



## STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

TOM LUNA  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

**March 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

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- **President Obama touts school choice, merit pay**
- **Department awards ten school health grants**
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### **GOVERNOR RELEASES STIMULUS PROPOSAL, LUNA TO HOLD CONFERENCE CALL (GO TO TOP)**

The Governor released his recommendations today for Idaho's portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Idaho is expected to receive \$201,700,000 from the State Stabilization Fund outlined in the ARRA – \$165,443,700 of which will be set aside for the Public Schools budget. From this amount, the Governor recommended using \$85,097,600 in the current fiscal year (FY 2009) to offset the 6-percent holdback. Doing so would hold K-12 education harmless in the current fiscal year while preserving funds in the state's Public Education Stabilization Fund (PESF) for use in future years. The Governor also recommended using \$2,583,100 in FY 2010 to complete work on developing and implementing the state's K-12 longitudinal data system-required by ARRA as a condition of receiving state stabilization funding. The Governor believes the remaining funds in the K-12 portion of stabilization funds – \$78,495,000 – should be held in reserve to cover shortfalls that may occur in the next two fiscal years. The Governor's recommendation includes implementing the approximately \$62 million in ongoing reductions proposed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction starting in FY 2010, and implementing an additional 5% personnel cost reduction of \$47 million, also for FY 2010.

In addition to State Stabilization Fund money, Idaho is estimated to receive \$104,426,900 in increases to formula grants. The Governor recommended that these funds be used, in accordance with the plan submitted by the Superintendent, to provide much-needed relief to local districts. In accepting these federal funds, the Governor said he, "strongly urges local school boards, their administrators and all those connected with the education of Idaho's youth to be mindful of the one-time nature of these additional funds. School leaders must pay special attention to avoid building any ongoing or long-term costs into their base budget assumptions. It also is imperative that, wherever it can be avoided, federal money not go to add new staff at any level of the state's educational operations. Hiring staff with



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limited, one-time federal funds would create ongoing expectations that the state's General Fund would be unable to meet in future years..."

Superintendent Luna will hold a conference call Friday, March 13, 2009 from noon to 1:00 p.m. MST with school district personnel to review the Governor's stimulus fund spending recommendations. The Department is using a conferencing system that will accommodate a maximum of 125 callers. While the call is not limited to superintendents, we ask that only one call be made from each district or charter so all districts and charters have access. If you have any problems calling in, please call Superintendent Luna's assistant, Brenda Mattson, at 208-332-6815.

### **PRESIDENT OBAMA TOUTS SCHOOL CHOICE, MERIT PAY (GO TO TOP)**

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna was among the nation's state superintendents who were addressed by President Barack Obama at a meeting Tuesday in Washington, D.C. Superintendent Luna, along with other superintendents, was expecting U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to address them, when President Obama unexpectedly walked in the room.

The President made a surprise visit to the conference after giving a bold speech to the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on education reform.

Superintendent Luna, who was attending the Council of Chief State School Officers conference to learn more about federal stimulus funding and how it will affect Idaho, was impressed by the President's comments and priorities for education including pay for performance, raising academic standards and offering more choice.

"Right now, there are caps on how any charters schools are allowed in some states..... That isn't good for our children, our economy or our country," President Obama said.

"Quite frankly I was impressed by President Obama's call for education reform and his specific call for more choice in education and asking states like Idaho, to remove the cap on public charter schools," Luna said.

Superintendent Luna, a supporter of school choice, added, "I have long been a proponent for raising or eliminating the cap on public charter schools in Idaho. There is a huge demand for choice, especially among our most struggling student populations such as English language learners and special education. I hope the Legislature can move forward in a bi-partisan way to increase choice for all students. Like the President said, limiting charter schools isn't good for our children, our economy or our country."

### **DEPARTMENT AWARDS TEN SCHOOL HEALTH GRANTS (GO TO TOP)**

The Idaho State Department of Education partnered with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to award 10 Idaho schools and districts with grants to promote healthier learning environments, Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna announced today.



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"These grants will give Idaho the opportunity to implement the Coordinated School Health model in several schools across the state. We want all Idaho students to gain the academic and health skills they need to lead healthy and successful lives. These grants are a step in that direction," Superintendent Luna said.

