



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

January 22, 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

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- **Department introduces new Rural Education web site**
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MICRON FOUNDATION DONATES \$7,500 TO IDAHO MATH INITIATIVE (GO TO TOP)

Micron Foundation, the charitable arm of Micron Technology Inc., donated \$7,500 to the Idaho Math Initiative in January. The Micron Foundation has been active in the development of the Idaho Math Initiative since the beginning, providing representation on the Idaho Math Initiative Task Force and helping promote awareness for the Initiative throughout the state. The Micron Foundation's donation will be used to promote the importance of math education across the state.

The Idaho Math Initiative is a comprehensive effort to improve math education across all K-12 grades through professional development for teachers and tools to help remediate students who struggle and provide advanced opportunities to students who excel in mathematics. The Math Initiative was implemented statewide in Fall 2008 and has proved successful in many districts across the state. More than 20,000 students in 88 districts across the state are using new intervention tools to receive additional math instruction and tutoring services, and teachers are seeing growth in student achievement as a result. By the end of Summer 2009, 1,300 teachers will have taken the three-credit Mathematical Thinking for Instruction professional development course.

For more information on the Idaho Math Initiative, please visit www.sde.idaho.gov/math.

DEPARTMENT INTRODUCES NEW RURAL EDUCATION WEB SITE (GO TO TOP)

As a result of the hard work of the Rural Education Initiative Task Force, the State Department of Education unveiled this week a new web site dedicated to helping Idaho's rural schools and districts with the unique challenges they face. The new page is online at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/ruraleducation/>.



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The Rural Education web site includes data on the Rural Education Task Force, a study on four-day school weeks in Idaho, federal programs related to rural schools and other articles and resources about rural education.

For more information, please visit the site or contact Deputy Superintendent Nick Smith at (208) 332-6959 or NWSmith@sde.idaho.gov.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (GO TO TOP)

- **Public Schools Budget** -- Since the Governor's State of the State address on January 12, the Idaho Legislature has been working to pinpoint an accurate budget figure to use while it crafts budgets for the fiscal year 2010, which will begin July 1, 2009. Despite speculation on different budget amounts, the Legislature has yet to announce an exact figure it will use to set budgets in the upcoming year. Superintendent Luna and staff at the State Department of Education are working closely with the members of the Legislature during this time and will keep all educational stakeholders up-to-date as soon as more information becomes available.

Superintendent Luna is scheduled to present his recommendation for the FY2010 Public Schools Budget to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) at 8 a.m. MT on Thursday, January 29. To listen to the presentation live, please visit <http://www.idahoptv.org/leglive/>.

- **Changes at State Board of Education** -- Two bills have been introduced to the Senate Education Committee to begin the process of realigning some of the programs currently housed at the State Board of Education. Senate Bills 1013 and 1011 were introduced earlier this week: S1013 would transfer the Board of Library Commissioners to the Department of Self-Governing Agencies, and S1011 would transfer the Idaho State Historical Society to the Department of Self-Governing Agencies. Governor Otter, with the support of Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna and members of the State Board of Education, has also proposed realigning the State Board's role in K-12 education. Under the proposal, assessment activities, including the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT), National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and the Idaho English Language Assessment (IELA), will be transferred to the State Department of Education along with the GEAR UP program. The State Board will retain its role as the accountability arm for public education, including the determination of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The proposal still requires legislative approval.

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)

- Superintendent Luna will speak at the Idaho Association of School Administrators conference at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, January 27 in Boise.
- Superintendent Luna will speak at the Idaho Educational Technology Association conference at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 28 in Boise.
- Superintendent Luna will speak at the Idaho State Superintendents' Association awards luncheon at 11:45 a.m. on Wednesday, January 28 in Boise.



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- Superintendent Luna will speak at the Idaho Association for Bilingual Education annual conference at 6 p.m. on Thursday, January 29 in Boise.
- Superintendent Luna will make opening remarks at the *Keeping the Promise* Dropout Summit at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, January 30 in Nampa.

WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

- **Governor to launch "Be Outside"** -- The Idaho Children and Nature Network is launching "Be Outside," an awareness campaign to help parents, teachers, and other youth leaders bring Idaho's kids back outside. On January 30, 2009, Governor and Mrs. Otter have been invited to launch the statewide "Be Outside" campaign along with Barbara Morgan and Dr. Bob Kustra, President of Boise State University. This launch will take place at Bald Eagle Days, an outdoor education event in Boise. Wherever you teach, you can participate by taking your class outside on that day for a lesson, experiment or just to enjoy being outside. On March 4, 2009, Timberline High School TREE (Teens Restoring Earth's Environment) club launches its first Outside Day providing outdoor education opportunities for elementary students. For information on both events, ideas for things to do with students outdoors, and future events throughout the state, check out the "Be Outside" website at www.beoutsideidaho.org.
- **Update on School Improvement Webinar** -- The Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools Webinar scheduled for January 28, 2008 at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. will focus on the characteristic of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with State Standards. We will be discussing comprehensive assessment plans that align with instruction. Both sessions are appropriate for Elementary and Secondary teachers and leaders. The estimated time frame for the webinar is 45 minutes. You can register at www.idahodigitallearning.org by selecting the "Idaho Live" tab and clicking "Register for Webinar." Please contact Lisa Kinnaman or Katherine Weatherspoon at 208-426-4852 with any questions. Credit is now available from Boise State University for participation in the School Improvement Webinar series. To receive more information or an application for credit, e-mail your name and contact information to katherineweatherspoon@boisestate.edu.

REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Deadline for Unique Student IDs** -- The State Department of Education would like to remind local school districts that the deadline for creating Unique Student IDs for enrolled students is **April 1, 2009**. After this date, the Unique Student IDs need to be kept up to date for ISAT tests and other reporting purposes. Information about the Unique Student ID System will be presented in IETA Conference breakout sessions on January 27 and 28. We encourage districts and charter schools that have not yet created Unique Student IDs to attend one of these sessions. As of January 14, 39 school districts and charter schools have created IDs using the Unique Student ID System. If you have any questions, please contact Rene Hughes at rhughes@sde.idaho.gov. To see a listing of districts that have already created IDs, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/usid/index.htm>.



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- **National Green Week** -- The Green Education Foundation is sponsoring National Green Week this year, a first-of-its-kind environmental event that will educate children on the importance of sustainability and what they can do to make a difference. Your school can sign up for National Green Week at <http://nationalgreenweek.com>. Participation is free and will provide your school with environmental curriculum for green assignments, activities and projects that can be seamlessly integrated into science, math, language arts, social studies, and creative arts curricula.
- **ABCTE events in Idaho** -- The American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) is hosting teacher recruitment events in person and online for professionals interested in changing careers and becoming teachers in Idaho. At the sessions, attendees can meet ABCTE representatives to discuss how they can earn their teacher certification. Here is the schedule for the final in-person session in Boise: The sessions begin at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. noon and 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 24, 2009 at the Red Lion Hotel Boise Downtowner. Online information sessions will be held at 2 p.m. on Friday, January 23, 2009 and at 7 p.m. on Monday, January 26, 2009. To register for an online session or learn more about ABCTE, please visit www.abcte.org or call 877-669-2228.
- **Reminder about Recertification** -- Teachers who renew their teaching certifications should use the new B1-R form on the State Department of Education's web site. Teachers who are audited will not receive their certificates until the Department gets the verification of the credits. To learn more or to download the B1-R form, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/teacher_certification/ and click on "Renewing an Idaho Certificate/Credential" link. If you have questions, please contact Clarice Lansbery in the Teacher Certification office at (208) 332-6882 or CLansbery@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Register now for Dropout Summit** -- *Keeping the Promise: Idaho's Summit on Dropout Prevention* will be held January 30, 2009 at the Nampa Civic Center in Nampa. The purpose of the summit is to initiate and strengthen Idaho's efforts to support students at risk of dropping out of school, broaden current strategies in dropout prevention and address issues that drive students to leave school. The cost is \$15 per person, with no charge for youth and scholarships available for adults. To view the entire agenda or to register, please visit <http://www.serveidaho.org/training/index.html>.
- **Guidance on requests for emergency assistance** -- If a school district is interested in asking the state for emergency assistance, they must go through a county emergency coordinator, who serves as the liaison for the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. The coordinators determine whether a governmental entity has exhausted their own resources in coping with the emergency and report its findings to the BHS who then calls the Governor, if needed. Please visit <http://www.bhs.idaho.gov/Pages/Contact.aspx> and click on the "County Emergency Coordinators" link or call (208) 422-3040 to find out how you can contact the coordinator in your county.
- **Special Olympics Global Youth Rally** -- The Special Olympics is holding a Global Youth Rally from 10 a.m. to noon MST on Monday, February 9, 2009 at Boise State University for all Idaho youth in grades 5-12 and college and university students. The goals of the event are to generate awareness, present important issues and call young people to action. To register your school to attend the rally or to participate in a virtual webcast, please visit http://www.active.com/framed/event_detail.cfm?event_id=1665201.



