

WHITESIDE REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION



Educational Highlights



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February 2000

Newsletter No. 6 Volume 55

Calendar Of Events

February

American History Month

- 2 Ground Hog Day
- 3 Transportation meeting -
9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m.
Rock Falls Holiday Inn
- 6-8 Il. Assoc. for Gifted
Children Conference
Chicago, IL
- 10 Scientific Literacy Grant
Participants Meeting -
ROE, 4-6 p.m.
- 12 Abraham Lincoln's birthday
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 15 Commemorative holiday
honoring Susan B. Anthony
- 21 Presidents' Day -
Regional Office closed
- 28, 29
Vision and Hearing
Sterling High School

Education to Careers

Teachers of grades K and 1, grades 2 and 3, middle school language arts and social studies, and high school foreign language and home economics will be invited to participate in the use of grant monies received by Whiteside County for Education to Careers. Teachers of these grades and subjects in Whiteside County will be invited to participate in teams to implement the Education to Career concept as the final step in any curriculum--the relevance to real life and the world of work--and to develop curricular units for their grade levels.

If you are a teacher of these grades or subjects, be watching for your letter in mid-February. Full explanation of application procedure, receipt of stipend, and requirements of the grant will be explained in the letter. Participation will be limited.

If you have any questions, contact Betty Clementz at the Regional Office, 815/625-1495.

On March 28, Whiteside County administrators will have an opportunity to attend an Administrator's Academy on Education to Careers. A full day of activities has been arranged to explain the concept of ETC so school administrators and teachers will both have the same understanding of what it is. ETC is for every level of student in all grades. Bob Marinangeli will be sending out the information in early February.

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Computer Classes for Spring Semester

Computer classes will again be held at this office during the months of February, March, April, and May. Nancy Slonneger will be the instructor.

Classes to be offered will include Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint, and Internet training. There will be levels from beginner to experienced. Classes will meet for half-day, full day, and evening sessions.

All principals, superintendents, and technology coordinators have received the full packet of information that includes the schedule, description of each class, textbook information, and registration form. Check your building faculty bulletin board for this information.

These classes are limited to a maximum of 10 students and will be offered if a minimum number of participants have enrolled. Therefore, it is important to register early, as the enrollment one week prior to the class will determine its status.

The full information describing these classes is also located on the web at (<http://www.keyboardconnections.com>). In fact, check out that website as there are many direct links to curricular information for teachers. If you have any questions or need registration information, contact the Regional Office of Education at 815/625-1495.

Meeting The Challenge X: A Success

On Friday, January 7, more than 125 educators gathered for the tenth annual fine arts conference, Meeting The Challenge X, at Sauk Valley Community College. This is sponsored jointly by the Whiteside County Regional Office of Education and Sauk Valley Community College.

Educators from the areas of drama, visual art, music, and theater presented topics, many of which were "hands-on". Additional topics of general interest to educators completed the opportunities for participants to network and return to their schools with new curriculum ideas. Participants also received an update from the Illinois State Board of Education regarding the fine arts assessment and teacher certification changes.

The date for Meeting The Challenge XI has been set for Friday, January 5, 2001. Whether you are a fine arts teacher, an elementary classroom teacher, or an administrator, mark your calendars now to participate.

Internal Review: What Is Required?

Illinois Administrative Code addresses in Ch. I, section 1.30 the requirement that all schools that are not undergoing an external review shall conduct an annual internal review and, no later than September 30 of each year, shall notify the regional superintendent of schools in writing that internal review has occurred for the preceding year. The regional superintendent shall notify the State Superintendent of any districts failing to comply with this requirement.

This review shall be designed to: 1) ascertain the success of the school's programs in terms of student performance and progress with respect to the state Goals for Learning, the Illinois Learning Standards, and local learning objectives; 2) identify areas in which improvement is needed; 3) plan for the implementation of the changes identified as appropriate; and 4) yield a written school improvement plan or revisions thereto.

Mini-grants were offered in the fall by this office to assist schools with the Internal Review process. Twenty-two schools have applied for mini-grants and will be sharing the results of their efforts in this process in June at the Regional Office. Any Whiteside County school which needs assistance in this process should contact Betty Clementz.

