On Friday we released the State, District and School Report Cards to the public. The Report Card is an important tool for us and our communities as we continue to move forward with a focus on preparing all students for college and careers. We have new metrics on college retention, freshman on track and teacher and administrator retention that received significant interest.

We’re currently working with the U.S. Department of Education to finalize our multiple measures index (MMI) that will be used for accountability going forward. This move toward MMI is reflected in our new Report Card, which focuses on growth and school climate, providing a more complete picture of what is going on in our schools. It allows you the ability to customize data to show the individual characteristics of your school to better tell your story. We no longer use Adequate Yearly Progress, a crude measure of how schools perform, and are moving to a more sophisticated, nuanced approach that does not solely rely upon test scores.

This year the student academic growth score decreased in reading from 102.1 in 2013 to 99.4. The growth score increased in math from 101.4 in 2013 to 102.9. What that means is schools and districts below the state growth score are not meeting the state average growth and those scoring above are exceeding the state average growth for a school. The growth score simply indicates the average amount of growth for students in a district or school and adds more context to other metrics.

The assessment scores released on Friday were the last ones using the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). This school year we begin administering the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exams. Scores from the tests administered this year will be used to set the baseline for the measures in years to come.

We have seen significant demographic shifts over the years, moving toward a more diverse and economically challenged student population. The percentage of white students is now below 50 percent, while the percentage of students of Hispanic/Latino heritage is nearly 25 percent and more than half (51.5 percent) of our students are low income. The state’s total enrollment dropped this year by nearly 7,300 to 2,046,857. In addition, our dropout rate fell to the lowest point in 15 years to 2.2 percent and the graduation rate increased by 3 points to 86 percent.
We have resources available for you as you discuss the Report Cards with your local communities, including fact sheets, FAQs and videos. You may access the information at www.isbe.net/hot-topics.htm?col5=open#CollapsiblePanel5.

Thanks for all you do. Have a great week.

Chris

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**Upcoming ISBE Dates and Deadlines**

Please note this is not a complete list of events, meetings and deadlines. For questions, call the Illinois State Board of Education at (866) 262-6663 or (217) 782-4321 or visit the agency’s official website at http://www.isbe.net.

- Eighth annual Conference on Best Practices in Nonpublic Special Education Programs – Nov. 6-7 (http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/np_handouts/default.htm)
- Biennial Preschool for All Administrators’ Forum – Nov. 7 (http://ec.thecenterweb.org/site)
- Deadline to complete all revisions to the Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim – Nov. 10
- ISBE offices closed for Veterans Day – Nov. 11
- Deadline to complete the 2014-15 Unfilled Positions Survey in IWAS – Nov. 13
- Limitation of Administrative Costs Worksheet deadline – Nov. 14 (www.isbe.net/sfms/AdminCaps/AdminCaps.htm)
- Deadline to transmit outstanding Special Education Room and Board monthly claims for the 2013-14 cycle – Nov. 14
- Part 425 (Voluntary Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Schools) – Public comment period ends Nov. 17
- Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data – Immunization system – Nov. 17
- Green Ribbon Schools Award applications due – Nov. 19 (www.isbe.net/green_ribbon/pdfs/green-ribbon-app-14-15.pdf)
- School District Library Grant program deadline – Nov. 21 (www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/grants/schoolpercapgrant.html)
- Extended deadline for districts to submit plans for an alternate learning conditions survey – Nov. 27 (www.surveymonkey.com/s/ISBELearningConditions)
- ISBE offices closed for Thanksgiving – Nov. 27-28
- FY 2015 NCLB Monitoring Instrument – Nov. 30
- FY 2015 NCLB Title I Comparability Analysis – Nov. 30
- Deadline to enter the 2015 Illinois Arts Education Week Poster Contest – Dec. 2 (www.isbe.net/arts-week/default.htm)
- Annual Statement of Affairs (ISBE 50-37) – To be filed with ISBE by Dec. 15 (http://www.isbe.net/sfms/afr/asp.htm)
- Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois) – Public comment period ends Dec. 15
- ISBE offices closed for Christmas Day – Dec. 25
- Deadline to submit written opt-out petition to regional superintendent of schools for Summer Food Service Program mandate (Public Act 096-0734) – Jan. 15
- Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in spring 2015 – Friday, Jan. 16, 2015 (See http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm for public notice requirements for all waiver requests.)
- TECH 2015 application deadline – Feb. 3 (www.iceberg.org/tech_2015)
- Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) testing window – March 23-May 1
2015 Illinois Arts Education Week – March 16-22
TECH 2015 student showcase – May 7
Deadline to submit data in the Student Health Data –Vision system - June 30

