

# WHITESIDE REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION



## Educational Highlights



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March 1999

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### Calendar Of Events

#### March

- 1 Casimir Pulaski birthday observed - schools closed
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 20 County Spelling Bee - Morrison High School, 10:00 a.m.
- 29 Vietnam War Veterans' Day - Commemorative Holiday

#### April

- 2 Good Friday - Regional Office closed

### SPELLING BEE

The Whiteside County Spelling Bee is scheduled for Saturday, March 20, 10 a.m. at the **Morrison High School**. Each school district in the county is encouraged to send their local winner and runner-up to the county finals in Morrison. We wish to take this opportunity to wish all participants good luck.

### Unfilled Teaching Positions

Curriculum Director - Eligible for an administrative certificate or working toward, Fulton CUSD #2. Contact Kent Hammer, supt., River Bend CUSD #2, 1110 Third Street, Fulton, IL 61252, 815/589-2711.

### University of Illinois Class in Technology to be Offered in Summer

Mark the dates of August 2-13, 1999 on your calendar as an opportunity to be a part of a 4 credit-hour class in technology being offered for the third time at the Whiteside Regional Office of Education on extension from the University of Illinois.

Students may be novices on the computer for the beginning level of Curriculum and Instruction 399 or former students from the first two years who want to continue to improve their skill level. Both classes focus on instructional applications of selected Internet technologies and creation of a web page to be used to enhance curricular units. The topics to be presented each day of the two weeks for C & I 399 are located at <http://talon.extramural.uiuc.edu/edtech/e-delacru/> the website of the instructor, Dr. Betsy Delacruz.

If you are interested in this class, please indicate on your survey of training needs or contact Betty Clementz directly at the Regional Office. Registration information will then be forwarded to you directly when available. All registrations will be through the University of Illinois, not through this office. If you as a teacher are not yet using the Internet to assist in instruction in your classroom, this is an opportunity to gain that level of confidence to do so.

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## **Level II of Gifted Education Training**

The last 25 hours of the training in Gifted Education (Level II) will be presented at the Regional Office on March 19, April 9, and April 23, 1999. All district coordinators of Gifted Education and participants who had completed Level I of Gifted Education training within the past two years were sent registration information. The instructor will be Joanne Rompel who has taught all levels of students. If you need further information or are interested in registering, please contact Betty Clementz at the Regional Office. Registration may also be completed on-line at the Whiteside Website.

## **ISBE Training of Trainers for ISAT Rubrics**

Districts were sent registration forms for training of trainers of the ISAT Rubrics for Writing to be held in Princeton on March 1 & 2, Reading to be held in Rock Falls on March 15 & 16, and Mathematics to be held in Mendota on April 29 & 30. Registrations are still open for the Mathematics Workshop.

This training is designed to train persons who will be able to use the rubric with ease and teach others to do the same. These workshops will not only instruct the participants in the use of the rubrics, but also will provide practice in scoring student work with consistency.

If you have any questions about any of these workshops, please contact Betty Clementz at the Regional Office.

## **Tapes From StarNet Available**

Programs recorded from StarNet include professional development which are 1-2 hours in length and student enrichment programs which are each 25 minutes on a specified topic. All programs are available for teachers to use in their classrooms. Submit a Request To View form to the attention of Betty Clementz at the Regional Office. Any program may be requested in advance of the broadcast, and you will be contacted when the tape is ready for pick-up from the office. Tapes from throughout September-January are also available, as are the tapes of programs from the 1997-1998 school year. The programs taped during February are:

### **Professional Development:**

*Assistive Technology in the Inclusive Classroom: Parts I, II, III, IV, V*  
*Rural Facilities Part II: Planning, Design & Improvement*  
*The Role of Standardized Assessment*  
*Essential Advocates: Administrators & Technology, Part 6*  
*Talking About Art: Art Criticism*  
*Using The School Grounds as Resources Part 2*  
*Teaching Reading: Success Stories from School and Home*  
*Apples Magazine: Topics of Early Childhood, Part 6*  
*Encouraging Student Responsibility and Discipline*  
*Leadership for Technology in Our Schools, Part 1: Don't Plan It-Dream It!*  
*Assessment of Technology Programs*

### **Student Enrichment: K - 6**

*Dinosaur Detectives*  
*Catpaws (weekly music)*  
*Ocean Quest: Weather and Ocean Circulation; Living on and Atoll; Life Underwater*  
*Reptiles*  
*NASA Connect: Recipe for the Future*  
*Catfish*  
*Sea Lions and Seals*

### **Student Enrichment: 7 - 12**

*Learning Through Art: A Visit to the Getty Institute*  
*Weather and Ocean Circulation*  
*Plant Power: How's It Growing?*  
*NASA Connect: Recipe for the Future*  
*American Gems*  
*Why Do Ships Float?*  
*Sea Lions and Seals*  
*City Scapes*

A schedule of the programs to be broadcast in March will be sent to each building principal with the Request To View form.