The Coordinated School Health model encourages schools to establish a school health team, made up of representatives from various programs, that works together to support and promote health with an emphasis on physical activity, nutrition and tobacco prevention.

The State Department of Education established a Coordinated School Health Team in 2008 with grant funding from the federal government. The team is made up of representatives from the Health Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Child Nutrition, Health and Welfare, and Physical Activity programs.

With additional grant funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Adolescent School Health, the state is now able to help Idaho schools implement the Coordinated School Health model and improve health, addressing nutrition and physical activity on a school-wide basis. A school or an entire district could have applied for grant funding in this first cycle, which begins now and continues through May 2010.

Ten Idaho schools and districts were awarded \$5,000 each in this first cycle of funding to establish school health teams in their own buildings. Staff from the State Department of Education and Health and Welfare will meet with each of the awarded schools and districts Thursday, March 12 to offer technical assistances and resources.

The following schools and districts were awarded \$5,000 Coordinated School Health grants:

- Wilder School District, Wilder
- Syringa Middle School, Caldwell School District, Caldwell
- Aberdeen Middle School, Aberdeen School District, Aberdeen
- Clair E Gale Junior High School, Idaho Falls School District, Idaho Falls
- Eagle High School, Meridian Joint School District, Eagle
- Garden City Community School, Garden City
- Moscow High School, Moscow School District, Moscow
- Middleton Heights and Mill Creek Elementary Schools, Middleton School District, Middleton
- Shadow Butte Elementary, Emmett School District, Emmett
- Bruneau Elementary and Grandview Elementary Schools, Bruneau-Grand View Joint School District, Grandview

For more information on Coordinated School Health, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/csh/>.

### **REMINDER ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS (GO TO TOP)**

This is a friendly reminder that all school districts and public charter schools participating in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs should distribute free and reduced-price lunch program (FRP) applications throughout the school year, especially during these uncertain economic times. Families that at one time did not qualify for FRP might meet the income criteria now. Once a FRP application is approved, the status is valid throughout the current school year.



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USDA Child Nutrition Program tools and resources can be found at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/>. Click into the National School Lunch or Child and Adult Care Food Program buttons for F/R Application templates.

In addition, the USDA Eligibility Manual for School Meals can be found at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/nslp/forms/EligibilityGuidancepdf>. This resource provides Federal Policy for Determining and Verifying Eligibility in these important nutrition programs.

If you have further questions, please contact the Idaho State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs at (208) 332-6820.

### **IDAHO TEENS TO APPEAR ON OPRAH TO DISCUSS TEEN DATING VIOLENCE (GO TO TOP)**

The Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence announced Wednesday that ten Idaho teens from the Idaho Teen Dating Violence Advisory Council and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Start Strong: Building Healthy Relationships Advisory Council would appear on Oprah via Skype this Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, to discuss teen dating violence.

Felony charges against Chris Brown for his violent behavior against his girlfriend, Rihanna, have brought discussions about teen dating violence into sharp focus. The Oprah Show was dedicated to the “Rihanna’s of the world.” The Idaho Coalition was contacted as result of the work on two projects – the Idaho Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Project and the Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships (Start Strong) Initiative – to gather ten Idaho teens to appear on Oprah this week to talk about teen dating violence. The Oprah Show launched a national advertisement last night indicating that Oprah would be talking to Idaho teens.

The Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence is collaborating with St. Luke’s Regional Medical Center and the Idaho Department of Education and ten collaborating organizations in a community-wide effort to address this serious public health issue. They will be working together through innovative new pathways to educate and engage students age 11 to 14 years old in Southwest Idaho to build healthy relationships and prevent teen dating abuse. Four of the teens who appeared on Oprah represented the *Start Strong Teen Advisory Council* and are involved in designing and implementing this prevention initiative. They are Laura Hampikian and Parker Luce from Boise, David Trompke from Eagle, and Hortencia Flores from Parma.

### **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, March 17 in Boise.
- Superintendent Luna will attend KTVB’s March for Youth Event from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18 in Nampa.