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- **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.
- **Building Blocks for Literacy course** -- The Lee Pesky Learning Center is hosting the Building Blocks for Literacy program in Idaho, a free professional development program for early care and education providers. The program will help providers to foster important, fundamental literacy skills. This two-day class will be held on the following dates from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Cambria Suits, 2970 West Elder Street, in Boise on the following Saturdays: January 31 and February 21, and March 14 and April 4. For more information or to register, visit <http://www.lplearningcenter.org/> and click on "Child Care Provider Classes."
- **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.
- **Winter EduFest** -- Winter EduFest, the conference on gifted and talented education, will be held February 26-28, 2009 at the Coeur d'Alene Resort in Coeur d'Alene. The conference is titled "Keys to Open Potential and Passion." For more information, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/gifted_talented/announcements.htm.
- **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)

- **Jan. 23, 2009** -- The deadline for students to enter the Reconnecting the Circle's National High School Essay Contest. This year's essay question asks, "Why is it important to understand patriotism in Indian Country?" and prompts students to research Native American patriots, as well as explore their own American communities. All high-school aged students (grades 9-12) from tribal, BIE, public, private, and parochial schools from all 50 states are invited to participate. To learn more, visit <http://www.reconnectingthecircle.com>.



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- **Jan. 23, 2009** -- The deadline to appeal information on the AYP Graduation Rate Appeal web site. Visit <https://seciis.sde.state.id.us/gradrate/default.asp> and use the same password as the other AYP web site, the Quarterly Cash Balance Report, the CIP tool and the IDCI web sites. If you have questions, please e-mail grates@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Jan. 23, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the 2009 National Youth Science Camp, sponsored by the National Youth Science Foundation. Download an application at www.nysc.org/2009. Two graduating high school students will be selected to represent Idaho at the all-expenses-paid honors program, which will be held from July 1-25, 2009. Mail or ship your completed application directly to Scott Smith, Science Coordinator at the State Department of Education. If you have questions, contact Scott Smith, Science Coordinator, at (208) 332-6952 or SSmith@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Jan. 30, 2009** -- The deadline to submit an application for 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants. Grants must be submitted to Matt McCarter, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Coordinator, by 4 p.m. (MST). If you have questions, please call (208) 332-6960. For more information visit www.sde.idaho.gov/site/ccclc/grants.htm.
- **Jan. 30, 2009** -- The deadline to register for the *Closing the Achievement Gap: Emerging Hispanic Students and Parents* conference, which will be held February 10-11, 2009 at the Center for Arts Education and Arts, 616 Dearborn Street in Caldwell. The conference will focus on academic transitions, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity and parental involvement. For more information and to register, please visit http://www2.state.id.us/icha/menus/events_07_02.asp.
- **Feb. 1, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the Frances Crawford Marvin American Indian Scholarship. A candidate for this scholarship must be enrolled full-time at a two-year or four-year college/university and must be Native American. Proof of American Indian blood is required by letter or proof papers. Students must demonstrate financial need, academic achievement, and have a 3.0 GPA or higher.
- **Feb. 9, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation's Christopher Columbus Awards program. The awards program is a national, community-based science and technology program for 6th-8th grade students. It challenges students to work in teams of three or four, with an adult coach, to identify a problem in their community and apply scientific method to create an innovative solution to that problem. For more information, please visit www.christophercolumbusawards.com.
- **Feb. 12, 2009** -- The deadline to postmark entries for the Abraham Lincoln Essay Competition for students in grades 9-12. The writing topic is "Abraham Lincoln's Vision of Liberty." Download and print the competition guidelines at <http://www.sde.state.id.us/site/english/>. If you have questions, please contact Elizabeth Smith, English/Language Arts Coordinator, (208) 332-6903 or EMSmith@sde.idaho.gov.
- **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.



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- **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 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.
- **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 <https://www.horacemann.com/resources/scholarships/default.aspx> for more information.
- **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.
- **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.state.id.us/SocialStudies/default.asp> for more information.