



March 15, 2010

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last week, Governor Quinn made his recommendation for the state FY 2011 budget to the General Assembly. We all know that these are trying economic times and the Governor’s overall budget is a dose of reality for everyone. It proposes a number of significant cuts throughout state government and also looks at a variety of ways to increase revenue in order to make ends meet.

I must point out that the Board proposes an education budget separate from the Governor, which we have already delivered to the Governor and General Assembly. The Board’s budget essentially calls for level funding, while the Governor’s proposed budget would reduce the ISBE budget by 16 percent or \$1.2 billion. However, he also proposed an income tax increase with proceeds earmarked specifically to go to education to fill in the cuts and pay down the state backlog of bills owed to schools.

In its FY 2011 budget, the Board proposed maintaining the General State Aid (GSA) Foundation Level at \$6,119 and also slightly increasing Mandated Categoricals (MCAT). Governor Quinn’s budget would reduce the GSA Foundation Level by \$450 to \$5,669 and would reduce MCAT payments by 21 percent, or a little more than \$400 million dollars.

A side by side comparison of FY 2010 appropriations, the Board’s FY 2011 recommendation and the Governor’s budget proposal may be found at http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY11_gov_budget.pdf . I encourage you to review and run some of the numbers based on this to see what possible impact these budgets could have on your district.

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I know many of you have been out speaking with the public about the needs of your district. This is the time to continue letting them know what your needs are and what a cut to your GSA and MCATS may mean.

Last week, the K-12 Common Core State Standards were released for public comment. Illinois is one of 48 states participating in the Common Core State Standards Initiative, an effort focused on developing college-and career-ready standards and ensuring that these standards are internationally benchmarked to top-performing countries around the world.

Public comment on the Common Core Standards will be taken through April 2, 2010, with a final draft available this spring. Please take the time to review and comment on these standards as Illinois intends to adopt the Common Core later this summer. You can access the standards at <http://www.corestandards.org/>. The submit feedback link (<http://feedback.corestandards.org/s-gwid2-233754>) on the Common Core Web site will allow you to provide comments on the standards.

Have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **2008-09 Study of School Level Expenditure Report deadline** – March 15
- **Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award nomination deadline** – March 15
- **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant applications deadline** – March 15
- **Part 180 (Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools)** – Public comment period ends March 15
- **Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program application deadline** – April 2
- **Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) RFP deadline** – April 14
- **Illinois School Wellness ... From A to Z Conference** – May 4
- **Illinois Young Authors' Conference in Bloomington-Normal** – May 15
- **2009-10 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2010** – Aug. 13
- **Superintendents' Conference** – Oct. 26-27

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

U.S. Department of Education Releases Information on i3 Grants

The U.S. Department of Education recently announced final priorities and the grant application for the \$650 million Investing in Innovation Fund, also known as i3. To read the press release <http://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2010/03/03082010.html>.

"Many of our generation's greatest breakthroughs occur when people are willing to invest in small scale projects with big scale potential," U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan stated in the news release. "We need to identify these pockets of promise in the education community and give them the resources they need to grow."

Individual school districts or groups of districts can apply for the i3 grants, which are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Entrepreneurial nonprofits can work with school districts or a consortium of schools to submit applications.

Applications are available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html>.

Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program Extended Through 2011

The Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program (QZAB), created in 1997, has been extended through 2011 by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The QZAB program provides federal tax credits in lieu of

interest on bonds designated as QZAB's by the issuing school district. QZAB proceeds may be used for rehabilitating or repairing public school facilities, investing in new equipment and technology, developing challenging course materials or training teachers. They can't be used for new school construction.

In order to designate bonds as QZAB's, a school district must receive an allocation of the state's volume cap through application to the Illinois State Board of Education. To qualify for an allocation, the school or program designated as a qualified zone academy by the school district must be located in an empowerment zone or an enterprise community; or there is a reasonable expectation that at least 35 percent of their students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches under the National School Lunch Act. Additionally, private business contributions that total at least 10 percent of the face value of bonds to be designated as QZAB's must be secured by the issuing district on behalf of the zone academy.

A qualified zone academy is a school or program that provides education and training below the postsecondary level if: (1) the public school or program is/was designed in cooperation with business to enhance the academic curriculum, increase graduation and employment rates, and better prepare students for the rigors of college and the increasingly complex work force, (2) students in the public school or program will be subject to the same academic standards and assessments as other students educated by the eligible local education agency, and (3) the comprehensive educational plan of the public school or program is approved by the eligible local education agency.