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### WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

- **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](http://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](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](http://www.census.gov) and click on "For Teachers & Students."
- **Response to Intervention Grants** -- The State Department of Education is now providing support and staff development for the Response to Intervention (RTI) program. RTI is the practice of providing high quality instruction and intervention, matched to student needs, and using learning rate over time and level of performance, to make important educational decisions. The Department will have a variety of resources available to further support the implementation of RTI in schools. One of these resources is six competitive district grants for full-scale RTI enhancement support. The application for the RTI Expansion/Extension Grant is available on the RTI web site <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/rti/>. Grant applications are due Monday, March 16, 2009. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Nancy Thomas Price at 208-332-6979 or [nthomasprice@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:nthomasprice@sde.idaho.gov).
- **Web Applications Migration** -- The State Department of Education is in the process of preparing our computing environment for many new changes that will help us better serve students, educators and other school and district personnel. The first step to these larger projects, such as the statewide longitudinal data system, is to migrate all of our existing web applications to a single server. This change will ONLY impact people who have bookmarked certain web applications, because bookmarked URLs will change. This change will have NO impact on those who use the Department's website to get to the web applications. After the change, the bookmarked URLs will prompt users to the Department's website, where links to all web applications are posted on the "Data Collections" page. The entire web environment will be unavailable from 7pm to midnight on Tuesday, March 17. Users will need to change any bookmarked links to SDE web applications on Wednesday, March 18. If you cannot find the web application you need on the Data Collection page of [www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov), please call the Director or Coordinator responsible for the web application so they can assist you immediately.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS?

The highlighted school this week is.... **Kuna High School**

Kuna High School's "Help Desk Willies" Robot Team was recently honored at a local competition. KHS received two awards while competing in the Tech Challenge. The Help Desk Willies Robot Team was awarded

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the Motivate Award for their outstanding team shirts and cheering section. They also received the Connect Award for creating a program that involved the school and community in community outreach and service. The Help Desk Willies were nominated for nearly every award at the competition, including the prestigious Inspire Award. Only three teams were nominated for this award, which goes to the team that best demonstrates overall performance in the tournament. Congratulations to the robot team at Kuna High School!

*"What's Happening in Our Schools?" is a feature that appears occasionally in the Weekly E-Newsletter. It is an opportunity for us to share the great things that are happening in Idaho's public schools on a statewide level. If you have something great happening in your school, please e-mail it to Melissa McGrath at [MRMcGrath@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:MRMcGrath@sde.idaho.gov) with "What's Happening in Our Schools" in the subject line.*

### REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Welcome new state Educational Technology Coordinator** -- Jimmy Takata is the new state Educational Technology Coordinator at the State Department of Education. In this position, Takata will work with Idaho schools and districts to improve technological opportunities in the classroom and act as a liaison with district technology coordinators. Before joining the Department, Takata worked at Micron Technology as a Workforce Development Specialist and spent nearly a decade working with school districts in Oregon and Idaho on educational technology issues. Takata has a master's in educational technology from Boise State University. You can contact Jimmy Takata directly at (208) 332-6937 or [JTakata@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:JTakata@sde.idaho.gov).
- **Register now for the Title I Conference** -- Online registration is now open for the Title I Conference, "Education & Service: Gifts without Boundaries." The State Department of Education is partnering with the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism and Serve Idaho to present many nationally known speakers who will provide exciting and helpful professional development opportunities for Idaho educators. In addition to keynote speakers, participants can take part in 30 breakout sessions covering topics related to math, science, reading, parent involvement and NCLB topics concerning accountability, School Improvement, Homeless Students, LEP, Paraprofessionals, and Response to Intervention. The conference will be held April 15-17, 2009 in Boise. For more information or to register, please visit [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/title\\_one/conference09/](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/title_one/conference09/). The deadline to register is **March 31, 2009**.
- **School Improvement Webinars** -- Here is the schedule for upcoming School Improvement Webinars:
  - March 19, 2009: Frequent Monitoring of Learning & Teaching, Secondary Webinar
  - 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.
- **Apply now for Learn and Serve Grants** -- Idaho school districts and public charter schools can now submit requests for proposals for Learn and Serve grant funding. All K-12 public schools are eligible to apply for funding. The grants range from one to three years in length and are awarded at up to \$5,000 a year. With grant funding, local schools can create new service-learning programs, replicate existing models, and train staff, faculty, adult volunteers and students in service learning. Please review the information posted online [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/learn\\_serve](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/learn_serve) before applying. The deadline to submit a request for proposal is on or

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before **5 p.m. on April 15, 2009**. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Tina Naillon, Learn and Serve Coordinator, at (208) 332-6904 or [TMNaillon@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:TMNaillon@sde.idaho.gov).