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Christa McAuliffe Fellowship Program

This office has received application forms for the 2000 Christa McAuliffe Fellowship Program. This program gives excellent teachers funding for projects of their own design aimed at improving education and linked to state education standards and objectives and is open to all teachers with eight or more years of classroom experience.

Two \$15,000 fellowships will be awarded in May, and for the first time, the top three non-winning finalists will each receive a \$1,000 stipend.

Applications must be received in the State Board's Springfield office by 5 p.m. on March 3. For more information, contact this office at 815/625-1495 or visit our website <wside.k12.il.us>.

Unfilled Teaching Positions

H.S. Spanish Teacher - River Bend CUSD #2. Illinois Certification 9-12. Contact Jerry Klooster, prin., Fulton H.S., 1207 12th Street, Fulton, IL 61252, 815/589-3511.

Media Professional or Specialist - Prophetstown-Lyndon-Tampico CUSD #3. Illinois Certification. Contact LeRoy Hooks, supt., 310 Riverside Drive, Prophetstown, IL 61277, 815/537-5101.

Guidance Counselor - Prophetstown-Lyndon-Tampico CUSD #3. Illinois Certification. Contact LeRoy Hooks, supt., 310 Riverside Drive, Prophetstown, IL 61277, 815/537-5101.

ISBE Training for ISAT Writing Rubrics

Half-day workshops have been arranged in Whiteside County to assist educators in the understanding and application of the ISAT rubrics for writing. Strategies to improve writing skills will also be shared. These workshops will be presented by Sharon Vaughan, a consultant in writing and the ISAT Writing Rubric. The workshops will be held at the Regional Office of Education:

March 14	8:30 - 11:30 a.m.	Elementary
March 14	12:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Middle/High School

Educators of all grades may attend these workshops; it is not only for those in grades 3, 5, and 8 where the ISAT assessment is completed. In fact, teams of staff from various levels are invited to attend so the rubric and strategies can be consistent within your district. Principals will receive the registration information by the middle of February. If you have any questions in regard to these workshops, please contact Betty Clementz at the Regional Office of Education, 815/625-1495.

Summer Graduate Classes

Two classes are being planned for late summer through the Regional Office of Education. One will be in the area of Gifted Education and the other in the area of Art for the Elementary Teacher. Interest has been expressed and the process of acceptance of these classes for 3 hours of graduate credit through Aurora University has begun. Full information and registration materials (when available) will be distributed through your building principal and announcement in this newsletter. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list for either of these classes, please contact our office at 815/625-1495. Both classes will be open enrollment so it will be important to register early.

Level II Training in Gifted Education

Level II Training in Gifted Education will be offered on Thursdays, March 9, April 6, and April 13. Gifted Coordinators and participants from the past two sessions of Level I will be receiving the full registration information. Joanne Rompel will be the instructor.

Gifted Education training offered through regional offices of education is one of the three possible methods of qualifying to receive over \$300 in salary reimbursement from Gifted monies. Three hours of credit in Gifted Education from a university or teaching Gifted Education for two years, with a letter so stating from the Superintendent in a personnel file, are the other two methods. Two of the three requirements must be met. There is a two-year window from completion of Level I for participants to complete the second level, and thus fulfill the requirement of 50 hours of gifted education training. If you have any questions, contact Betty Clementz at the Regional Office of Education.

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ROE Lending Library: Materials for You and Your Classroom

Do you need materials to enhance a unit of study? Look through the bibliography of the lending library of the Regional Office of Education that was sent to your building principal in the fall. There are curriculum and audio-visual materials for every subject area. These materials are available for a period of two weeks, may be renewed for additional time, and may even be reserved. Consider these:

Social Studies:	20th Century United States studied through the decades by the US Post Office Education Series which has posters, student handouts, resource guide, and brochures
Science/Math:	Lego kits (Simple Machines for grades K - 3 and Technic I for grades 4 - 9)
Physical Education:	Manual for <i>Jump Jive and Swing</i> : curriculum to teach dancing that culminates in a Dance-a-thon
Special Education:	<i>Teaching Kids With Learning Difficulties in the Regular Classroom</i>
Classroom Discipline:	<i>Tough Kid Book: Practical Classroom Management Strategies</i>
Music:	Video: <i>Composers You Should Know</i>
Science/Health:	HeartPower kits for grades K - 2 and 3 - 5

Whatever your needs for supplementary materials, come in and check us out!

