



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

February 12, 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:

- **Update on the federal stimulus package**
- **Sample Senior Projects now available**
- **Superintendent's Schedule**
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UPDATE ON THE FEDERAL STIMULUS PACKAGE (GO TO TOP)

The leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate announced on Wednesday, February 11 that the conference committee had reached a compromise on the federal stimulus packages that were approved by the House and Senate. The House and Senate released a preliminary overview of the compromise but have not released more detailed information on how much Idaho will receive for public education and what, if any, strings will be attached to the stimulus funding.

When U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan visited Boise today with the Vice President, Superintendent Luna spoke with him briefly about the stimulus package. During that conversation, Secretary Duncan said the intent of the stimulus package is to provide funding that will give states the flexibility they need to prevent cuts to public education. At this point, the following information is the most detailed information we have received on the education portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is below:

Investments in Education and Training include:

- **\$53.6 billion for the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund**, including \$39.5 billion to local school districts using existing funding formulas, which can be used for preventing cutbacks, preventing layoffs, school modernization, or other purposes; \$5 billion to states as bonus grants for meeting key performance measures in education; and \$8.8 billion to states for high priority needs such as public safety and other critical services, which may include education and for modernization, renovation and repairs of public school facilities and institutions of higher education facilities.
- **\$13 billion for Title 1** to help close the achievement gap and enable disadvantaged students to reach their potential.
- **\$12.2 billion for Special Education/IDEA** to improve educational outcomes for disabled children. This level of funding will increase the Federal share of special education services to its highest level ever.



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- **\$15.6 billion to increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$500.** This aid will help 7 million students pursue postsecondary education.
- **\$3.95 billion for job training** including State formula grants for adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs (including \$1.2 billion to create up to one million summer jobs for youth).

More detailed information is expected to be released later today. Please visit www.sde.idaho.gov and click on the "Public Schools Budget" link to get the most current information on the federal stimulus package.

SAMPLE SENIOR PROJECTS NOW AVAILABLE (GO TO TOP)

As part of the new high school graduation requirements, students in the Class of 2013 will be required to complete a senior project by the end of their senior year. The project must include a written and oral component but can otherwise be designed by the local school district.

To assist local school districts in this implementation, the State Department of Education is posting samples of quality senior project models that several school districts around the state have already implemented. The samples are posted online at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/hs_grad_requirements/.

For more information on the new high school graduation requirements, please visit the web site or contact Deputy Superintendent Nick Smith at (208) 332-6959 or NWSmith@sde.idaho.gov.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (GO TO TOP)

- **New legislation proposed to give districts flexibility** -- The Chairmen of the House and Senate Education Committees proposed legislation today that is necessary to implement the budget Superintendent Luna proposed in January. The legislation is co-sponsored by Senate Pro Tempore Bob Geddes and House Speaker Lawrence Denney. The Chairmen presented two bills: one about transportation and maintenance, and the other bill is about personnel. The legislation would change Idaho Code to give local school boards the flexibility they need to furlough staff or reduce pay for all staff, instead of laying off teachers next year. This legislation will be discussed in the germane House and Senate Education Committees during a series of public hearings scheduled for next week.

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)

- Superintendent Luna will attend the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners meeting from 9 a.m. to noon on Tuesday, February 17 in Boise.
- Superintendent Luna will speak to the Idaho Indian Education Committee at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, February 18 in Boise.



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- Superintendent Luna will appear on Idaho Public Television's "Dialogue" show at 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 19 to discuss the public education budget.

WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

- **High school students wins InvestWrite essay contest** -- Dylan Jones a senior at Bishop Kelly HS has won first place nationally in the InvestWrite investment essay contest. Jones is one of 7,000 Idaho students competing among 740,000 nationwide last semester in an investment simulation called The Stock Market Game. Jones will be awarded a laptop computer and a trip to NYC to ring the opening bell at the NYSE. The Idaho Council on Economic Education is the sponsoring organization of The Stock Market Game in the state. For more information, please contact Justin Larson at the Idaho Council on Economics Education at (208) 426-1193 or jl Larson@boisestate.edu.
- **NASA introduces new podcast tools** -- NASA Education is excited to introduce the Do-It-Yourself Podcast activity in the "For Educators" section of NASA.gov. Students can preview and download audio and video clips of astronauts performing work in space and on the ground. They can then use these clips to build their own podcast or similar audio/video project. To learn more, visit <http://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/diypodcast/index.html>. For answers to questions about this activity, please contact Deana Nunley at Deana.Nunley@nasa.gov.
- **Forestry Professional Development Opportunities** -- Idaho Project Learning Tree's spring/summer workshop schedule is at www.idahoforests.org/pltl.htm. A variety of professional development classes are offered throughout the state, each worth one graduate credit. Contact 208-334-4061 or pltl@idahoforests.org for more information.
- **Forest Products Commission Newsletters available** -- The popular *EarthTracks* newsletter, full of environmental education news and opportunities, including spring and summer workshop schedules from Project's Learning Tree, WILD and WET and the Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission is now available at www.idahoforests.org/news.htm. Also at this location is "The Log," the forest education update from Idaho Forest Products Commission.
- **Forest History Supplement** -- *The Idaho Forest: From Lumberjacks to Lasersaws* is available to Idaho teachers, free of charge. Preview the student reader and teacher guide at www.idahoforests.org/lumberjacks.htm. Contact the Idaho Forest Products Commission at pltl@idahoforests.org or **800-ID-WOODS** to request a classroom set (30 unless you specify otherwise) of Student Readers and a Teacher Guide.
- **Apply now for Sustainable Forestry Tour for teachers and counselors** -- This trip of a lifetime explores north-central Idaho forests and the full circle of making products from trees while sustaining forest ecosystems—All while providing you with the VIP treatment you deserve as an educator. All expenses paid. Learn more and apply online at www.idahoforests.org/tour.htm.
- **Nominate a teacher for the Freida J. Riley Award** -- The Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation, a federal government agency, and the West Virginia Freida J. Riley Teacher Award Committee are now accepting nominations for the 2009 \$10,000 Freida J. Riley Teacher Award. The award honors an American teacher who