The federal legislation provided for national allocations of \$1.4 billion in each of calendar years 2009 and 2010.

The Internal Revenue Service notice (IRS Notice 2010 – 22) provides that Illinois' share of these allocations is \$52.218 million (for calendar year 2010). In addition, \$13,923,899 from the calendar year 2009 volume cap remains to be allocated for a total of \$66,141,899. Changes to the program made by the Tax Extenders and Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act of 2008 are discussed in the Notice which is available at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-09-30.pdf>.

Allocations will be based on the relative degree of poverty as reflected by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, with preference given to those school districts that have not previously been awarded an allocation.

The Illinois State Board of Education will be accepting applications and supporting materials for the calendar year 2009 and 2010 allocations from March 15 to 4 p.m. April 2, 2010. Applications and additional information are available on the ISBE Web site at <http://www.isbe.net/construction/html/qzab.htm>.

For further questions or inquiries, please call Lou Ferratier, School Support Services at 217-785-8779.

ARRA Reporting – SFSF Education Payments for General State Aid

In an e-mail dated Feb. 19, information was provided regarding the distribution of the next three General State Aid (GSA) payments on Feb. 19, March 10 and March 19 using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) Education funds. Federal rules require that the time between receipt of federal funds and their expenditure must be minimized to avoid excess cash on hand. To comply with this rule local education agencies (LEAs) must fully expend these three payments on or before March 31.

To meet this requirement, local education agencies (LEAs) need to keep in mind the following:

1. The three SFSF Education GSA payments can be used for legitimate local expenditures between Jan. 1, 2010 and March 31, 2010.
2. SFSF payments can be utilized for expenses beyond salaries and benefits. LEAs should also look to other general operating costs in the quarter to fully expend these funds (e.g. utilities costs, supplies and materials, equipment etc.). Please refer to "Expenditures – ARRA General

State Aid" on Page 6 in the ARRA Reporting Instructions at http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf for more information.

The ability to charge the SFSF Education GSA payments for expenditures in the entire quarter should be adequate for all LEAs to fully expend these funds by March 31, 2010. If there are further questions regarding this issue, please contact Jim Mathes at jmathes@isbe.net or Marj Beck at mbeck@isbe.net or 217-782-5256.

LEAs are required to report funded jobs that are in alignment with the new guidance as provided in the ARRA Reporting Instructions. The deadline for reporting ARRA jobs and vendor data to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) for the reporting quarter ending March 31 is Monday April 5, 2010. ISBE has created a new ARRA data collection system in IWAS for LEAs to report full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs information as well as vendor payment data. Previously, LEAs submitted ARRA jobs and vendor information as an addendum to the financial expenditures reported via the Electronic Expenditure Reporting System in IWAS. The new ARRA data collection tool is now a stand alone system. Administrators are preapproved to access the new system. All other LEA users will need to request access to the new system through the normal process used when signing up for additional systems within IWAS. Users begin this process by selecting "Want to Signup for Other Systems?" on the lower right of the screen.

ARRA Jobs and Vendor Data Due April 5, 2010

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and vendor data for the quarter ending March 31, 2010, is due at the Illinois State Board of Education on or before April 5, 2010. ARRA jobs and vendor data must be submitted by all local education agencies (LEAs) that have applied for and/or received ARRA funds. Please note that the jobs calculation has changed per new Federal guidance. Refer to the new ARRA Reporting Instructions at http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf for more information. ARRA data reporting includes two primary elements: the number of jobs funded in the reporting quarter with ARRA funds and payments made to a vendor that were \$25,000 or more. ARRA data must be reported regardless of whether any jobs were funded or a payment was made to a vendor of \$25,000 or more.

