

Focus on the Illinois Certification Renewal Process

The new teacher certification process can seem somewhat complicated, as are many things that are new and different. The following article gives educators an overview of the certification process. Important information on certification resources is included.

The first group of Illinois teachers is now participating in the Illinois certification renewal process. More teachers will join the certification renewal process when their current elementary, secondary, special or early childhood certificates expire and are

exchanged for Standard Certificates, which carry the same teaching privileges and endorsements. The first certificate exchange took place in July 2000. Additional teachers will receive Standard Certificates in July 2001 and the last of the old certificates will be exchanged in July 2002.

Teachers who received Standard Certificates on July 1, 2000 are now completing their Certificate Renewal Plans (CRP); awaiting approval of their CRPs from their district's Local Professional Development Committee, and accumulating necessary documentation of their professional development activities. The deadline for CRPs for those who received Standard Certificates in July 2000 is April 30, 2001. Because the guidelines were not yet finalized when the process began, the first group of teachers benefited from an extended deadline specified under interim procedures. Guidelines for the process were published in October 2000 in the Certificate Renewal Manual and took effect on January 1, 2001.

Once teachers hold a Standard Certificate they become part of the Illinois certificate renewal process and must complete the required professional development in order to renew their certificate. Standard certificates are valid for a five-year period and will be renewed in 2005, 2006, or 2007, depending on the issue date.

Teachers who will receive Standard Certificates in 2001 and 2002 will need to submit their CRPs either in the semester before receipt of their new certificates or no later than October 28 of the year of renewal.

Certificate Renewal Plans

The CRP asks teachers to choose three goals that will allow for professional growth, and also asks teachers to identify the knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish these goals. Then, teachers will project the types of activities that will allow them to move toward their goals. The plans should include a list of possible activities, along with timelines for completion. Plans can be

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Painted Lady Butterflies Land in April

This spring, West 40 is proud to offer an exciting educational experience for students and teachers: The Painted Lady Butterflies. This program, which has become a West Cook tradition, gives students the opportunity to experience the entire lifecycle of the Painted Lady Butterfly. All West 40 schools are invited to purchase kits which include three to five Painted Lady Butterfly larvae in a vial with nutrients. The supplier guarantees at least three butterflies per kit and the late April pick-up date assures that students will observe the entire metamorphosis before the end of the school year.

The cost per kit is \$13.95. Orders are due to West 40 by April 5, 2001, and pick-up will be April 26 at West 40's offices in Riverside/Brookfield High School.

Companion grade level activity kits with 12-25 activities are also available for \$3 per packet. To purchase kits, please indicate the grade level on the order form, which was recently sent to schools.

Teachers will also need to build a simple flight cage for emerging butterflies. Building instructions are included with each order.

Last year, schools ordered more than 750 of the butterfly kits, which means that more than 15,000 children enjoyed watching the butterflies develop and emerge. For additional information, please call Doug Dirks at 708/447-6070.

New! A Master's Program for the Busy Educator

For educators, finding time to earn a Master's degree can be very difficult. But West 40, in association with Aurora University, has developed a convenient, affordable Master's program for the working professional. Beginning in the summer of 2001, educators can earn a Master's degree in just 25 months by attending school one night a week during the school year and two weeks each summer! West 40 and Aurora University are forming educational cohorts in the Northern and Western suburbs. Earn a Master of Arts in Teaching with a Reading-Literacy track or a Master of Arts in Educational leadership (including an Administrator's Type 75 certificate). Plan on attending an informational meeting and learn all about how easy earning a Master's degree can be.

Questions? Call Sarah Urycki at 708/447-6070.



Update: Regional Middle School

The first regional middle school for the West Cook area is currently being developed under the leadership of West 40's Karen Tiemann, Regional Middle School site director. The school will serve middle school students from 31 West Cook school districts who are at risk. The goal is to transition students back to their home school district.

