



Aug. 18, 2009

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

The Illinois State Fair is under way in Springfield this week, a sure sign that summer is coming to a close. (And yes, as a Saluki, I am well aware and excited about the upcoming State Fair in DuQuoin.) The fair kicked off last Thursday with the twilight parade, which hosted returning veterans as Grand Marshalls. It is a fitting honor to recognize these veterans in such a special way, especially at a time when more military personnel have been deployed into active duty than any time since World War II.

As school begins, I would urge you to keep in mind these veterans, as well as their children, brothers and sisters. As you know, students who have family members overseas may present some special needs. You can find resources to help by contacting the National Military Families Association, which has a guide, Working With Military Children — A Primer for School Personnel, that can be accessed at <http://www.nmfa.org/site/DocServer?docID=642>.

Additionally, as our service personnel continue to return after their deployment, students and staff may wish to be excused to see them arrive. While attendance and excused absence must be taken into consideration on a case by case basis, I encourage you to err on the side of honoring these soldiers.

The State Board of Education will be meeting in Bloomington this week for its annual retreat. All open sessions will be Webcasted live on our Internet site at www.isbe.net. On Tuesday afternoon, Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of the Council of Chief State School Officers, will speak about issues confronting education on a national stage and, on Wednesday, the Board and Agency staff will discuss preparations for our Race to the Top application and the continued reforms the Board is carrying out.

Also on Wednesday, ACT will release state test scores for the graduating class of 2009. The information is embargoed until Wednesday morning, but I am sure you will be pleasantly surprised. We'll have information posted on our Web site.

We are posting a joint letter to our Web site from Dr. Damon Arnold, Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health and me, urging parents to have their children vaccinated for both the H1N1 virus and the seasonal flu virus. Both pose possible significant health risks to our students, and vaccines have proven to be a safe and effective way of mitigating these risks.

The letter is in Spanish and English and is posted to our H1N1 Virus Resource page at <http://www.isbe.net/htmls/H1N1.htm>. I ask that you go to our Web site, download the letters and provide them to your parents as part of your back to school materials.

Finally, we will need your assistance as we work with the other state and federal agencies to better track the H1N1 virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a common reporting form that requires only the name and ZIP code of the school or school district, the date they first dismiss students and the projected date they plan to re-open. School districts and local public health agencies may complete this form via the Web

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(www.cdc.gov/FluSchoolDismissal), e-mail (FluSchoolDismissal@cdc.gov), or fax (770-488-6156). All Web and e-mail submissions will be sent simultaneously to CDC and a designated state agency. All faxed submissions to CDC will be emailed as a PDF file to a designated state agency.

Thanks, and remember to remain in contact and work closely with your local departments of public health.

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Part 120 (Pupil Transportation Reimbursement), Part 180 (Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools), Part 252 (Driver Education), Part 401 (Special Education Facilities Under Section 14-7.02 of the School Code) and Part 675 (Providers of Supplemental Educational Services):** Public comment period ends Aug. 20
- **Affidavit of School Treasurer Bonds submitted by Regional Superintendents** – Sept. 1
- **Hooked on Hydroponics application deadline** – Sept. 18
- **Bright Green Dream Challenge entry deadline** – Sept. 25
- **National Public Lands Day** – Sept. 26
- **State Farm’s Youth Advisory Board service-learning grants deadline** – Oct. 2
- **U.S. Senate Youth Program and Hearst Scholarship application deadline** – Oct. 7
- **Illinois Youth Dropout Prevention Summit** – Oct. 12
- **Annual Superintendents’ Conference in Springfield** – Oct. 27-28
- **School District’s Adopted Budget due at ISBE** – Oct. 30
- **Annual Statewide Transition Conference** – Nov. 8-10
- **Veterans Day moment of silence** – Nov. 11
- **Annual Financial Report due at ISBE** – Nov. 16 (excluding those granted extensions due Dec. 15)

School Business Services

School District Annual Budget – Dates to Remember

The School Code, Section 17-1 (105 ILCS 5/17-1) requires school districts within or before the first quarter of each fiscal year to adopt and file with the Illinois State Board of Education an annual balanced budget. These budgets are to be entered and adopted on the applicable Form 50-36 provided by ISBE at the following link: <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/budget/2010/SDB2010FORM.xls>.

