



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

August 6, 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:

- **Idaho students continue to excel in reading**
- **Annual Superintendents' Meeting next week**
- **Superintendent's Schedule**
- **What's New**
- **Reminders**
- **Upcoming Deadlines**

IDAHO STUDENTS CONTINUE TO EXCEL IN READING (GO TO TOP)

More than 75 percent of Idaho's third-grade students are reading at grade level or above, according to the most recent scores from the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI).

"It's critical for students to master reading skills by the end of third grade. Now, for the first time in years, more than 75 percent of Idaho students are now reading at grade level or above by the time they leave third grade," Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said. "I credit Idaho's talented educators, dedicated parents and hardworking students for helping to reach this goal."

Last year, 71 percent of Idaho's third-grade students scored at grade level or above on the Spring IRI. Student scores improved at other grade levels as well. In second-grade, for example, 72 percent of students reached grade level or above on the Spring 2009 IRI, compared to 69 percent of students the previous year.

The IRI is designed to measure students' reading skills in kindergarten through third grades to help classroom teachers quickly identify those students who are struggling and provide the necessary remediation to bring them up to grade level.

The IRI is conducted three times a year in the fall, winter and spring and is graded on a three-point scale: Benchmark, Strategic or Intensive. A "Benchmark" score means the student is scoring on grade-level in reading. A "Strategic" or "Intensive" grade means a student is performing near grade level or below grade level, respectively. The Legislature allocates \$2.8 million a year for the Idaho Reading Initiative, and more than \$1.5 million funds remediation programs for students who struggled with reading.



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Student scores increased in every grade level from the fall to spring, except first grade. In first grade, student scores increased from 80 percent in Fall 2008 to 83 percent in Winter 2009. However, student scores unexpectedly dropped to 71 percent in Spring 2009.

"We have worked closely with educators from across the state to identify the reasons behind this unexpected decrease," said Jenny Fisk, state Reading Coordinator. "We believe student scores decreased from winter to spring because while first-grade students are tested on multiple measures during the fall and winter IRI, they are only tested on a reading passage on the Spring IRI. Therefore, we are bringing all stakeholders together to discuss how we can better collect the information we need throughout the entire first-grade year."

The following is a comparison of the percentage of students who scored at grade-level on the Fall, Spring and Winter IRI during the 2008-2009 school year:

Table with 4 columns: Grade, Fall 2008, Winter 2009, Spring 2009. Rows include Kindergarten, 1st Grade, 2nd Grade, and 3rd Grade with their respective percentages.

For more information about IRI scores at schools and school districts across the state, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/reading_indicator/.

ANNUAL SUPERINTENDENTS' MEETING NEXT WEEK (GO TO TOP)

Friday, August 7 is the final day to register for the 2009 Annual Superintendents' Meeting. The meeting will be held Thursday, August 13 at the Meridian School District offices. To register and see a full agenda, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/meetings_events/.

The entire meeting, including breakout sessions, will also be streamed live online via IdahoLive. To participate via IdahoLive, please visit www.idahodigitallearning.org, click on the "IdahoLive" tab, click on "Room Access" on the left under Quick Links and then click on the designated room assigned for the meeting and breakout sessions. (We will post the room assignments next week prior to the meeting.)

Participation in an IdahoLive session requires a computer with internet access as well as a headset or speakers. Please take a moment prior to the meeting to run the setup wizard (http://67.202.210.70/wizard/launcher.cgi?wc=wms) to ensure compatibility between your machine and the meeting room. Logging in as a participant, you will not need a password. If you have any issues and/or questions feel free to e-mail idaholive@idla.k12.id.us or call 1-800-927-8158.

Don't forget! The New Superintendents' Meeting is on Friday, August 14. If you are a new superintendent or charter school administrator, please e-mail mrmcgrath@sde.idaho.gov to register.



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SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)

- Superintendent Luna will attend the 2009 Annual Superintendents' Meeting on Thursday, August 13 in Meridian.
- Superintendent Luna will speak at the 2009 New Superintendents' Meeting at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, August 14 in Boise.

WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

- **New Grant Reimbursement Application training now posted** -- Did you miss the webinar training on the new Grant Reimbursement Application? Check out an archived copy of the webinar on our web site at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/accounting/>. The new Grant Reimbursement Application now incorporates the reporting requirements for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding.
- **Attendance and Enrollment Training Workshops** -- Here are the dates and locations of the 2009 Attendance and Enrollment Training Workshops:
 - Boise: Friday, September 18, State Department of Education offices, Barbara Morgan Conference Room
 - Coeur d'Alene: Wednesday, September 23, Midtown Meeting Room, 1505 N 5th Street
 - Lewiston: Thursday, September 24, Lewiston District Office Board Room, 3317 12th Street
 - Blackfoot: Tuesday, September 29, Performing Arts Center, Blackfoot High School, 870 S Fisher Ave
 - Jerome: Wednesday, September 30, Jerome Middle School, 520 10th Ave. WestRegistration forms and other materials for the workshops are posted online at: http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/finance_tech/training.htm. If you need additional information or have questions, please contact Greg Berg at GDBerg@sde.idaho.gov.

REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Conference for Hispanic students and parents** -- The Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs is hosting the "Emerging Hispanic Students and Parents in Education" conference from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on October 20-21, 2009 at the Best Western Caldwell Inn & Suites. The conference will focus on academic transitions, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, cultural competency and parental involvement. The conference is open to counselors, administrators, paraprofessionals, superintendents and anyone working directly with Hispanic students who would benefit from this training. For more information, contact Juan Saldana at (208) 334-2147 or juan.saldana@icah.idaho.gov.
- **Data Acquisition Calendar now posted** -- The 2009-2010 Data Acquisition Calendar is now available on the State Department of Education's web site. Please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/administrators.htm> and click the link in the menu on the left of the screen. This calendar provides the various due dates required by state and federal laws, rules and regulations.
- **IDOC instructor job openings** -- The Idaho Department of Correction is currently looking for three temporary instructors to provide GED/Vocational skills to probationers/parolees at the parole office locations in Coeur



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d'Alene, Caldwell, and Boise. These positions will work approximately 26 hours per week for the duration of up to one year. To learn more, please visit <http://dhr.idaho.gov/dhrapp/stateJobs/TemporaryOpenings.aspx>.

- **Update IDCI Database** -- School and district officials are encouraged to visit the Idaho District Contact Information database and update all contact information for the upcoming school year. Please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/data_collection.htm and click on the "Idaho District Contact Information" link. Instructions for using IDCI are posted at the top of the web page.
- **Free Person-Centered Planning (PCP) Services** - The Council on Developmental Disabilities is pleased to announce the availability of expert person-centered planning facilitators around Idaho. Thirteen people have just completed intensive training to become Person-Centered Planning (PCP) Specialists and will work with adults and transition-age youth (14-18) with developmental disabilities who live in Idaho communities. Person-centered planning is a valuable tool used to help individuals with developmental disabilities create a plan for support and services that is focused on their life goals and dreams. This service is free to individuals and their families. Contact information for PCP Specialists can be found at <http://www.idahocdh.org/dnn/personcenteredplanning>.
- **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 August 18, 2009. 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. 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.

UPCOMING DEADLINES (GO TO TOP)

- **August 7, 2009** -- The deadline to register for the 2009 Annual Superintendents' Meeting. Visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/meetings_events/ to register and see a full agenda.
- **August 10, 2009** -- The date the Professional Standards Commission Authorization Committee will meet to review Alternative Authorization – Teacher to New Certificate requests. Please submit complete application packets to Cina Lackey, Alternative Authorization Coordinator, prior to that date. If you have questions, please contact Cina Lackey at (208) 332-6936 or CLackey@sde.idaho.gov. You can mail applications to:
State Department of Education
ATTN: Cina Lackey
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0027
Boise, ID 83720-0027
- **August 15, 2009** – The Title I-A Annual Performance Report is due from all LEAs. Please complete this report online at this website: <https://www.sde.idaho.gov/datacollection/title1apr/>. The report can be found via our Title I website underneath the Title I-A Annual Reports' subheading and through the Data Collection website. You will need a separate password however, in order to access your report, which is separate from the CIP Tool and WISE Tool. Please contact Tyrel



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Trainer at (208) 332-6942 or tstrainor@sde.idaho.gov if you should have any questions or if you need to know your Title I-A Annual Performance Report password.

- **August 15, 2009** – The Title I-A Summer Extended Time Report is due from all LEAs that had summer or extended programs during the 2008-2009 school year. The report is located as a word document on our Title I website underneath the Title I-A Annual Reports' subheading that expands when you select it (towards the bottom of the screen) http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/title_one/. Please contact Tyrel Trainer at (208) 332-6942 or tstrainor@sde.idaho.gov if you should have any questions about this report.
- **August 15, 2009** – The Title I, Part D, Subparts 1 and 2 Neglected or Delinquent Evaluations for State agencies and Local Education Agencies are due from all State agencies and LEAs which received Title I, Part D funds for the 2008-2009 school year. Please complete this report found on the Neglected or Delinquent website at this location: <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/neglected/>. Instructions are also posted with the evaluations. The report can be found as a separate subheading under Surveys. Please mail and submit your completed report to Tyrel Trainer, Administrative Assistant, NCLB Idaho State Department of Education PO Box 83720 Boise, ID 83720-0027. You may also contact Tyrel Trainer at (208) 332-6942 or tstrainor@sde.idaho.gov if you should have any questions.
- **October 31, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for awards up to \$500 for Teacher Scholarships and Classroom Mini-Grants from Northwest Professional Educators. All educators are eligible for the awards. Each teacher must submit a short application describing the continuing education opportunity or class project, an itemized budget, and the academic benefit for students. Teachers may obtain applications by filling out a contact form on the NWPE website at www.nwpe.org. All awards are competitive.
- **December 31, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for \$250 New Classroom Start-Up Grants from Northwest Professional Educators. Teachers new to their district or grade level are eligible for the awards. Each teacher submits a short application describing their needs for setting up their classroom. Teachers may obtain applications by filling out a contact form on the NWPE website at www.nwpe.org. All awards are competitive.
- **September 30, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the American Association of School Administrators National Superintendent of the Year Program, which pays tribute to the talent and vision of the men and women who lead the nation's public schools. The maximum award is \$10,000. For more information, please visit <http://www.aasa.org/awards/content1.cfm?ItemNumber=890>.
- **November 20, 2009** -- The deadline to postmark an application for the 2009 Qwest Foundation for Education Grant, which is awarded to Idaho K-12 public school classroom educators who demonstrate innovative uses of technology in the classroom. Visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/tech_services/grants_contracts.htm to download the application form. If you have questions, please contact Jimmy Takata at (208) 332-6937 or JTakata@sde.idaho.gov.