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## **Grant Workshop For Area II**

**T**he Illinois State Board of Education's Grants Management Division has scheduled the dates for their FY2000 Grant Application Workshops throughout the state. Area II will meet on March 23, 1999 at the Holiday Inn in Rock Falls. These workshops are designed to inform districts about changes in the applications and to make staff available to answer specific questions regarding each of the programs included in the applications.

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## **Best Practices in Reading**

**T**he Reading Best Practices Committee has produced the following documents for distribution:

*Reading Best Practices:* A list of 14 reading best practices identified through research and validated by national reading experts.

*Guide to Commercially Prepared English Language Arts Inventories:* A list with summary information on pre-K through adult inventories described in a teacher-friendly format.

*Common Threads:* A summary of findings from three studies on reading in high performing or improving Illinois schools.

You may request copies of these documents from the ISBE Reception Center in Springfield at 217/782-4321.

## **Internal Review**

**N**ow that the IGAP testing is completed, focus in your buildings can be turned to the other areas of the internal review process which is to be completed during the 1998-1999 school year. Collection of further local assessment data and demographics information, the school as a learning community, teaching and learning analysis are all part of the total review process. Internal Review is an on-going process to look at where the school is and where it wants to improve, thus developing a school improvement plan which has timelines, funding sources, and a means of measurement to determine its success. This Internal Review process is an opportunity for all the participants--school personnel, students and parents, and the wider community--to be a part of the planning for improvement in the building. If your Internal Review team needs help in this process, please contact Betty Clementz at the Regional Office of Education.

## **Fine Arts Day Planned for Fulton Middle School Students**

**F**ulton Middle School will be enjoying a day of activities devoted to the fine arts on March 26. Thanks to a committee chaired by teacher Maggie Hammer, the plans are in place for students to experience "artists at their tasks" in Visual Arts, Music, Theater, and Dance throughout the day. Students will have an opportunity to select four 45-minute sessions in a variety of interest areas including photography, jewelry making, watercolors, quilt design, architecture, jazz, storytelling, theater make-up and costuming, choreography, and many others. FAX, a professional mime, will be the opening act, as well as teaching his profession to students in the four sessions. Performances in music and dance will also be enjoyed by the full student body. What a great day has been planned for students to experience how art enhances one's life!

## **Software and Technology Training Surveys**

**S**urveys have been distributed to all school employees, certified and non-certified, within Whiteside County. The Regional Office of Education is willing to provide training in a variety of software and technology during the summer, as well as throughout the school year. Please return your survey to your building principal. The surveys will be picked up during the week of March 1-5. Results of these surveys will determine what trainings will be offered.

An Intermediate Word and Excel class is presently available on Tuesdays and Thursdays through March 23. The dates for Intermediate Excel are March 9, 11, 16, 18, and 23.

Persons interested in these last five sessions should contact Betty Clementz at the Regional Office.

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## **Educational Materials:**

The following resources might be of interest to many of you, particularly the first resource listed regarding performance assessment.

**“Assessing Hands-On Science: A Teacher’s Guide to Performance Assessment”** This has been published by Corwin Press. The book tells how to use performance assessments to measure learning with hands-on curriculum for grades K-12. It describes how traditional and performance assessments work with the same materials. It also discusses both analytic and holistic scoring systems. You can order the book for \$25 by contacting the publisher at 2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320-2218; or at (805)499-0774; or via the e-mail using [e-mailorder@corwin.sagepub.com](mailto:e-mailorder@corwin.sagepub.com)

**“The Celebrate the Century Education Kit Series from the U.S. Postal Service”** Supported by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), the Department of Education, and other education associations, this two-year program will provide teachers with free curriculum covering the decades from the 1900s. Designed primarily for students in grades 3-6, the curriculum kit features hands-on activities that integrate history with science, math, art, geography, language arts, social studies, and computer technology. Each kit contains a teacher’s guide, student activity magazine, computer activities and links to websites, interactive classroom visuals, educational games, and take-home projects to involve and inform parents. For information, or to receive the kits, contact **Celebrate the Century, U.S. Postal Service, PO Box 44342, Washington, D.C.** or you can call **1-800-450-INFO**. The curriculum also can be viewed online at the following URL: <http://encarta.msn.com/schoolhouse> (Other websites connected with the curriculum are <http://www.usps.com> and <http://www.usps.gov/ctc> and <http://encarta.msn.com/ctc/explore.asp>