By Sept. 1 – Tentative Budgets: The budget should be prepared in tentative form by some person or persons designated by the school board, and in such tentative form made conveniently available to public inspection. At least one public hearing is required on this tentative budget prior to the final action. Notice of the availability for public inspection and of the public hearing is to be given by the district at least 30 days before the hearing.

By Sept. 30 – Adopted Budget: The budget is adopted by the school board at a public meeting held after the budget hearing.

By Oct. 30 – Budget Filed with ISBE: The adopted School District Budget Form 50-36 is to be electronically submitted to ISBE within 30 days of adoption and no later than Oct. 30.

By Oct. 30 – Deficit Budgets: School districts that adopt an unbalanced budget in the operating funds must complete a Deficit Reduction Plan (DRP) to balance the budget within three years. The DRP, if required, is filed with ISBE at the same time as the budget.

Other Budget Dates to Remember:

- Deadline for filing a certified copy with the county clerk – Within 30 days of adoption.
- Deadline for posting on the district’s Web site – Immediately after adoption.
- Deadline for amending the budget – No later than June 30.

- Deadline for submitting an amended budget to ISBE – Within 30 days of adoption or no later than June 30.

If you have any questions, please contact the School Business Services Division at 217-785-8779.

The FY 2008-09 School District/ Joint Agreement Annual Audit

For the year ending June 30, the Illinois State Board of Education provides the Illinois School District Annual Financial Report (AFR) (Form 50-35) and Joint Agreement Annual Financial Report (Form 50-60) electronically and is supported in Excel version 97-Excel 2003 workbook version. These forms are used for the financial reporting requirement by all school districts and joint agreements.

Section 3-7 of the School Code sets forth the duties and responsibilities needed to meet the audit requirement.

There are several items regarding the FY09 AFR that we would like to bring to your attention.

- Filing deadline for the AFR. Statute requires that the AFR and attachments be filed this year on or before Oct. 15 with the appropriate Regional Superintendent. In extenuating circumstances, the Regional Superintendent may grant up to 60 days extension per Section 3-7 of the School Code. If an extension has not been granted, the AFR must be forwarded by the Regional Superintendent to ISBE on or before Nov. 16, 2009 (Cover page through page 8 with all signatures).
- When filing the AFR electronically to ISBE, the CPA firm and school district are required to file using the Attachment Manager Web site at the links provided below. From the Annual Financial Report FY09 Web page, Select: “Submit Your Completed AFR” then complete all required sender information. In the ISBE Receiver Name, Select “Annual Financial Report Group.” Note: The Audit, Management Letter, Opinion Letter, Compliance Notes, Financial Notes, etc., all must be embedded into the Opinion letters page of the AFR. To be consistent, all copies of documents must be filed with the School District and the Regional Office of Education (ROE).
- An A-133 Single Audit must be completed if total federal expenditures are \$500,000 or more.

This report must be submitted electronically using the forms included in the AFR, if applicable. The sheets are unprotected for any necessary alterations. Note: All opinion letters must have the auditor signature.

- The “Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet” is included with the AFR and must be filed directly with ISBE on or before Nov. 16. (No provisions exist for extension of time or submission to the ROE)
- The Estimated Financial Profile Summary is included in the AFR on Page 4 and provides the district with a preliminary score/designation. The final profile score/designation will be released for verification in the spring of 2010.

The AFR and related material may be obtained from <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/afr.htm> or at the ISBE homepage (www.isbe.net), select “Division Links,” then “School Business Services Division,” then “Forms” and then select “Annual Financial Report FY09.”

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the School Business Services Division at 217-785-8779.

