



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
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TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

April 2, 2009

TO: Superintendents, Principals, Business Managers, Charter School Administrators, Title I Directors, Special Education Directors, Testing Coordinators, Technology Coordinators and Public Information Officers

FROM: Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Weekly E-Newsletter

IN THIS REPORT:

- **JFAC approves Public Schools Budget**
- **Idaho receives \$5.9 million grant for longitudinal data system**
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JFAC APPROVES PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET (GO TO TOP)

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna expressed relief that the Legislature's budget committee heeded his recommendation and minimized cuts to public education. The committee voted on Friday, March 27 to set the public schools budget for fiscal year 2010.

"No one wants to cut education, least of all me. Unfortunately in these unprecedented economic times, the members of the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee had to make the tough decision to cut public education. While I am not happy that we had to cut public education, I am relieved JFAC made every effort to minimize the cuts to education as much as possible," Superintendent Luna said.

As the economy continues to worsen and state revenues decline, the public schools budget was facing a shortfall of up to \$130 million for fiscal year 2010, which begins July 1. In recent days, some had recommended cutting public education by more than \$100 million, including a 6.5 percent pay cut for teachers. Superintendent Luna fought against these serious cuts that would have hurt student achievement.

The 20-member Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) today approved \$69 million in reductions to the FY2010 Public Schools Budget. The budget uses \$60 million in federal stimulus funds to minimize cuts to Idaho schools.

"The \$69 million in cuts will not be easy, but I am convinced our talented teachers and administrators will work hard next year to ensure the cuts do not hurt student achievement," Superintendent Luna said. "My priority is to preserve student-teacher contact time and those programs that get directly into the classroom and have the most immediate, positive impact on student achievement. I believe we can maintain these priorities with these targeted cuts."



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The FY2010 Public Schools Budget that JFAC approved today includes reductions to maintenance, transportation, textbook funding and salaries. Here is how the base salary reductions will break down for school employees:

- Administrators: 5 percent reduction
- Teachers: 2.63 percent reduction
- Classified: 2.63 percent reduction

The budget also includes \$20 million to fund anticipated growth in student enrollment next year.

More detailed information including a spreadsheet and fact sheet about the public schools budget are available online. Visit www.sde.idaho.gov and click on the "Public Schools Budget" link.

IDAHO RECEIVES \$5.9 MILLION GRANT FOR LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM (GO TO TOP)

The Idaho State Department of Education was awarded a \$5.9 million federal grant to develop and implement the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna announced this week.

"This is very exciting news for Idaho's public schools. The Statewide Longitudinal Data System is a vital tool educators need to raise student achievement across our state," Superintendent Luna said. "A longitudinal data system provides educators with current, accurate data on student performance at the school, district and state level so we can work together to make better-informed decisions for Idaho students."

Idaho is currently one of only six states without a Statewide Longitudinal Data System. Since taking office in 2007, Superintendent Luna has worked closely with the Idaho Legislature to secure funding for this system. Last year, the Legislature appropriated an initial \$2.5 million for the State Department of Education to begin development.

In September 2008, the Department, in partnership with the Idaho State Board of Education, applied for the \$5.9 million federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics. An estimated \$4.6 million will be allocated to Idaho in the first two years.

With this federal grant, the State Department of Education will continue the development of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System. Once this system is in place, Idaho schools will be able to accurately measure the success of academic programs, guide classroom instruction and immediately evaluate the needs of new students who transfer from other schools within the state.

"The possibilities of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System are endless," Superintendent Luna added. "This data system is critical as we evaluate what we are currently doing in education and work to improve the public education system to meet all students."

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (GO TO TOP)

- **House Bill 252 -- School District Financial Emergencies:** This bill relating to teacher contracts and district financial emergencies unanimously has passed the full House and the Senate Education Committee. It now heads to

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the full Senate for a vote. This consensus bill is the result of negotiations between bipartisan stakeholders for the last 30 days and has broad support among all education interests.

- Read the bill: <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2009/H0252.htm>.
- **House Bill 256 -- Student Transportation Support Program:** This bill passed the full House last week. The Senate Education Committee sent the bill to the amending order in the full Senate.
 - Read the bill: <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2009/H0256.htm>.
- **House Bill 262 -- Teacher Early Retirement Repeal, Freeze of Experience Grid:** This bill has passed the full House and the Senate Education Committee. It now heads to the full Senate.
 - Read the bill: <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2009/H0262.htm>.

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)

- Superintendent Luna will attend the State Board of Education meeting on Monday, April 6 in Boise.

WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

- **DATE CHANGE: Webinars on the Math Initiative** -- The State Department of Education is hosting Webinars to discuss the Idaho Math Initiative and upcoming Mathematical Thinking for Instruction (MTI) course. The Webinars will be held **Thursday, April 23** at 4 p.m. MT and **Thursday, April 30** at 4:30 p.m. MT. Please visit the IdahoLive web site at <http://idla.blackboard.com/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>.
- **Apply now for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program** -- The State Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs is opening another round of competitive applications for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), a great opportunity for Idaho schools and districts to offer a wider variety of fresh produce to students throughout the school day than they would normally have access to through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. If your school or district is interested in applying, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/> and click on the "2010 FFVP Applications" link on the left side of the page. Please read the details of the program before applying. The deadline to apply is no later than **5 p.m. on April 17, 2009**. If you have any questions, please contact Ed Herrera at (208) 332-6820 or EHerrera@sde.idaho.gov.
- **RTI Webinars** -- The State Department of Education will host two webinars in April to kick off the Response-to-Intervention (RTI) Webinar Series. The first "Overview of Response to Intervention: Essential Components" will be held April 9, 2009 from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. MT. The second webinar "District Level Leadership- Supporting a Rigorous Response to Intervention Framework" will be held April 27, 2009 from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. MT. While this series is offered at no cost to Idaho educators, credit through Boise State University is available for participation in the webinar series. Pre-registration is necessary for all of the webinars in this series. Visit the following site to learn how to register: <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/rti/staffDevelopment.htm>. If you have questions about these webinars or RTI in Idaho, please feel free to contact me at nthomasprice@sde.idaho.gov or (208) 332-6979.



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- **Writing workshop for high school students** -- Thirty Idaho high school students are invited to participate in a one-week residential writing workshop. Writers @ Harriman will be held August 2-8. Students who will be in 11th or 12th grade in fall 2009 are eligible. Harriman State Park, managed as a natural and historical site by Idaho State Parks & Recreation, is on highway 20 between Ashton and Island Park. Students will submit a writing sample with their application. They will work in small groups and one-on-one with professional writers and a naturalist, exploring imaginative writing techniques in Idaho's superb outdoor classroom. An anthology of student work will be printed following camp. Students must apply before **May 15, 2009**. Scholarships are available. For an application and more details, visit <http://writersatharriman.org>.
- **Overview of federal stimulus funding** -- Looking for an overview of the education provisions of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)*? The Department has released a PowerPoint presentation on guiding principles and funding availability. The ARRA contains more than \$100 billion in direct education funding for the next two fiscal years and \$39 billion in bonding authority and tax credits. For more information, please visit <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/presentation/>.

NEWS FROM THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (GO TO TOP)

Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter announced the appointment today of Don Soltman of Twin Lakes, vice president for support services at Kootenai Health – the operator of Kootenai Medical Center in Coeur d'Alene – to the state Board of Education.

He succeeds Sue Thilo of Coeur d'Alene, whose term expired March 1. Soltman's term runs through March 2014. His appointment is subject to Idaho Senate confirmation.

"I was impressed with the quality of the people who were willing to consider this job. It's tough, and often thankless even in the best of times, and I appreciate the great work that Sue has done," Governor Otter said. "Don's proven commitment to education and experience at both the local and statewide policy level made him a standout candidate, and a great choice to help the Board of Education fulfill its mission."

"I feel privileged to be appointed and hope to serve the people of Idaho as best I can," said Soltman, who was a member of the Rathdrum-based Lakeland School District for 13 years, including five years as chairman. He did not seek re-election last year.

In addition, Soltman served four years on the state's Professional Standards Commission – which advises the Board of Education on standards for teacher certification in Idaho schools – including three years as chairman of its budget committee. He also served on the state committee that developed the graduation standards in science for Idaho students.

Soltman, 60, is a Grangeville native with a bachelor's degree in life sciences from the Air Force Academy and a master's degree in health care administration from Baylor University in Texas. He served 10 years in the Air Force, working at various health care facilities across the United States, Europe and in Vietnam.



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Soltman's daughter, Hilary Bradbury, is an attorney practicing in Boise.

REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Join Superintendent Luna on Facebook** -- Superintendent Luna now has a Facebook page at www.facebook.com. If you have a Facebook account, please make Superintendent Luna your friend and get updates on meetings and events, press releases, photos, etc. You can also submit comments and questions for the Superintendent.
- **IDLA improves ISAT Prep materials** -- Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA) introduced new online ISAT Preparatory Review materials. Since 2005, IDLA has offered the ISAT Preparatory Review free of charge to Idaho school districts. IDLA has made significant improvements to these materials, including new interactive review content, numerous online practice quizzes and exercises, updated feedback on sample questions, and a fresh visual design. Beginning this year, we have established a simplified process for school administrators to retrieve their ISAT Preparatory login accounts. Please point your browser to <http://login.idahodigitallearning.org> and follow the simple directions to retrieve your logins. IDLA is hosting a webinar on IdahoLive to discuss the improved ISAT Prep Resources from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. MST on Tuesday, March 31, 2009. Visit www.idahodigitallearning.org and click on the "IdahoLive" tab to learn more.
- **Spring IRI** -- This is just a reminder that the Spring Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) starts April 15, 2009. For more information, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/reading_indicator/. If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Fisk or Stephanie Martin at (208) 332-6903.
- **Teacher workshops in Yellowstone** -- Yellowstone's National Park Service and the Yellowstone Association Institute are hosting teacher workshops in Yellowstone National Park. University credits and teacher in-service credits are available. The "Take it Outside" workshop is scheduled for July 27-30 at the historic Lamar Buffalo Ranch. For more information on this workshop and others, please visit www.yellowstoneassociation.org or call (406) 848-2400.
- **AP Test Fee Grant** -- The State Department of Education will be assisting districts by paying for AP/IB exams for low-income students. The College Board will provide information on AP Central, the AP program's online resource found at www.apcentral.collegeboard.com. Once again, registration will be online. The state will pay \$56 per AP/IB Exam for public and private school students qualifying for the College Board fee reduction. The final AP fee for qualifying students is \$0. Therefore, AP exams are provided at no cost to students. Please go to the SDE Gifted Talented website http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/gifted_talented/announcements.htm for further information or call Dr. Val Schorzman at (208) 332-6920.
- **New Census in Schools Web Site Coming Soon** -- Beginning the end of March 2009, the U.S. Census Bureau will be launching a new Census in Schools Web site. The website will incorporate information for teachers and students on using the 2010 Census in classrooms through teaching tools, resource materials, and professional development opportunities. To view the Census in Schools Web site, visit www.census.gov and click on "For Teachers & Students."