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

- State Fiscal Stabilization Fund – Education (General State Aid) – Revenue Code 4850
- Title I Low Income – Revenue Code 4851
- Title I Low Income Neglected – Revenue Code 4852
- Title I Low Income Delinquent – Revenue Code 4853
- IDEA Part B Preschool – Revenue Code – 4856
- IDEA Part B Flow Through – Revenue Code 4857
- Title II D Enhancing Education Through Technology – Revenue Code 4861
- McKinney Vento Homeless Education – Revenue Code 4862

New ARRA Jobs and Vendor Data Collection System

The Illinois State Board of Education has created a new American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) data collection system for local education agencies (LEAs) to report full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs information as well as vendor payment data. Previously, LEAs submitted ARRA jobs and vendor information as an addendum to the financial expenditures reported via the Electronic Expenditure Reporting System in IWAS. The new ARRA data collection tool is now a stand alone system in the IWAS System Listing. Administrators are preapproved to access the new system. All other LEA users will need to request access to the new system through the normal process used when signing up for additional systems within IWAS. After a user logs into their IWAS account select System Listing and begin the process by selecting “Want to Signup for Other Systems?” on the lower right of the screen.

LEAs that have not been able to report ARRA jobs and vendor data for the period ending Sept. 30 due to delays in application approval are now able to do so. In addition, jobs data reported for the period ending Dec. 31 should be reviewed and amended accordingly due to new guidance issued by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on Dec. 18, which can be accessed at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-08.pdf.

The new guidance reflects two significant changes:

1. Subjective assessment has been eliminated in favor of reporting FTE jobs as those funded in the reporting quarter with ARRA funds. Jobs

funded partially with ARRA funds will only be counted based on the proportion funded by ARRA. Previous guidance required LEAs to make a subjective judgment on whether a given job would have existed were it not for ARRA funds.

2. LEAs must report FTE jobs by dividing the ARRA funded hours worked by the employee in the reporting quarter (i.e., the most recent quarter) by the hours in a full-time schedule in that reporting quarter. Previous guidance required LEAs to sum all hours worked from the current and all prior quarters and divide that total against a cumulative sum of all full-time hours from the current and prior reporting quarters. The December 2009 Federal OMB guidance has been incorporated into ISBE’s new ARRA reporting procedures, which can be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf. Please read the revised procedures before entering data into the new ARRA reporting system. If the LEA has a pending application (e.g. Title I or IDEA Part B) that has a start date prior to Sept. 30, 2009, or if jobs information for the period ending Dec. 31, 2009, needs to be amended to be in alignment with the new OMB guidance, please enter that information into the new ARRA data collection system.

If you have further questions, please contact the division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

Innovation and Improvement

Office of Safe and Drug-Free School Program Offers Listserv

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program offers a listserv to deliver a newsletter and information on legislation and grant opportunities. Sign up for PreventionED at <http://www2.ed.gov/news/newsletters/listserv/preventioned.html>.

Special Education Services

State Board Seeks Public Comment on FY 2010 Draft IDEA Part B Application

The Illinois State Board of Education’s Special Education Services division has completed the grant application under Part B of IDEA as amended in 2004. Upon receipt and approval of the required assurances,

certifications and information in the application, the state is eligible to receive Part B funds.

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) requires that states must publish their Part B Application for at least 60 days and accept public comment for at least 30 days. The plan can be reviewed at the ISBE Web site through May 3 at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/IDEA_PartB_app_FFY10.pdf.

The plan includes a checklist of assurances that Illinois has policies and procedures in effect to comply with the requirements of the December 2004 amendments to IDEA. Where Illinois is not in compliance with the IDEA amendments of 2004, a date is given by which Illinois assures that policies and procedures will be in effect. The plan for expenditure of state-level IDEA funds by category is also a component of the state plan.

Written comments will only be accepted April 1 to May 3. To submit a written comment, go to http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/IDEA_PartB_app10_comment.pdf.

In addition, public comments may be e-mailed to partbapplication@isbe.net or mailed to: David Andel, Division Administrator, Illinois State Board of Education, Division of Special Education Services, 100 North First Street – N-253, Springfield, IL 62777-0001.

Interested persons can review a copy of the plan and comment form at the Illinois State Board of Education office at 100 N. First St., Springfield, IL in the Information Center located on the first floor in 1 South.

Nutrition

FDA Working on Recalls for Flavor Enhancer Used in Variety of Foods

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is working on several recalls involving hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HVP). HVP is a common ingredient used most frequently as a flavor enhancer in many processed foods, including soups, sauces, chilies, stews, hot dogs, gravies, seasoned snack foods, dips and dressings.

At this time, there are no known illnesses associated with this contamination and there have been no recalls connected with USDA-purchased commodities.