Over the past few months, several lease sites have been evaluated and Karen is hopeful that an appropriate site will soon be found; something that has proven not to be an easy task. The site must meet many requirements. It must provide a safe, school-like environment in a welcoming community, meet myriad state requirements, local zoning laws, budget requirements, and be convenient to the students it serves.

Although Karen admits that finding the perfect space has been a challenge, she is hopeful that the quest will soon be over and the new regional middle school will open in spring. To that end, two teachers are already on board to begin as soon as the space is ready, and Karen will also move from her West 40 offices to be on-site.

WestWinds will continue to report on regional middle school developments as they occur. ■

Educators' Accolades

Have you reached a milestone in your career? Did you recently earn an advanced degree, present at a conference, win an award, develop a new software program, publish an original work in a magazine or book, OR...? If so, please share your accomplishments with approximately 7,000 educators in the West Cook area through this newsletter.

Fax information—your name, title, school, district and a description of your accomplishment—along with a phone number or e-mail address where you can be reached to Educators' Accolades at 708/447-6732, ATTN: Kay Poyner Brown. Or e-mail your information to Kay at kpoynerb@westcook.k12.il.us WestWinds will print as many as space allows.

Don't forget: All educators in the West Cook area can participate.

Keep These Dates With West 40

March 20 Tobacco Grant: Follow-up workshop and meeting for those who attended the January 25 Science, Tobacco and You workshop. 8:30 AM.

April 5 Painted Lady Butterfly orders due.

April 25 Substitute teacher information meetings 8:30 AM or 6:30 PM.

April 25 Substitute teacher training. One-day intensive course, 10 AM to 5 PM.

April 26 Painted Lady Butterfly kits pickup.

May 3 and May 10 Substitute teacher training. Two-day course, 4:30 PM to 8:00 PM.

May 22 Tobacco Grant: Dinner meeting and recognition for workshop participants, 4:30 PM.

October 25 Substitute teacher information meetings at 8:30 AM or 6:30 PM.

October 25 Substitute teacher training. One-day intensive course. 10 AM to 5 PM.

All of these events will be held at Riverside/Brookfield High School

U of I Independent Literacy Summer Camps

The University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana offers summer computer camps for 14 to 19-year-old students with either upper motor or visual impairments. The week is intended to help empower students through improved knowledge and understanding in the use of computer technologies and to promote independence in achieving career goals. It is also an opportunity to experience, learn, and discuss campus life issues. Tuition assistance is available.

Students must be performing at grade level. Students will use assistive technology to access computers, create their own Web sites, and experience the college environment. The camp for students with upper motor impairments will take place June 10 through 22, while the camp for students with visual impairments will take place June 17 through 22. Applications are due no later than March 26. For more information, please contact Christie Gilson at the U of I: (217) 244-6759, or cgilson@uiuc.edu. Or, visit this web page: www.rehab.uiuc.edu/camp

Technology Award Winners

On Friday, February 23, Lugene Finley, the ISBE's newly appointed assistant chief deputy superintendent for technology, presented the Larry Stilgebauer Awards at the annual Role of Technology Conference in St. Charles. The awards recognized individuals, schools and districts that demonstrate innovative and effective uses of technology. Congratulations to all of the West 40 (West Cook) technology award winners on their outstanding efforts.

DISTRICT AWARDS

Exemplary:

Oak Park Elementary School District 97 Curriculum Standards Through the Research Process

LaGrange Highlands School District 106 Completing the Puzzle of ILS, ISAT, SIP, Staff Development, and Technology

Proviso Township High School District 209 Mini-Gramogram

Maywood, Melrose Park, Broadview School District 89 Staff Development Program

SCHOOL AWARDS

Certificate of Merit:

St. Mary's School, Riverside Innovations in Integration

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Exemplary:

Fred Leinweber and Donna Veverka St. Mary's School, Riverside Rainforest 2000

Deborah Creticos and Dorothy Hamilton Longfellow School, Oak Park District 97 Feather Your Net: An Internet Encyclopedia of Birds