School Treasurer Bonds

Section 3-8 and Section 8-2 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/3-8 and 105 ILCS 5/8-2) require Regional Superintendents of Schools to file an affidavit with the Illinois State Board of Education showing which treasurers of school districts in their region are properly bonded. This affidavit must be filed before **Sept. 1** of each year. Copies of the actual school treasurer bond do not have to be filed with ISBE.

Section 8-2 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/8-2) requires each treasurer of a school district to be properly bonded. The penalty of the bond shall be 25 percent of the amount of all bonds, notes, mortgages, moneys and effects of which the treasurer is to have custody at any given time. The bond shall be increased or decreased from time to time, as the increase or decrease of the amount of notes, bonds, mortgages, moneys and effects may require. The bond shall be payable to the township trustees of schools over the district or payable to the school board of the district, whichever is applicable. The bond shall be filed with the Regional Superintendent of Schools. School districts do NOT need to file a copy of their bonds with ISBE.

For additional information on the State Board of Education interpretation of this Section, please refer to the State Superintendent’s Weekly Message for June 12, 2006, which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/board/archivemessages/archivemessage_06.htm.

Section 3-8 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/3-8) describes the duties of the Regional Superintendent of Schools upon receipt of the treasurer bonds. When the bond of any school treasurer is filed with the Regional Superintendent of Schools, the Regional Superintendent shall carefully examine it. If the bond is found to be in all respects according to law and the sureties sufficient, the Regional Superintendent shall endorse his or her approval and file it with the papers of his or her office. If the bond is in any respect defective, or if the sureties are insufficient, the bond shall be returned for correction.

An electronic version of the affidavit, and other information, can be found online at www.isbe.net/sfms/html/t_bonds.htm.

Please contact **Michelle Heninger**, School Business Services Division, at 217-785-8779 or via e-mail at mheninge@isbe.net with any follow-up questions.

No Child Left Behind

DRAFT Waiver Notifications

ISBE has reviewed the U.S. Department of Education (ED) Guidance on Title I, Part A Waivers, and is preparing the following waivers for submission on behalf of the LEAs in the state. Additional information and the draft waiver letters are available at <http://www.isbe.net/nclb/htmls/waivers.htm>.

3. **Waiver to exclude some or all of the Title I, Part A ARRA funds in determining an LEA’s 20 percent obligation for choice-related transportation and SES**
 - If granted, this waiver will allow LEAs to exclude some or all of the Title I, Part A funds they receive under the ARRA in calculating their “20 percent obligation” for choice-related transportation and SES.
4. **Request to exclude Title I, Part A ARRA funds in determining the 10 percent professional development set-aside for an LEA in improvement**

- If granted, this waiver will allow LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status to exclude some or all of the Title I, Part A funds they receive under the ARRA in calculating their 10 percent professional development set-aside.
 - LEAs in improvement will still be required to provide the basic 10 percent set-aside.
5. **Request to exclude Title I, Part A ARRA funds in determining the 10 percent professional development set-aside for a school in improvement**
 - If granted, this waiver will allow schools in improvement status to calculate their 10 percent professional development set-aside in accordance with the specific formula.
 - Schools in improvement will still be required to provide the basic 10 percent set-aside.
 6. **Request to exclude Title I, Part A ARRA funds in determining the per-pupil amount for SES**
 - If granted, this waiver will allow LEAs within Illinois to exclude some or all of the Title I, Part A funds they receive under ARRA in calculating the per-pupil amount for SES.
 - LEAs thus have the option, but are not required, to reduce the per-pupil amount for SES.

If additional waivers are prepared, we will post them on the Web site and include a notification in the Weekly Message. Please send any questions or concerns on this matter to nclb@isbe.net.

Legal

Moment of silence required in schools for Veterans Day

Public Act 96-0084, which took effect on July 27, requires that a school holding any type of event at the school on Nov. 11, Veterans Day, include a moment of silence at that event to recognize veterans of foreign wars. The act also applies to state universities and community colleges.

Here is the link to the public act:

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=096-0084&GA=096>.