The FDA recommends consumers:

- Check <http://www.foodsafety.gov> or <http://www.recalls.gov> for a list of recalled products.
- Remember to follow cooking instructions for all foods.
- Report symptoms of Salmonella or other food-related illness to your local health care professional.

If you have questions, call the FDA at 888-463-6332.

Rules and Waivers

Notice of Completed Rulemaking

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

Part 1 (Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision)

Among other updates, changes the correction window for the Prairie State Achievement Examination, conforms school fee waiver provisions to P.A. 96-360, adds new curricular requirements resulting from recently enacted legislation, and updates a cross-reference to bilingual education requirements.

Affected Sections: 1.30, 1.60, 1.245, 1.420, 1.445, 1.705
Effective Date: Jan. 18, 2010

Part 151 (School Construction)

Adds provisions pertaining to application for energy efficiency grants; provides for an electronic application process for school maintenance grants.

Affected Sections: 151.20, 151.50, 151.100, 151.110, 151.120, 151.200, 151.210, 151.220, 151.230, 151.235, 151.240
Effective Date: Jan. 18, 2010

Part 252 (Driver Education)

Changes references to Section 27-23 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/27-23], which was repealed, to the School Code sections into which applicable requirements were incorporated.

Affected Sections: 252.10, 252.25
Effective Date: Jan. 18, 2010

Educator Certification

NASDTEC Annual Conference to be Held in June in Indianapolis

This year's National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education & Certification conference will be held June 13-16 in Indianapolis.

Featured speakers at the 82nd annual NASDTEC conference include Tom Carroll of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, Julie Ewart from the U.S. Department of Education, Dennis van Roekel of the National Education Association and many more.

Visit <http://nasdtec.com> for the conference agenda and hotel and registration information. Call 508-380-1202 or e-mail rje@nasdtec.com for additional questions.

Professional Development

Program Sends Educators to the Galapagos Islands

Full-time classroom teacher or teacher-librarians for grades 6-12 are eligible to apply for the 2010 Toyota International Teacher Program to the Galapagos Islands. The program, which is funded by Toyota Motor Sales USA, is administered by the Institute of International Education and will be held Nov. 20 through Dec. 4. Applicants must have at least three years of full-time teaching experience by the program start date.

On line application and frequently asked questions are available at <http://toyota4education.com>. For more information, e-mail toyotateach@iie.org or call 877-832-2457. The deadline to apply is May 26.

Nominations Sought for Annual Rolland J. Van Hattum Award

Do you know an individual who demonstrates exemplary commitment and contributions to the delivery of audiology and/or speech-language pathology services within a school setting? The 2010 nomination period for the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation's Roland J. Van Hattum Award for Schools-Related Professionals is open, and you are invited to nominate a professional who meets the criteria for selection.

In addition to the national recognition, the winner will receive \$1,000, and the school system represented by the recipient will receive \$500.

The deadline for nominations is April 15. To obtain nomination applications and to learn more about other ASHFoundation awards, visit <http://www.ashfoundation.org/grants>.

Student Opportunities

Illinois Youth With Disabilities Leadership Summit Coming Up

The Statewide Independent Living Council is gearing up for the Illinois Youth With Disabilities Leadership Summit, which is set for July 25-28 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

This summit aims to empower young leaders by learning from each other and from successful adults with disabilities who are recognized leaders and role models. Youth who wish to apply should have a disability, be between the ages of 17-24, live in Illinois and have a strong desire to learn and grow as a leader. The summit is free including travel to and from the event, lodging, meals and any personal care attendant services/interpreters that may be needed.

For further information, please review the Web site at <http://www.silcofillinois.org/summit.html> or call the Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois at 217-744-7777.

National Institutes of Health Scholars Program at Elgin Community College

High school seniors interested in science, medicine and cutting edge fields in biomedical research are invited to apply for the National Institutes of Health Scholars Program at Elgin Community College.

The program is a partnership with Roosevelt University and is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Ten students will be selected for the two-year program that consists of two paid summer research experiences at Roosevelt University's Schaumburg campus along with regular meetings and activities during the fall and spring semesters at ECC.

To be eligible, students must plan to be enrolled full time at ECC in the fall 2010 semester. The application deadline is April 2. For more information, visit <http://www.elgin.edu/nihsscholars> or e-mail Daysi Diaz-Strong at dstrong@elfin.edu.

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/100312.htm>.