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works with a physical disability, teaches in an especially challenging educational environment or has performed a heroic act by making an exceptional, personal or physical sacrifice on behalf of students. To learn more, please visit www.columbusfdn.org/freidajriley/RileyNomination2009.pdf. All nomination materials must be mailed to West Virginia Freida J. Riley Teacher Award Committee, Post Office Box 4157, Clarksburg, West Virginia 26302. Nominations must be received in the Committee office no later than **Monday, March 2, 2009**.

REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Apply now for LEP Awards** -- The State Department of Education has established two new award programs to recognize outstanding schools and educators who work directly with LEP students and their families. The new Idaho LEP Program of Excellence award will recognize and honor outstanding LEP programs at the school or district level. The new Idaho LEP Educator of the Year award program to recognize and honor outstanding educators who work with LEP students and families. Applications are due by 5 p.m. on **Friday, March 13, 2009**. Please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/lep/> to learn more.
- **Environmental Education conference** -- The Idaho Environmental Education Association is hosting its annual conference in Pocatello March 6-7, 2009. There will be a field trip to Pocatello Charter School, including a tour of the school's solar installation. Idaho Power will be there to answer questions about the Solar 4R Schools program. To sign up for the conference, please visit www.idahoee.org.
- **Abraham Lincoln and American Constitutionalism** -- The SDE is offering a day-long professional development for social studies teachers entitled "Abraham Lincoln and American Constitutionalism" on March 10, 2009 in Idaho Falls. Educators will gain balanced, in-depth content knowledge about Abraham Lincoln's ideas and decisions regarding slavery and the use of presidential power to preserve the Federal Union during the Civil War. Participate in interactive social studies lessons that utilize deliberation and performance assessment as model teaching tools. Registration online at http://www.sde.state.id.us/site/social_studies/ until February 20. If you have further question, please contact Peter Kavouras at (208) 332-6974 or pgkavouras@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Charter School Dissemination Grants** -- As part of the federal Charter School Program grant, three high-performing charter schools in Idaho have received dissemination grants to share their best practices with other public schools, including other public charter schools, about how to create and sustain high-quality, accountable schools. More information on these grants and the high-performing charter schools is available online at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/charter_schools/dissemination.htm.
- **Financial Literacy Education program** -- The Office of State Treasurer Ron Crane is offering the "ABC's of Credit Card Finance", a free program designed to educate high school seniors about the do's, don'ts, and pitfalls of credit card ownership. Given the difficult economic times, this next generation needs to be armed with as many financial tools as possible. The presentation is about one hour in length and includes information such as essential credit card facts, choosing and using a credit card, understanding a credit report and score, consequences of irresponsible credit card use, and identity theft. If your school is interested in scheduling a presentation, please visit www.sto.idaho.gov/Programs/CreditCardFinance.aspx or contact Jennifer Hobbs in the State Treasurer's Office at (208) 332-2963 or email Jennifer.Hobbs@sto.idaho.gov.



