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Webinars on USAS coding changes are May 6-15

During three upcoming webinars, Eric Bode and Londa Schwierking of the Office of Quality School Choice and Funding will describe upcoming changes to the Uniform School Accounting System (USAS) codes. The changes are being made to help districts in implementing data reporting that will enable the department to fulfill requirements to rank school districts by expenditures in late fall 2013.

During the webinar, participants will learn how to code expenditures and how coding choices will affect spending reports and the expenditure rankings. They also will learn about a "crosswalk" resource that will indicate how each coded expenditure will be placed in its proper category. The three webinars listed below will present the same information; treasurers only need to participate on one of these dates:

- **May 6** – 2 to 3:30 p.m. – For traditional school district treasurers, co-hosted by the Ohio Association of School Business Officials;
- **May 13** – 9 to 10:30 a.m. – For community school treasurers; and
- **May 15** – 9 to 10:30 a.m. – For traditional school district treasurers, co-hosted by the Ohio Association of School Business Officials.

Access a webinar [here](#). The participant PIN is 3473109# and the Web login is 130235093.

Related activities include ongoing updates to the Auditor of State's USAS Manual, which are expected to be completed in early May. The department, auditor's office, the Northwest Ohio Computer Association and other Information Technology Centers also are working together to update state USAS software in the near future. In addition, in preparation for the public announcement of statewide expenditure rankings next fall, the department is preparing 2011-2012 simulations for each school and district that will be available through local Information Technology Centers. The department will notify treasurers when the software updates and the simulations are available. For several new resources and related information about the expenditure rankings, click [here](#).

School district projections based on House budget are available

To view what state funds would be available to your district in the House version of the FY2014-2015 budget bill, click [here](#) for the Finance and Appropriations Committee hearing minutes and look under the April 9 heading. For a comparison between Governor Kasich's budget proposal and Am. Sub. House Bill 59, please click [here](#). The bill is now under review in the Senate and is not expected to be final until June 30.

Make note of two transportation payments

A total of \$5 million was provided in the April #2 payment to qualifying school districts for transportation payments-in-lieu. These payments are to reimburse eligible parents for transportation costs they incurred because their districts determined it would be impractical for them to provide their children with transportation to school. In the May #1 payment on May 10, a total of \$60.4 million will be provided to qualifying school districts for transportation of special education students. Both types of payments are based on data from T-1 and T-2 reports previously submitted by school districts.

Please note ODE staff changes in Finance Program Services

Roger Hardin, who has worked with ODE school finance staff for more than eight years, will be reducing his hours to part-time as of May 6. He will focus his efforts on assisting districts that are in danger of, or placed in, Fiscal Watch and Fiscal Emergency.

Concurrent with this change, [Sonja Hunter](#) is assuming Hardin's former position as assistant director, Finance Program Services. Hunter has worked with ODE since 1997 and will maintain primary responsibility for five-year forecasting, bond financing and other areas of fiscal oversight. Districts may continue to contact Hunter on these topics for the near future.

Reminders

Make updates to board-approved five-year forecasts by May 31

All city, local, exempted village and joint vocational school districts are required to submit an updated five-year forecast by **May 31**. The forecast should be approved by your board and submitted electronically through EMIS. Traditional districts are reminded of the following details regarding their submissions:

- While the numeric five-year projections **must** be submitted through EMIS, districts continue to have the **option** of submitting forecast assumptions in PDF format via email. If choosing the email option, please be sure that your EMIS assumption submission section has this text: "*Please visit the Ohio Department of Education website at <ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/geodoc/5-yrForecast/>."*
- PDF files should have the naming convention **DISTRICT_NAME-IRN**, where all parts of the name are separated with an underscore followed by a dash and the IRN, with contain no spaces. For example, Newton Falls Exempted Village School District would be named NEWTON_FALLS-045567 and Newton Local would be NEWTON-048637. Note that school district type (city, local, exempted village, joint vocational) should **not** be part of the file name. Email PDF assumptions to Sonja Hunter at sonja.hunter@education.ohio.gov.

Community schools need only update their five-year forecasts if there are changes to their October submissions. An update to a community school five-year forecast will need to be reviewed and approved by the school's governing authority and submitted to the Office of Community Schools (**not** through EMIS) between April 1 and May 31. Community school five-year forecasts and questions should be directed to mary.cotton@education.ohio.gov.

Cupp Report and other resources are now available

Now that the Auditor of State's final report on student data systems and the 2011-2012 Local Report Card have been released, several financial reports are available: the [Cupp Report](#), the [Expenditure Flow Model](#) and the [Benchmark Report](#). Please note that in these reports, some districts have their data marked "pending" because of findings in the Auditor's report that need addressing through corrective action. These data will be corrected after the actions are resolved.

Opportunities

Facts about changes in education, Local Report Card are available

Recently, as part of an education update to the Ohio House and Senate Education Committees, ODE prepared several one-page summaries on key educational reforms underway in Ohio. You may find these summaries useful for discussions at a board of education meeting or with parents and guardians. The reform summaries, along with a timeline of key implementation dates, are available [here](#). In addition, the public is invited to review work to date on the new Local Report Card as specified in House Bill 555. For more information and to comment, click [here](#).

ilearnOhio is accepting applications for advanced placement tuition waivers

Under the direction of the Ohio Board of Regents, *ilearnOhio* is offering one-time funds for Ohio high school students (public and private) who want to enroll in online advanced placement (AP) courses at little to no cost to the student or school. A student may receive only one Digital AP Tuition Waiver and must attend a public or private Ohio high school or be homeschooled with an Ohio school of residence. A school official must complete the application for the student through *ilearnOhio*. The district or school (or school of residence for homeschooled students) enrolling the student shall award the student credit for successful completion of the course. For more information, please contact the program office at web@ilearnOhio.org or visit the [ilearnOhio](http://ilearnOhio.org) website.

ilearnOhio is accepting applications for the Digital AP Tuition Waiver to begin anytime now through this fall. For students who want to enroll in an online AP course for the next academic year, now is the time to begin considering this option. Interested applicants also may wish to inquire how this program may apply to students enrolling in postsecondary education option (PSEO) programs.

Race to the Top (RttT)

RttT is lowering FY2013 budget allocations

The department is allowing local education agencies the option of lowering their FY2013 budget allocations in the CCIP if they determine that their current budget allocations are too high and will not be spending all of their funding. If your LEA would like to lower the current budget allocation in the CCIP for FY2013, please contact your RttT regional coordinator.

New budget allocations announced

The revised four-year budget allocations for currently participating local education agencies are now posted on the Race to the Top [website](#) (see Budget News, column one at bottom). These allocations reflect adjustments the department made to redistribute unused funding. More information will be forthcoming in the next edition of the RttT News and Views.

Year 4 budget Excel templates uploaded for participating LEAs

The department is assisting with Year 4 budgets by uploading a Year 4 Excel budget template in the Collaboration Center (SharePoint). The Year 4 budget template is uploaded and placed into the Year 4 budget folder for each RttT participating agency. LEAs are responsible for updating their budgets using the template with the actual expenses for the first three years of RttT.

FY2013 budget amendment deadline announced

LEAs have until June 24 to submit any budget allocation changes in the CCIP through the amendment process. CCIP budget allocations for FY2013 must be in a status of "final approved" on June 30. Final expenditure reports will be due in the CCIP between July 1 and Sept. 30.

For more information, contact your [area coordinator](#) or the ODE staff member below.

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