact Harry Hendrickson, Executive Director, Illinois Science Teachers Association, at [hrhendrickson@comcast.net](mailto:hrhendrickson@comcast.net) or (217) 498-8411 or Tara Bell, Awards Chairperson, at [taracmcdonald@gmail.com](mailto:taracmcdonald@gmail.com).

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## Professional Development

### Program Targets Teachers Who Teach or Want to Teach Chinese

The Taiwan Ministry of Education is sponsoring an opportunity for teachers to travel to Taiwan during the summer to promote teaching of Chinese. This program is open to educators who teach or want to teach Chinese. This program will not lead to an endorsement but will provide opportunities for teachers to enhance their understanding of Chinese culture and language and provide opportunities to bring this knowledge back to your classroom. Teachers who want to use this to meet professional development, must have approval prior to traveling. Contact your local LPDC or your Regional Office of Education for more information if you want to count this for professional development.

Participating teachers will receive methodological and theoretical advanced instruction for K-12 level Mandarin Chinese pedagogy, respectively. Professional development includes curriculum and oral training, Chinese teaching pedagogy, classroom visits, cultural introductions, and a conference promoting Chinese

language learning. The program is proposed for July 18-29. The deadline to apply is April 10. For more information, contact the Taipai Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago at [info@edutw.org](mailto:info@edutw.org) or (312) 616-0805.

### Upcoming Workshops Take an International Perspective

Registration is under way for professional development workshops co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education National Resource Centers for International and Area Studies at the University of Illinois. CPDUs are available for all workshops.

The workshops include “Innocent Victims of International Conflict: Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law,” which is set for July 25-29. For more information and to register, visit [http://i2i.illinois.edu/2011\\_institute.php](http://i2i.illinois.edu/2011_institute.php).

Other workshops include:

- Illinois Council for Social Studies Conference, “Seeing Eye to Eye: Bringing International, National and Local Perspectives to Social Studies,” April 15, <http://www.illinoiscss.org/home.php>
- Global Studies Forum, “The Responsibility to Protect: Exploring International Humanitarian Law, April 16, <http://cgs.illinois.edu/content/global-studies-forum-exploring-international-humanitarian-law>

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## 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>.

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## In the News

### Weekly News Clips

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at <http://www.isbe.net/news/2011/newsclips/110321.htm>.