George Miller and Helen Harper Riverside/Brookfield High School Literature WebQuests: An Exploration of Learning Styles and Opportunities

Steve Bogaerts, Renee Johansson, Jim Opolony and Ian Smith Proviso East High School Bataan Commemorative Research Project

Marianne Venute J. W. Riley School, Berkeley District 87 Leveraging Resources for Bilingual Students

Catherine Lenzini Union Ridge School, District 86 Mini-Grant Program

Certificate of Merit:
Anne Becker East Leyden High School Surfing and Learning on the WWW for Spanish III

Sandy Chiampas, Kim Haag, Debbie Nederhauser, Geri Shleter, Michelle Mannix-Richards, and Elaine Sledz LaGrange Area Department of Special Education, Clarendon Hills Middle School Writing With Assistive Technology

Rachel Gladney Elmwood Park High School Data Collection, Instrumentation, and the Internet

Katie Moroney, Kim Zeman, Courtney Webb and Becca Wolf Hauser Junior High, District 96 MythQuest

Lisa Weber, Therese Hawkins and Anna Klamik Westchester Intermediate School Travelling Through Time: Creative Writing

Barbara Lappe and Anna Klamik Westchester Primary School Spiders on the Big Screen

Mikkel Storaasli and Dalia Zygas West Leyden High School Scientific Method and Statistics in Health Research and Media Presentation

Andrea Tureson Proviso East High School Garfield Park Conservatory

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revised at any time, but careful development of original plans may prevent later revisions.

The selected professional development activities should address one or more of four purposes. Activities must advance the teachers' knowledge in: 1. The area of certification; 2. Critical areas as defined by the State Board of Education; 3. Items identified in the school's improvement plan; or, 4. An additional teaching field or endorsement. For most teachers, fifty percent of their professional development activities must address the first two purposes. If a school is required to have a school improvement plan, school improvement needs to be addressed by at least one activity. Work toward an additional teaching field or endorsement is optional.

Many regular, school-based teacher activities can be counted toward professional development for recertification. For example, these can include serving on school improvement, business partnership, or curriculum committees; supervising student teachers, attending or presenting at a conference, authoring a book or an article, and participating in scheduled district or school in-service programs (if the district is an approved provider of professional development). Attendance at off-site seminars or workshops, such as those provided by West 40,

also qualify.

A complete list of the types of activities that may be included for professional development is included in Appendix D of the Certificate Renewal Manual. Teachers should study Appendix D during their plan development process in order to thoughtfully identify activities that are compatible with their professional goals, ongoing activities and personal interests.

Certification Renewal Manual: An Important Tool
The Certification Renewal Manual, which is available from the ISBE, includes all required forms, samples of completed forms, a listing of professional development activities and their point values (Appendix D) and explanations of the process for teachers, local development committees, and regional committees. The manual is available on-line at www.isbe.net, or a printed version can be ordered through the ISBE at **1 (866) CEU-CPDU**.

For More Information...
Not all details of the certificate renewal process can be completely addressed in this article. For more information, talk to a member of your school's Local Professional Development Committee; call West 40 staff at 708/447-6070; attend a two hour West 40 CRP Writing Workshop, (scheduled monthly beginning in March), and explore the print and online resources available from the Illinois State Board of Education. ■

West 40 is offering a Certificate Renewal Plan workshop to help educators draft their Curriculum Renewal Plans. The goal is for teachers to complete a draft of their individual CRP in the class.

HOW TO WRITE YOUR CERTIFICATE RENEWAL PLAN

This two-hour course gives teachers a quick overview of the new certificate renewal process, and focuses on writing a Certificate Renewal Plan. Topics will include the renewal process, renewal requirements, and the plan submission process for the local Professional Development Committee in accordance with the ISBE's Certificate Renewal Manual.

Attendees should come to the class with ideas of what they want to do for their own professional development.

Choose from either March 15, April 3 or May 7, 4:30 to 6:30 PM at Riverside/Brookfield High School. Attendees earn two CPDU credits. Cost: \$10.

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