



# Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001  
www.isbe.net

Jesse H. Ruiz  
Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

November 17, 2009

Dear Educator:

In 2008, Illinois experienced the safest year in highway travel since 1923. Traffic-related fatalities dropped to 1,043, which is the lowest in 85 years. Even though this is a record low, far too many are still being killed on Illinois roadways. With this in mind, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and other state agencies have developed a new goal of "Zero Fatalities" for the Illinois Strategic Highway Safety Plan. This goal envisions eventually reducing fatalities on Illinois roads to zero.

As part of this Plan, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is joining with IDOT, the Illinois Chapter of the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) and the American Traffic Safety Services Foundation (ATSSF) to coordinate a statewide Work Zone Safety calendar contest for elementary students in Illinois schools to emphasize the importance of safe driving in work zones. Since the contest began in 2005, more than 7,700 students, throughout the state, have participated in this educational contest. Every entry submitted showed creativity in sharing the lifesaving message of Work Zone Safety.

Again this year we are inviting students in kindergarten through sixth grade in Illinois public and private elementary schools to participate in the Work Zone Safety Calendar Contest. The contest promotes work zone safety by introducing children at an early age to safe driving practices with the hope of instilling a lifelong awareness of work zone hazards and fostering safe driving behavior in the future.

There are three categories for this contest: Kindergarten and First Grade; Second, Third and Fourth Grades; and Fifth and Sixth Grades. Each school will choose the top four entries from each category to submit to IDOT for the state contest. Through a series of judging panels, the top two entries from each category will be chosen and will qualify for the national calendar contest. Along with the top six contest winners, six additional contestants will be chosen to have their entries displayed in a 12-month calendar which will be distributed to the public through community events throughout Illinois.

We will announce the winners at an awards ceremony in spring 2010. The top six contestants will receive monetary awards, and all 12 winners will receive plaques. All students who submit a contest entry will receive a certificate of participation from the Illinois partners.

I hope you will encourage your students to use their creativity to share a lifesaving message. For contest rules and additional information, please visit the contest website at [www.dot.il.gov/trafficsafety/wzs/wzscontcst.html](http://www.dot.il.gov/trafficsafety/wzs/wzscontcst.html). Please confirm your interest by calling 217/785-3062. If you have questions, please contact Jessica Baker with the Illinois Department of Transportation at 217/785-3062.

Sincerely,

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education