Assessment

Nov. 5 Webinar on Student Information System 2015 Assessment Process

A webinar on the Student Information System (SIS) 2015 Assessment Process is scheduled for today.

The webinar will cover key dates and next steps for districts regarding the ACCESS for ELLs, ACT, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) exams.

Space is limited. Register online at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/171095473.

Title: Student Information System (SIS) 2015 Assessment Process-ACCESS, ACT, PARCC and DLM-AA
Date: Nov. 5
Time: 1:30 to 3 p.m.

ACCESS for ELLs Materials Available To Order for 2014-15 School Year

The window for ordering ACCESS for English language learners (ELLs) materials for the current school year ends Nov. 16, 2014.

Ordering instructions will be sent out via email by the ACCESS material vendor, MetriTech, shortly before the beginning of the ordering window. Please ensure that MetriTech has current email addresses for staff in your district who will be involved in the ordering process. To update MetriTech’s contact database, simply call their main number at (800) 747-4868 and ask for Customer Service.

Pre-ID labels for the ACCESS tests will be generated from student data in the state’s Student Information System (SIS) and sent along with the materials. However, ACCESS materials must be ordered from MetriTech. The deadline for updating Pre-ID label information in SIS is 4 p.m. Nov. 7.

Every student identified as an English learner is required to participate in ACCESS testing. If you have questions about ACCESS testing, contact Barry Pedersen at (866) 317-6034.

Special Education Services

IDEA Excess Cost Documents Released

Federal guidance requires the development and implementation of a process for documenting local district compliance with federal special education regulations and the use of federal special education funds.

Please carefully review all information provided regarding this annual process that will be used to collect Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) excess cost documentation. The IDEA Excess Cost Worksheet, IDEA Expenditure Detail Report form (for cooperatives and member districts) and accompanying instructions are available on the IDEA grant webpage at www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/idea_part-b.htm.

IDEA Excess Cost
The 34 CFR 300.202 allows districts to use federal IDEA funds to meet the excess cost of educating students with disabilities. The IDEA funds are to supplement local spending on special education expenses, and as such, each district must calculate its excess cost threshold annually. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has directed state education agencies that written assurances are not sufficient means to verify that districts calculate the local excess cost threshold and expend IDEA dollars as supplemental funds. Illinois previously relied on written assurances in the IDEA grants for excess cost purposes. In order to ensure compliance with IDEA excess cost requirements, the Special Education Services Division has developed an IDEA Excess Cost Worksheet to assist districts in documenting the excess cost threshold.

Relevant Points:
Federal Regulations – The excess cost worksheet was developed in accordance with 34 CFR 300.16, 300.202 and Appendix A to Part 300.

Expenditures – The excess cost calculation is specific to district expenditures (not revenue, not budgets). The Excess Cost Worksheet will direct districts to the data sources by fiscal year to collect the correct district expenditure information.

Format – The Excess Cost Worksheet is an excel spreadsheet that uses district specific data to calculate the excess cost threshold. The completed IDEA Excess Cost Worksheet must be submitted to the IDEA grant coordinators by email.

General Education and Special Education Coordination – The excess cost calculation requires child count and financial data for the entire district, not limited to special education expenditures.

Special Education Cooperative and Member District Coordination – Districts that are members of special education cooperatives must coordinate with the cooperative to secure accurate data regarding IDEA flow-through expenditures. An additional form, the IDEA Expenditure Detail Report, is provided for the cooperatives to document IDEA expenditure data for each of the member districts.