Registration Guidance: Residency, Immigrant Pupils, Homeless Pupils and School Fees and Waivers

The summer is once again drawing to a close and as we prepare to register pupils for a new school year, we want to identify four areas that traditionally have generated confusion: residency, immigrant pupils, homeless pupils and school fees and waivers. Below are brief introductions to the four topics. To access the complete document, click here: [Residency, Immigrant Pupils, Homeless Pupils and School Fees & Waivers.](#)

I. Residency (for non-special education pupils): School districts are concerned about registering or enrolling pupils that cannot produce documented proof of residency in the school district. ISBE encourages districts to “enroll first, ask questions later.”

II. Immigrant Pupils: Please review your district’s enrollment policy to ensure it is consistent with applicable laws, including the guidance outlined here.

III. Homeless Pupils: ISBE considers the school enrollment, attendance and success of homeless children and youth throughout Illinois to be a high priority.

IV. School Fees and Fee Waivers: During registration and throughout the school year, school districts must be aware of families who believe they are unable to afford school fees.

Funding and Disbursement Services

Important Revenue Code Information for Aug. 10 GSA Payment

The first FY 2010 General State Aid payment was vouchered Aug. 6, and per statute was forwarded to the Office of the Comptroller for release Aug. 10. During FY 2010 The state board will again be utilizing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act – State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) as the source for some of the payments made through the General State Aid program. In FY 2009, we utilized SFSF Education funds for the final five GSA payments. In FY 2010 we will utilize the SFSF Education as well as the SFSF Other Government Services fund as the fund source for select payments this year.

Please be advised that this first GSA payment is being vouchered from the SFSF Other Government Services source of funds. The revenue code for this program is 4870 and the federal Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number is 84.397 for audit purposes. This is the only GSA payment you will receive this year under the SFSF Other Government Services line item.

Later this fall, you will receive at least two, and a portion of a third, payment from the SFSF Education source of funds. The revenue code for this program is 4850 and the CFDA number is 84.394, which is the same revenue code as was used in FY 2009. When the state board receives final approval to access the balance of the SFSF Education funds we will distribute the payments to you consecutively.

We are still developing the collection tool for you to report the ARRA funds distributed to you for GSA and will notify you as soon as it is ready.

If you have questions regarding the General State Aid program please contact **Jim Mathes** at jmathes@isbe.net or 217-782-5256.

Interrupted School Days/Heat

The health and safety of students are a primary concern for every school superintendent. Section 18-12, of the School Code allows the use of Interrupted School Days for “adverse weather conditions,” including extreme heat as well as extreme cold. ISBE allows four options with regard to extreme heat:

- Amend the public school calendar to start school at a later date
- Dismiss after five clock hours of instruction
- Utilize an Emergency Day
- Utilize an Interrupted Day

If an Emergency Day is utilized, it is recommended that an Amended Calendar be submitted electronically through IWAS to the Regional Office of Education (ROE) for approval, to assure that the most up to date Public School Calendar is available online via the School Calendar Inquiry. If an Interrupted Day is utilized, an Amended Calendar must be submitted electronically through IWAS, within 30 days of occurrence, to the ROE, who will forward it to ISBE for approval as required by statute. The Calendar Code for Emergency Day is ED. The Calendar Code for an Interrupted Day is XID. When amending the calendar code to XID, Student Attendance Time is required to verify a minimum of 1

instructional clock hour was conducted as well as a brief explanation of why the day was interrupted.

ISBE's policy further states that if the announcement is made in advance (i.e., on the previous day) that school will be closing on any day or days after less than five clock hours because of heat, you must use an emergency day(s). You cannot count that shortened day as a full-day of attendance under those circumstances.

At this time, all 2009-10 Public School Calendars should have ROE approval, making the calendar available for interested parties to view on the ISBE's School Calendar Inquiry. Per Section 10-19 of the School Code, any changes to the calendar must be approved by completing and submitting an amended calendar via IWAS prior to the change taking effect.