## **Helpful Websites:**

### Lesson Plan Goldmines

Sneaker Science - <http://www.primenet.com/~jllarsen/>

### Net Lessons

Surfing for Sunbeams - <http://www.lmsal.com/YPOP/Spotlight/Tour/index.html>

NASA StarChild - [http://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/Starchild/universe\\_level1/stars.html](http://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/Starchild/universe_level1/stars.html)

### Kids Corner

Something Fishy - <http://www.siec.k12.in.us/~west/proj/owl/>

Dreambox Storybox - <http://www.dreambox.com/storybox/storybox.htm>

### Global Projects

All About Us - <http://www.angliainteractive.com/try/primary/event/981/index.htm>

Keiko: Return to the Wild - <http://www.classroom.com>

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## **Science Corner - Paul Cannon**

**Science Literacy Mini-Grants:** On February 10 the recipients of the Regional Office Science Literacy Mini-Grants met and shared with each other the progress of their projects. Some really neat things are going on in these classrooms. Lee Johnson and Nancy Trainor of Challand Middle School in Sterling are using an interdisciplinary approach to investigate Yellowstone National Park by connecting the study of life science, earth science, mathematics, and social studies. Elisa Gantz and Steve Johnson from Sterling High School are using digital photography in the chemistry and physics classes. Several teachers at Montmorency School are using technology to gain greater knowledge and understanding of endangered species of animals around the world. Brad Storm from Erie High School is continuing the integration of technology into the GLOBE project that he started last year. Several teachers at Prophetstown High School are using their grant funds in a multi-disciplinary project in science, mathematics, and home economics. And finally, Kathy Bracke from Tampico Middle School is combining science and the history of the area around Tampico. At some point, reports of their finds will be available on the World Wide Web. All of these teachers will complete their projects this spring and will present their projects in detail in a "mini" science fair on May 21 at the Regional Office of Education in Sterling. This event will be held from 1-5 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend and view the efforts of these projects.

**Connected Classroom Conference** entitled "Influence The Course" will be held at the McCormick Place Convention Center in Chicago March 17-20. This conference is your opportunity to share ideas, network with your peers, and prepare yourself for the important task of the integration of technology and the Internet into your classroom. There will also be special sessions pertaining to incorporating the Illinois Learning Standards. For more information, and registration on-line go to the following web site, <http://www.classroom.com/pd> and click on Chicago. Follow the links and instructions on the screen.

**Cool Science for Curious Kids:** Check out this site! This Web Site is full of cool science for your students. It provides interactive on-line activities from butterflies to vegetables, and all things in between, that are interesting and inviting. Great experiments are detailed here, and there are lots of ideas for teachers to use to add a hands-on dimension to the student's on-line learning experiences. <http://www.hhmi.org/coolscience/> is the URL for this site.

**PBS To Launch "Education Supersite":** A new online education at PBS has designed an "Education Supersite" on the PBS Online homepage. Building on the success of the Learn With PBS section of the homepage, the new site, to be launched in October, will showcase PBS television programs and related educational resources with extended taping rights for grades preK-12 teachers. It will present nearly 1000 online activities and lesson plans correlated to national teaching standards. In addition, teachers will find "Ready to Learn" services and activities and teacher professional development resources. This site will be found at <http://www.pbs.org>

## **STARLAB Training Available**

Several teachers have indicated that they would like to use the STARLAB for their students but they lack the necessary training to check out the lab and find it very difficult to come to a training scheduled during the week. Also, many of the teachers who have gone through a training session have moved on to different districts thus limiting the pool of trained teachers available within an individual building. If there are several teachers within a building who would like to learn how to use the STARLAB, I will come to your building and train you so that you can utilize this very valuable resource. If you are interested in making arrangements for such a training please, contact me at the Regional Office of Education at 625-1495, and we can discuss a time to do the training. If you are already trained and want to check out the lab, contact Sherry Dykema at the Regional Office.

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## **1999 Summer Seminars for Teachers**

**T**he Illinois Humanities Council has begun planning its third annual True Learning, True Teaching seminars. These week-long seminars are designed to reward the state's best teachers with opportunities for further learning and intellectual renewal. In the summer of 1999, the IHC will offer six one-week, residential seminars at Starved Rock State Park in Utica, IL. These seminars are open to elementary and secondary teachers from Illinois who wish to re-invigorate their passion for learning in a stimulating intellectual and natural setting.

Twenty to twenty-five teachers will be selected to attend each expenses paid seminar. Participants in the program will spend the week at a beautiful and historically significant state park. No college or graduate credit will be offered.

For a listing of dates and more information contact the Regional Office of Education.

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Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
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### **Office Hours:**

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon. - Thurs.

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Friday

After 4:30 p.m. by Appointment