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- **School Improvement Webinars** -- Here is the schedule for upcoming School Improvement Webinars:
 - April 28, 2009: Action Planning Webinar
 - May 14, 2009: Parental Involvement WebinarThe estimated time frame for all webinar sessions is 1 hour. You can register at <http://idla.blackboard.com>. Select the Idaho Live tab, and then click on "Webinar Registration." Please contact Lisa Kinnaman or Katherine Weatherspoon at (208) 426-4852 with any questions.
- **Mathematics of Personal Finance Professional Development** -- Mathematics teachers wishing to use the new Mathematics of Personal Finance content standards can attend a free professional development opportunity in Boise on April 21, 2009 sponsored by the Idaho Financial Literacy Coalition in partnership with the State Department of Education. These math content standards can be used as the basis for a district developed math course that will satisfy the new high school graduation requirement in mathematics for ninth graders entering school in the fall of 2009. There are five major strands to the content standards: Money Management; Savings and Investment; Education, Employment and Income; Taxation; and Data Analysis and Statistics. Free materials will be provided. For more information and online registration, please visit <http://www.sde.state.id.us/site/math/> or contact Amanda Salazar at adsalazar@sde.idaho.gov or (208) 332-6974.
- **IEA Teacher Awards** -- Every month, September through June, the Idaho Education Association offers eight (8) \$50 awards to teacher members who are new to the profession (5 years or less). Applying is easy. Just e-mail your name and a statement of how you plan to use your Cold Hard Cash for your Classroom to ecurrie@idahoea.org. If your name is not selected this month, your entry is rolled over to the next month. Visit www.idahoea.org for more information.
- **ASVAB** -- The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) program is one way to help students identify a future career path. The ASVAB program is a comprehensive career exploration and planning program that includes a multiple-aptitude test battery, interest inventory and various career planning tools designed to help the student explore the world of work. The program is free of charge. Please consider using ASVAB in your school or school district. For more information, you can contact: David Hodson, at (208) 334-1450 ext. 213 or david.a.hodson@mepcom.army.mil or Colleen Owen at (208) 334-1450 ext.214 or colleen.owen@mepcom.army.mil. Schools in Northern Idaho, north of New Meadows should call Fred Bernize at (509) 353 3105 ext. 242 or fred.bernize@mepcom.army.mil.

UPCOMING DEADLINES (GO TO TOP)

- **April 3, 2009** -- The deadline to register for the Idaho School Safety Summit. The Summit, hosted by the State Department of Education, will be held April 23, 2009. The focus of the summit is to highlight crisis prevention and response best practices from a national expert in the field, provide an increased understanding of online SDE tools to develop emergency operations plans and raise awareness of safety/security equipment available through vendors offering product at a reduced rate through a vendor showcase. For more information please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/safe_secure/docs/School%20Safety%20Summit%20Flyer.pdf.
- **April 10, 2009** -- The deadline to postmark nomination packages for the sixth annual *Preserve America* Idaho History Teacher of the Year Award, sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and Idaho



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Council for History Education. The Idaho Council honors each state winner with an award of \$1,000. All elementary (K-6) teachers who have responsibility for teaching American history are eligible this year. Please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/social_studies/ for more information.

- **April 15, 2009** -- The deadline for Idaho school districts and public charter schools to submit requests for proposals for Learn and Serve grant funding. Please review application information available online at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/learn_serve. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Tina Naillon, Learn and Serve Coordinator, at (208) 332-6904 or TMNaillon@sde.idaho.gov.
- **April 30, 2009** -- The deadline to submit new Alternative School Summer Program applications. The Department has introduced a more user-friendly and streamlined Alternative School Application that will be used for both Regular Session Alternative Schools and Alternative Summer School Programs. The revised application is available online at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/alternative_schools/. If you have any questions regarding your Alternative School Summer Program, please contact Nick Smith at (208) 332-6959 or at NWSmith@sde.idaho.gov.