It is our hope that this information is helpful for the upcoming school year. If you have further questions regarding the public school calendar please contact your Regional Office of Education or **Marj Beck** at mbeck@isbe.net or 217-782-5256.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Updated ARRA Guidance for Securing DUNS Number and CCR Registration

Updated guidance has recently been provided for carrying out the reporting requirements included in Section 1512 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Previous guidance indicated that sub-recipients that receive ARRA funds, such as districts, regional offices of education, joint agreements and other local education agencies must secure a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) site.

We have received updated information indicating that all sub-recipients that receive ARRA funds must have a DUNS number but do not have to register with the CCR site. Each sub-recipient will have to provide their DUNS number when they report ARRA expenditures and other variables as required. The ARRA collection instrument is still being developed and all sub-recipients will be notified when it is ready.

Q: What is a DUNS number and who provides it?

A: Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) maintains a database of information on businesses worldwide. D&B provides a DUNS number, which is a unique 9-digit identification number for each physical location of a business organization. D-U-N-S number assignment is free for all entities required to register with the U.S. federal government for contracts or grants.

Most school districts already have a DUNS number. Please check with your business office to determine if your district has a DUNS number assigned, and if you do not, please register at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Recovery Act FAQs Available Online

The latest Recovery Act guidance FAQs are available on the White House Web site (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/recovery_faqs/) and will also be available on [Recovery.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/recovery_faqs/) in the near future.

Topics included:

- Clarification on M-09-21 Recipient Reporting Guidance
- Guidance on federal agency-specific jobs guidance and publication deadlines
- Technical aspects of the FederalReporting.gov solution
- Clarification on the M-09-18 Memo for covering state administrative costs
- General Recovery Act clarification

The data model is updated at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_fy2009/m09-21-supp2.pdf.

Student Assessment

ISAT Writing Pilot

ISAT writing is assessed in the spring at grades 3, 5, 6, and 8. As the pilot test is being administered in the fall, we will be pilot testing a grade up, meaning we will pilot test students in grades 4, 6, 7, and 9. Measurement Inc., our contractor, is in the process of contacting schools, including high schools for the grade 9 students. We appreciate your cooperation in completing this critical step in the assessment development process.

PSAE Fall Retake and Exemptions From the Diploma Requirement

This announcement summarizes two legislative changes brought about by Senate Bill 2014, regarding the

administration of the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) and allowable exemptions from the PSAE diploma requirement, which is awaiting the governor's signature. Once signed by the governor, SB2014 will become effective immediately. Please carefully review these changes and discuss implementation with your staff, especially high school principals and directors of guidance who are responsible for maintaining student records.

Elimination of PSAE Fall Retake

Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, the PSAE will be administered only in the spring of each school year. The PSAE Fall Retake and all Grade 12 ACT test vouchers will be eliminated, effective immediately.

These changes provide significant financial savings for the state. Because only the spring administration is required or utilized for federal accountability purposes, the financial savings does not jeopardize any school district's standing with regard to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Eliminating the Fall Retake for the PSAE also reduces the severe strain on local school district resources needed to implement the test at the beginning of the school year. Counselors, in particular, are consumed with scheduling students' courses and late student enrollment issues during the days immediately before and after the start of school. And, eliminating the need for Grade 12 test vouchers required for the national ACT removes an additional level of complexity.

PSAE Diploma Requirement

As indicated in the Illinois School Code, students must take the PSAE in order to receive a regular high school diploma, unless that student is exempted from taking the exam.

Eleventh graders, unless they are exempt, are required to take the PSAE in the spring. Students absent from Day 1 or Day 2 of the initial test dates should participate on the make-up date(s) for the day or days they missed.

New for 2010: Students classified as being in grade 12 in the spring who have not satisfied the PSAE diploma requirement, because they have not taken the PSAE and were not exempt from taking the PSAE when they were in grade 11, will be allowed to participate in the spring administration of the PSAE. Students absent from Day 1 or Day 2 of the initial test dates should participate on the make-up date(s) for the day or days they missed. With this change, students are essentially afforded a total of four opportunities to take the PSAE and satisfy the diploma requirement in their 11th and 12th grade years.

Scores achieved by these grade 12 students will not count towards AYP for the school, district or state.