- **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](mailto:adsalazar@sde.idaho.gov) or (208) 332-6974.
- **ERI Application now available** -- The application form for the Early Retirement Incentive Program is now available online at [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/finance\\_tech/early\\_retirement.htm](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/finance_tech/early_retirement.htm). *Please bear in mind:* Submission of the application does not guarantee that the early incentive program will be funded. Actions by the 2009 Legislature could affect this section of Idaho Code. Interested parties are encouraged to watch the daily activities of the Idaho Legislature for any changes that might affect this law, including but not limited to the Department web site at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/schoolsbudget/>. Applications must be returned to SDE/Public School Finance no later than **April 1, 2009**.
- **News Parents Can Use** -- The next "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast from the U.S. Department of Education will focus on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The broadcast is scheduled for 8 a.m. ET on March 17, 2009. For more information, please visit <http://www.ed.gov/edtv/>.
- **Forestry Professional Development Opportunities** -- Idaho Project Learning Tree's spring/summer workshop schedule is at [www.idahoforests.org/plt1.htm](http://www.idahoforests.org/plt1.htm). A variety of professional development classes are offered throughout the state, each worth one graduate credit. Contact 208-334-4061 or [plt@idahoforests.org](mailto:plt@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](http://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](http://www.idahoforests.org/lumberjacks.htm). Contact the Idaho Forest Products Commission at [plt@idahoforests.org](mailto:plt@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



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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](http://www.idahoforests.org/tour.htm).

- **Financial Literacy Education program** -- The State Treasurer's Office 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. If your school is interested in scheduling a presentation, please visit [www.sto.idaho.gov/Programs/CreditCardFinance.aspx](http://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](mailto:Jennifer.Hobbs@sto.idaho.gov).
- **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](mailto:ecurrie@idahoea.org). If your name is not selected this month, your entry is rolled over to the next month. Visit [www.idahoea.org](http://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](mailto:david.a.hodson@mepcom.army.mil) or Colleen Owen at (208) 334-1450 ext.214 or [colleen.owen@mepcom.army.mil](mailto: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](mailto:fred.bernize@mepcom.army.mil).

### UPCOMING DEADLINES (GO TO TOP)

- **March 13, 2009** -- The deadline to submit the second period attendance and enrollment reports. If you have questions or need help submitting the attendance and enrollment reports, please contact Greg Berg, Public School Finance, at [GDBerg@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:GDBerg@sde.idaho.gov).
- **March 13, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the new Idaho LEP Program of Excellence award, which recognizes outstanding schools or districts in this area, or the LEP Educator of the Year award, which recognizes outstanding educators who work with LEP students and families. Applications are due by 5 p.m. on this date. Please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/lep/> to learn more.
- **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](https://inlportal.inl.gov/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=2247&parentname=CommunityPage&parentid=11&mode=2&in_hi_userid=200&cached=true).



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- **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 15, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for *Idaho Reads!* VISTA grants, which help to improve literacy and volunteerism in communities across Idaho. Applications must be postmarked by this date. For more information or to download an application, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/vista/>. If you have any questions, please contact Tina Naillon, Idaho VISTA Coordinator, at (208) 332-6904 or [TMNaillon@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:TMNaillon@sde.idaho.gov).
- **March 20, 2009** -- The deadline to nominate an individual for the 2009 Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education. This year's award will recognize three individuals who address the connection of education and innovation in one of three broad categories: PK-12-focused school and community programs, teacher training and professional development, and policy at all levels of government. Recipients will receive \$25,000. For more information, please visit <http://www.mcgraw-hill.com/prize/>.
- **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](http://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.idaho.gov/site/social\\_studies/](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/social_studies/) for more information.