

# R.I-Milan School District ready for 'super' visit

By Robin J. Youngblood  
Staff writer

Robert Schiller, Illinois' state superintendent of schools, will visit the Rock Island-Milan School District today.

Mr. Schiller vowed last summer to visit at least one Illinois school per week as part of his "continuing approach" to the job, said state board of education spokesperson Wade Nelson.

Mr. Schiller chose to visit Rock Island because five of its schools participate in a student-achievement program called Following the Leaders. The program is supposed to help schools meet federal academic standards set by the No Child Left Behind Act, an initiative spurred by President Bush.

The Rock Island schools include Thurgood Marshall Learning Center, Washington Middle School, Edison Junior High School, and Lincoln and Longfellow elementaries.

"We're looking forward to having the state superintendent," said Rock Island-Milan School District Superintendent David Markward. "We are very pleased to be included in the Following the Leaders program. We think it will help us attain marked improvement in our schools. We're anxious to

see how it works in these schools so we can introduce it in other schools."

As part of Following the Leaders, students learn by using a computer program called Project Achieve.

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**State superintendent Robert Schiller chose to visit Rock Island because five of its schools participate in a student-achievement program aimed to help schools meet federal academic standards set by the No Child Left Behind Act.**

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Project Achieve helps teachers evaluate students' weaknesses and strengths and then develop lessons to target those weak areas. The program also tracks progress on achievement tests over several years. Students can use computers to take sample tests and work on their skills.

Mr. Schiller's visit begins with a luncheon hosted by Regional Superintendent of Schools Joe Verriere at the Four Points

Sheraton Hotel in Rock Island.

At 1 p.m., Mr. Schiller will attend a flag-raising ceremony at Lincoln. Afterward, Lincoln students will perform for Mr. Schiller.

Mr. Nelson said Mr. Schiller will listen to questions and concerns from administrators, teachers and students during his visit. Mr. Schiller also will talk with district officials about how Project Achieve is working.

Rock Island-Milan Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Jay Marino said the schools implemented Project Achieve shortly after the Christmas break. He said it is too early to tell if it's working. So far, students seem to like it, Mr. Marino said.

"Students are motivated by it," he said. "They like to use the computers to practice their skills."

To implement the program, the district was awarded software and 30 computers.

The state board of education sets education policies, provides leadership for school districts and facilitates the distribution of federal and state funds.

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