PSAE Diploma Requirement: Students Who Are Exempt

Students who were exempt from taking the PSAE in grade 11 are exempt from the PSAE diploma requirement.

Upon SB2014 taking effect, the exemptions to taking the PSAE in grade 11 will include:

- the student's individualized educational program developed under Article 14 of the School Code identifies the Prairie State Achievement Examination as inappropriate for the student (i.e., the student is eligible to take the IAA),
- the student is enrolled in a program of Adult and Continuing Education as defined in the Adult Education Act. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.6 (c).
- the student is served in any locked facility that has a state-assigned RCDTS (region/county/district/type/school) code;
- the student attends a public university laboratory school under Section 18-8.05(K) of the School Code;
- the student is beyond the age of compulsory attendance (other than students with IEPs) whose programs do not culminate in the issuance of regular high school diplomas (23 Ill. Adm. Code 1.30 (a)(4)(A)); or
- the school district is not required to test the individual student for purposes of accountability under federal No Child Left Behind requirements because at the time of the grade 11 administration of the state assessment, the student is:
 - participating in residential programs that provide psychological treatment or treatment for drug or alcohol abuse;
 - jailed or in a locked-down facility;
 - residing in or attending facilities located out of state or out of country (This includes Illinois students who were in foreign exchange programs.);
 - hospitalized because of medical emergencies or procedures (i.e., medically exempt); or
 - homebound (i.e., homebound exempt), at which time, districts shall examine the circumstances of each case individually to determine whether administration of the state assessment to

the homebound student is feasible and appropriate (This does not necessarily mean that the student is receiving “homebound instruction”; but that the student is unable to attend school, and the reasons therefore must be assessed individually to determine whether administration is feasible and appropriate.).

PSAE Diploma Requirement: Students Who Are NOT Exempt

Students who attend alternative programs and schools are not exempt from the PSAE diploma requirement.

Students who are administratively transferred to an alternative school program created under Article 13A of the School Code (the Safe Schools Law) or who participate in a program funded under Article 13B of the School Code (the Alternative Learning Opportunities Law) must take the PSAE. The PSAE scores these students earn are to be reported to and counted for AYP purposes at the home high school they attended (or would have attended) had they not been transferred to a safe school program or, in the case of students attending an alternative learning opportunities program, the home school they attended (or would have attended or still do attend).

Students who attend an alternative school created and operated by a Regional Superintendent of Schools under Section 18-8.05 of the School Code must take the PSAE if they 1) are dually enrolled in a local school district and an alternative school and 2) will be receiving a regular high school diploma from the district. The PSAE scores these students earn are to be reported to and counted for AYP purposes at an identified home school in the district.

Determination of Participation for Awarding a Regular High School Diploma

District superintendents are responsible for determining whether students have taken the PSAE and informing students of the grade 12 spring administration if they have not.

Acceptable Proof that a Student Has Taken the PSAE

Proof that a student has taken the PSAE includes:

- The student’s Assessment Record in ISBE’s Student Information System indicates Assessment Data for PSAE,
- The student’s name appears on a PSAE School Roster,

- The student’s name appears on a PSAE label on the student’s transcript,
- The student’s name appears on a PSAE Individual Student Report, or
- Due to the unavailability of the above prior to the awarding of a regular high school diploma, for grade 12 testers only, the student’s name appears on a local PSAE testing roster, on which the student’s attendance is marked as present for testing.

Curriculum and Instruction

AGED500 Introduction to Natural Resources for Teachers

This graduate level course (four graduate hours) is the first of a series of courses developed for distance education by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to provide an introduction to Illinois natural resources. This course can be taken without being admitted to a graduate degree program at the U of I by registering through the Office of Continuing Education at <http://www.outreach.uiuc.edu> as a non-degree seeking student.

Class discussion sessions operate live through a virtual classroom using the Elluminate distance education system (www.illuminate.com) as well as outside independent work. Course software is provided at no cost and high speed internet is required. Class sessions are 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesdays from Sept. 8 to Dec. 1. Course cost is \$1,416 (\$354 per credit hour).