StarNet: Programs Taped for You

The following programs have been taped and may be checked out from the lending library:

Professional Development:

Rings, Strings, and Other Things
What's New in Special Education Law?
Current Trends in Technical Education
Transitioning from Pre-Service to In-Service
Part 5: Induction Years
Making Inclusion Work in a Small Rural School
Best Practices Part 3
Apples Magazine: Sharing A Vision
Integrating Technology: Software, Software, Software
Books, Books, Books: Part 2 (Middle and high school)

Student Enrichment:

Plug In and Play Music
Disc Golf
Microscopic Images
Meow Wow!
Geometry: Wings Over Mars NASA
Aw Nuts! Is It a Legume or Nut?
Space 2000
Careers and College

Programs of Professional development are 1-2 hours in length; student enrichment programs are each 30 mins. These tapes, as well as those from September through December, are available for use for two weeks upon request to Betty Clementz. Submit your request on the Request to View form. The schedule of programs to be broadcast in February has been sent to each building principal for posting. Be watching for this information on your faculty bulletin board.

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SERVICES

- **Laminating** - If you would like to laminate your school materials, etc., stop by and use the laminating machine. Cost is \$.50 per foot. If you would like our office to do the laminating for you, the cost is \$1.00 per foot.

- **Ellison Letter Machine** - You may use the Ellison letter machine either at the office for \$2 per use or off-site for \$10 per day with you picking up the machine and returning it.

- **Consultations** - If you have questions pertaining to: (1) school improvement, assessment, quality assurance, REI, gifted, please contact Betty Clementz; (2) scientific literacy, please contact Paul Cannon; (3) Adm. Academy, please contact Bob Marinangeli; and (4) technology, retired professional service core, contact Gary Steinert. Although Bob and Paul are not in the office on a full-time basis, we will be sure to get your questions answered. Please do not hesitate to call if you have questions.

- **Even Start Family Education Program** - Even Start is an individualized, home-based family education program that brings parents and children together in learning. If you know of a family that has a parent who wants to work towards a GED or improve English as a Second Language skills, has a child between birth and seven years of age, and lives in Whiteside County, please give the office a call and ask to talk to Mary Gospodarczyk.

Super Science Saturday

The Bureau/Henry/Stark Regional Office of Education is sponsoring a *Super Science Saturday* on Saturday, February 26, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Kewanee High School. There is a registration fee of \$135, BUT...each participant will receive a \$100 stipend in return. This is only a net cost of \$35 for this training.

Topics include:

Building Science Ideas: Early Primary Science - for K-12 teachers;

Engineering Science - for teachers grade 3 and 4;

Discrepant Events - for teachers grades 7-12;

Science Literature and the Standards - for teachers grades 5 and 6

Instructors are from Western Illinois University (Dr. Beaver, Dr. Powers, Dr. Finson, and Dr. Logan). If you are interested in this training, please contact Paul Cannon at the Whiteside Regional Office (815/625-1495) for a copy of the registration form. All registrations and the fee must be paid and received at the Bureau/Henry/Stark ROE by February 19.

STARLAB

The Regional Office has the STARLAB Planetarium available to be checked out by teachers within the county who have been trained in its use. If you are interested in utilizing the resource, please contact Sherry Dykema at 625-1495.

The Starfield Cylinder, which was damaged, has been replaced. Please use extreme care, and correct procedures, when handling any of the cartridges as well as the projector and the Dome. When you check out this resource, you and your school district assume responsibility for its care and nurture from the time you pick it up until it is returned to the Regional Office.

Many teachers who received STARLAB training in the past have either retired, or left the district in which they were teaching. This has left the qualified user list greatly reduced. **If several teachers in a building are interested in receiving training in the proper use of STARLAB, I will be glad to arrange a time to come to your district, with the lab, and provide this training.** Arrangements for such training can be made by calling Paul Cannon at the Regional Office, 815/625-1495.

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Places to Publish On-line

If you would like your students to have the experience of publishing on-line but aren't ready to start your own on-line journal, here are some Web publishing sites to check out. Each has won numerous awards and international recognition. Most of the projects have an adult editor listed who oversees the site, and many have student editors as well. Visit the URL listed to read about project suggestions and journal submission guidelines.