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- **Spanish for the Working Professional** -- Northwest Nazarene University will offer a new course entitled Spanish for the Working Professional. This two-credit, weekly introductory course to Spanish is designed to develop functional language skills through conversation and practice for professionals who wish to be prepared for the ever-increasing demands of today's workplace. It is the hope of this course to offer specialized Spanish courses in the healthcare, law enforcement and/or human resource fields as various Treasure Valley organizations have already expressed an interest and a need for practical Spanish courses. If you have any questions or comments beforehand, please contact Matt Fraley at (208) 891-7046 or mpfraley@nmu.edu.
- **Regional Wellness Forums** -- The Idaho State Department of Education is hosting regional Public Wellness Forums across the state for schools to learn more about wellness policies. School wellness committee members as well as school administrators, teachers, foodservice employees, parents, and community members are encouraged to attend these forums. At the forums, Department staff will provide information on keeping wellness policies active in your local school district, evaluating wellness policies, and getting everyone involved in school wellness. For a full list of wellness forums, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/wellness_policy.htm or call (208) 332-6821.
- **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)

- **Feb. 15, 2009** -- The deadline to register for the NEA C.A.R.E. PROGRAM (Culture-Abilities-Resilience-Effort), a research-based program that focuses on intervention strategies to improve student achievement within the local school. The program is sponsored by the Human and Civil Rights Committee of the Idaho Education Association. The IEA encourages teams of educators to participate in this training that is scheduled for March 6-8, 2009 in Boise. Participation is free for IEA members and college credit is available. For more information, contact Kathy Yamamoto at kyamamoto@idahoea.org.
- **Feb. 16, 2009** -- The deadline to postmark nominations for the 9th annual GIANTS (Governor's Industry Award for Notable Teaching in Science) Award, which recognizes teachers who integrate real life applications of science



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and technology in their classrooms. Visit www.sde.idaho.gov/site/science/giants.htm to learn more or contact Scott Smith, the Department's Science Coordinator, at (208) 332-6952 or SSmith@sde.idaho.gov.

- **Feb. 23, 2009** -- The deadline to register to attend the *Charter Start! 101* workshop in March. The workshop helps parents, educators and other patrons learn more about public charter schools and what it takes to start a school. Workshop attendance is now a statutory requirement for all charter developers. The workshop will be held March 2-3, 2009 in Boise. To register, please visit <http://sdestatic.sde.idaho.gov/forms/charter/>.
- **Feb. 27, 2009** -- The deadline to submit a proposal for a Workforce Investment Act grant. to the Governor's Workforce Development Council for training low-income, at-risk high school students for the good-paying occupations that will be demanded by the high-growth industries of Idaho's economic future. Over \$560,000 in one-year Workforce Investment Act grants will be awarded on a regional basis. The grants must be matched by participating school districts, either in cash or through in-kind contributions such as staff time or facilities. Written proposals must be submitted to the Department of Labor by **February 27, 2009**. For complete RFP and submittal instructions, please visit www.labor.idaho.gov and click on the "What's News" link.
- **March 1, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for Idaho Power's Solar 4R Schools program. Schools must be Idaho Power customers. Successful applicants will receive, at no cost, a 1.1 KW solar array, data monitoring and a curriculum package. Please visit <http://www.idahopower.com/greenpower/solar4Rschools/default> for more information.
- **March 1, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for a summer internship or freshman scholarship in the Idaho State University Physics department. Interns will spend four weeks in laboratories of the ISU Physics Department or the Idaho Accelerator Center, where they have the opportunity to work with premier particle accelerator facilities. Interns will be provided room and board on campus and earn \$8.50 an hour. For more information, please visit www.physics.isu.edu.
- **March 12, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the Horace Mann Scholarship Program for Educators, which offers scholarships for educators in public and private schools to take college courses. Please visit <http://www.horacemann.com/resources/scholarships/default.aspx> for more information.
- **March 13, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for mini-grants from the Idaho National Laboratory (INL). A teacher can apply for up to \$2,000 in grants, and schools can apply for up to \$10,000. For more information, please visit https://inlportal.inl.gov/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=2247&parentname=CommunityPage&parentid=11&mode=2&in_hi_userid=200&cached=true.
- **March 15, 2009** -- The deadline for students to enter the Siemens We Can Change the World Challenge. Middle school student teams from across the country will be challenged to create sustainable, reproducible environmental improvements in their local communities. Visit <http://www.wecanchange.com> to learn more.
- **March 31, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for Northwest Professional Educators' awards for continuing education scholarships and classroom support for materials, technology, projects, etc. Additionally, teachers new to the profession, their grade level, or their school district may apply for \$250 New Classroom Start-Up Grants to assist with classroom expenses. To apply for any of these awards, visit www.nwpe.org for applications.



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- **April 1, 2009** -- The deadline for creating Unique Student IDs using the statewide Unique Student ID System for enrolled students. After this date, the Unique Student IDs need to be kept up to date for ISAT tests and other reporting purposes. For more information about the Unique Student ID creation process, refer to the Unique Student ID web site at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/usid/index.htm>. The SDE will be holding Unique Student ID System WebEx sessions every week during February. When available, the session schedule will be posted on the web site and TechTalk. As of today, 49 districts have used the system to create Unique Student IDs, and there are 124,429 students with Unique IDs assigned in the system. If you have questions, please contact Rene Hughes at rhughes@sde.idaho.gov.
- **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 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.