For more information contact **Heather Miller**, program director at 217-265-6568 or hmiller1@illinois.edu.

Nutrition

Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Funds

Again this year, the Department of Defense (DoD) allowed participation in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to all schools that requested to participate subject to a \$500 allocation floor. The Illinois State Board of Education allocated the money it could spend with DoD amongst all schools that selected yes under Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Participation on the Annual Order Forms menu option on the Illinois Commodity System (ICS). Schools can see how much money has been allocated to them by selecting Fresh Fruits and

Vegetables Participation on the Annual Order Forms menu option on the ICS.

Those schools that have funds allocated to them and do not have a login and password to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Order Receipt System (FFAVORS) are advised to contact DoD at 215-737-3676 to begin placing orders. Any other questions related to the DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program can be addressed with Food Distribution Program staff at 217-782-2491.

It Has Been a Busy Summer for Nutrition Programs' Staff

Between May and August, more than 20 workshops and the first two ever Webinars were conducted statewide by Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Programs' staff. The workshops and Webinars covered school wellness, Basic Training workshops (administration of the National School Lunch Program), menu planning and dietary guidelines, certification of eligibility and verification, and the National School Lunch Program's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant.

If you missed any of these trainings, most of the resources and reference materials used are posted online at www.isbe.net/nutrition. For example, the Administrative Handbook covering Basic Training workshops is located at www.isbe.net/nutrition. Just scroll down to NSLP, National School Lunch Program (raspberry shaded box), and then click on Administrative Handbook, the first bullet item. Likewise, Electronic Direct Certification System resources, including the Webinar, are available further down on the same page. Bookmark that link as a favorite for future use.

In addition, frequently check the What's New section of the Web site for information and workshop announcements. You can also e-mail us at cnp@isbe.net or contact the office at 800-545-7892 or 217-782-2491.

Student Opportunities

Groups Form Engineering Alliance With Students in Mind

Project Lead the Way has announced the launch of the Engineering Alliance, a new partnership with the Technology Student Association and SkillsUSA that will provide students the opportunity to participate in innovative activities in science, technology, engineering and math education – outside of the classroom.

“The PLTW curriculum is proof that given the right tools and learning environment, students do get excited about technology and innovation,” said Richard Grimsley, PLTW's vice president of programs. “We are always looking for new ideas and innovative strategies to attract more students to engineering, including co-curricular activities and competitions. Given their combined 75 years of experience in the industry, TSA and SkillsUSA are just the right partners to help us identify new and interesting ways to engage students.”

PLTW's critical thinking and project-based STEM curriculum is being implemented at more than 3,000 schools and the program reaches over 300,000 students. The alliance will offer online competitions and leadership development activities designed to support teachers and excite students about technology, innovation and engineering.

Project Lead the Way is a not-for-profit organization that promotes engineering and biomedical sciences courses for middle and high school students. The Technology Student Association is a national organization for middle and high school students with a strong interest in technology. SkillsUSA is a national partnership of students, teachers and industry that works together to ensure America has a skilled work force.

For more information, visit <http://www.pltw.org>, <http://www.skillsusa.org> and <http://www.tsaweb.org>.

Classroom Opportunities

Grants available for field trips to Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum

Grants for field trips to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield are available to certain Illinois schools and youth organizations with a high enrollment of low-income children. The application deadline is Sept. 11.

Midwest Generation, an Edison International Co., and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation are offering field trip grants to teachers of grades 4 through 12 in public and private schools that have a low-income enrollment of greater than 30 percent. Not-for-profit youth organizations that serve economically disadvantaged children are also eligible. The grants provide funding to visit the museum at no or reduced cost by deferring the cost of transportation, lunch or educational materials. School groups do not pay a museum admission fee.

Grant applications are available at www.alplm.org/education/grant_application_packet.pdf, and must be postmarked by Sept. 11. The grant awards will be announced in October. In 2008, a total of \$20,000 was awarded to 17 schools. For more information, call 217-558-9016 or e-mail randy.wiseman@illinois.gov.

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/2009/newsclips/090814.htm>.