Electric Soup <http://www.hcrhs.hunterdon.k12.nj.us/esoup/welcome.html>

This literary magazine, featuring multimedia designs and creative writing by secondary students, won a New Jersey Best Educational Practices award. Visitors can contribute to and enjoy reading short stories, poetry, free writes, essays and an international feature.

Highwired <http://www.highwired.net>

For those interested in publishing an on-line newspaper without the HTML hassles, this site provides free publishing tools, templates, and do-it-yourself directions. You and your students create and edit the articles, then upload them (along with graphics) to the Highwired site. There is a "network pool" that allows newspapers at the site to share stories...with proper credit given...and the option of selling local advertising to raise money.

The Junior Journal <http://journal.jr.summit.net>

This journal's mission is to let young people express their views concerning world issues. Activities focus on breaking down barriers of distance and prejudice so children from all over the world may work together.

MidLink Magazine <http://longwook.cs.ucf.edu/~MidLink>

This site showcases exemplary work by middle grade students in locations that span the globe. This international magazine, sponsored by North Carolina State University and the University of Central Florida, seeks creative writing, interactive designs, and projects with a direct link to classroom activities and curriculum. It has a Teacher Resource Center that includes many rubrics and other useful classroom resources, as well as a guide to Web searching and citing sources.

MainXchange

<http://www.mainXchange.com>

MainXchange is a free, Internet-based stock market simulation that will teach your student "investors" about terms, trends, companies, and building and managing a stock portfolio. This is an extremely authentic, engaged learning experience for students in both mathematics and social studies.

Students begin with \$100,000 in virtual "bux" for investing and an on-screen "personal consultant" to advise them. Activity takes place on the Trading Floor, which provides continually updated, "real" stock quotes from the New York NASDAQ and American Stock Exchanges.

A Resource Center offers solid tips on how to read stock tables, manage risks, and so forth, and a Marketplace, divided into fashion, entertainment, food and other sectors, includes a range of information on publicly traded companies. Students can win prizes for making the most money in a week or month.

Up Coming Conferences

Connected Classroom Conference--February 16-19, McCormick Place Convention Center, Chicago

Integrating Resources/Connecting our Strengths--February 28 - March 1, Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, Chicago

For more information regarding these conferences, please contact Paul Cannon at the Regional Office, 815/625-1495.

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Science Corner - Paul Cannon

Mars Millennium Project

The countdown to a new century provides a unique opportunity to engage Illinois' youth in charting a course for the future. The *Mars Millennium Project* challenges students across the state to design a community yet to be imagined for the planet Mars. Participants will design a real and permanent colony on Mars for the year 2030 and create a scientifically sound, suitable, livable, and aesthetic environment for 100 people. This basic idea will be enhanced with the parallel goal of developing artistic and cultural aspects of a community on Mars including the symbols, images, and cultural qualities that would distinguish and reflect such a community. This interdisciplinary project will focus on bringing the sciences, arts, and humanities to meet the Illinois Learning Standards from across the school curriculum. The results of the project, will include student-centered colony projects and supporting web pages that showcase the application of students learning to be placed on exhibit at the Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum.

If you would like any additional information, contact Mr. Bryan W. Wunar, Manager of Education, Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum, 1300 South Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60605 or call him at (312) 322-0542.

TLCF Grant Applications

If you are writing, or are planning to write, for the TLCF grant funds for FY2001, applications must be received by ISBE no later than **4:00 p.m., February 24, 2000**. Also, when preparing your grant application, keep in mind the following:

Focus Is On:

- Both Reading and Math
- Early Childhood Teacher Preparation
- Preference to Lowest Performing Schools

Application Must Include:

- Community Partners
- Services for Private Schools (if interested and/or Applicable) Document refusal of services
- Involvement with a Teacher Education Institution

Application Should Document:

- Weakness in Math and Reading
- ISAT Scores
- IGAP Scores
- Show Data and Sight Proven Research and Methods

Other Issues:

- Keep Readers in Mind as Grant is Written
- Easy to Read Font Size
- Avoid Long, Wordy Paragraphs
- Use Charts and Graphs to Project Visual Presence
- Follow all Directions
- Meet Date Deadline
- Doublecheck that All Signatures are Included

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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