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For Immediate Release

DATE: April 19, 2011

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COMMON SCHOOL FUND EARNINGS INCREASE 5% OVER LAST YEAR

MADISON - The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) announced today that [Common School Fund](#) earnings increased five percent from last year for a total of \$33.6 million. The Board will forward these funds to the Department of Public Instruction for its annual distribution to Wisconsin's K-12 public school libraries. The allocation each school district receives is based on the number of children aged 4 through 20 living in the district, and the distribution this year provides more than \$27 per child.

Funds for library aid distribution consist primarily of interest earned on loans provided through the [BCPL State Trust Fund Loan Program](#). Through this program, municipalities and school districts are able to borrow for public purpose projects including economic development, school repairs and improvements, local infrastructure, and capital equipment and vehicles. The increase in library aid can be attributed to higher demand for BCPL State Trust Fund Loans over the past fiscal year.

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands administers both the Common School Fund and the BCPL State Trust Fund Loan Program.

"Public school libraries benefit greatly from the Board's prudent investment strategies," said Secretary of State Doug La Follette, who serves as Chair of the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands. "For many school districts, the library aid provided by the Common School Fund may be the only money available to purchase new library books and materials for the students."

The Common School Fund was established as a permanent "school fund" through the state's constitution. The principal continues to grow from the collection of civil and criminal fines, fees and forfeitures, and proceeds from the state's unclaimed property program.

"Serving on the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands is a special responsibility of the Attorney General. It has been rewarding to participate in the Board's legacy of service to Wisconsin's future," said Attorney General and Commissioner J.B. Van Hollen.

Including this year's distribution, the Board has provided \$164.9 million in public school library aid since 2007. Library media coordinators in each school district may use the money to purchase books, newspapers and periodicals, computer hardware and software, web-based resources, and other library materials.

"Municipalities and school districts across Wisconsin can easily finance their projects using the State Trust Fund Loan Program and, in turn, the interest paid on those loans benefits public school libraries," said State Treasurer and Commissioner Kurt Schuller. "The State Trust Fund Loan Program and Common School Fund provide critical financial support to every community in Wisconsin."

"Studies show that good school libraries effectively improve student performance," said State Superintendent Tony Evers. "Aid from the Common School Fund is an important resource for providing a variety of school library materials to support our students so they gain the skills to graduate ready for the workforce or further education."

Created in 1848 by Article X, Section 7 of the Wisconsin Constitution, the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands was established to accept federal land grants and to manage trust funds for the benefit of public education in Wisconsin. The majority of Trust Fund assets are held in the Common School Fund, from which most State Trust Fund loans are issued.

To view a photo of today's event visit: <http://bcpl.wisconsin.gov/docview.asp?docid=21537&locid=145>

More information about the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands is available at <http://bcpl.wisconsin.gov>. The list of Common School Fund allocations by school district can be found at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sfs/xls/libaid11.xls>.

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