Data Sources – Districts must use the Fall Enrollment count, IDEA Child Count, Annual Financial Report (AFR), the Financial Reimbursement Information System (FRIS) and local financial records when completing the Excess Cost Worksheet. The instructions and the excel worksheet will direct users to the required data sources.

Separation of Elementary (K-8) and Secondary (9-12) – All directives from OSEP require districts to calculate IDEA excess cost for elementary and secondary separately. The excel worksheet provides separate columns for elementary and secondary costs with additional information provided in the IDEA Excess Cost Worksheet instructions. We have provided a list of all districts with the verified Fall Enrollment count with student populations separated by elementary and secondary. That list and all other IDEA excess cost documents and resources are available on the IDEA grant webpage.

Resources – In addition to the instructions, excess cost resources are available on the IDEA grants webpage, including:

- A video-taped IDEA Excess Cost session from the August 2014 Directors’ Conference, presented by Deb Morrow, former OSEP fiscal consultant.
- An IDEA Excess Cost webinar presented by the IDEA grant team.

Annual Requirement – Districts will be required to complete and submit an IDEA Excess Cost Worksheet by the end of January each fiscal year.

Timeline for Completion – The Excess Cost Worksheet must be completed and submitted to the Special Education Services Division via email no later than Jan. 30, 2015.

The Special Education Services Division and the IDEA grant coordinators strive to provide technical assistance and guidance to ensure that Illinois districts and special education cooperatives expend IDEA funds in accordance with federal/state regulations. The IDEA grant coordinators are available for questions as districts embark on this new process. Please direct questions to your IDEA grant coordinator by telephone at (217) 782-5589 or by email:

- Dawn Camacho, dcamacho@isbe.net
- Tammy Greco, greco@isbe.net
- Felicia Malloy, fmalloy@isbe.net

Funding and Disbursement

Final 2013-14 Special Education Room And Board Claims Due Nov. 14

Nov. 14 is the deadline to transmit any outstanding Special Education Room and Board monthly claims for the 2013-14 cycle (Sept. 1, 2013, through Aug. 31, 2014). All claims and adjustments must be submitted to ISBE via the Special Education Room and Board Claim system available in IWAS. Outstanding 2013-14 claims not received by Nov. 14, 2014, will forfeit any reimbursement due.

Once all claims are received, districts will be notified of the final proration percent and payment in December.

If you have questions regarding the Room and Board claim process, please contact Lisa Willhoit at (217) 782-5256 or email lwillhoi@isbe.net.
Correction Period Open for Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claims

The correction period for fiscal year 2015 (2013-14 school year) annual claims for Pupil Transportation Reimbursement is now open.

All local education entities are hereby notified that the review and amendment (if needed) process is open and will end at midnight on Nov. 10. All revisions to the Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim must be completed and transmitted on or before midnight on Nov. 10. No revisions will be accepted after this date in order to close the claim file and schedule the three remaining quarterly payments.

Instructions for reviewing the claim are as follows:

1. Log into the ISBE Web Application Security system (IWAS).
2. Click on “System Listing” on the IWAS homepage.
3. Select “Pupil Transportation Claim Reimbursement System” under the "Annual Claims" heading.
4. Click on "Review Claim" under the "Reimbursement Claim" heading on the homepage. Do not click on "Revise Claim" button unless you need to make revisions.
5. The claim will be loaded to the screen in read-only format. Carefully review each line on the claim for possible revisions. If you entered transportation assets on the Depreciation Schedule, don't forget to click on the "Depreciation Schedule" button at the bottom of the screen and review the depreciation schedule data for possible revisions.

If you do not have revisions, you do not need to do anything. Your claim will remain as originally submitted by the statutory Aug. 15 due date.

If you have reviewed the claim and found that revisions are needed to the depreciation schedule and/or the pupil transportation reimbursement claim:

1. Click on the "Revise Claim" link under the "Reimbursement Claim" heading on the homepage.
2. You may enter notes in the "Your Comments" text box to help you remember why revisions were needed. Click on the "Revise Claim" button at the bottom of the screen to proceed with revisions to the depreciation schedule (if needed) and the pupil transportation reimbursement claim.
3. Note that all links for the reimbursement claim are open and may be revised as needed. The "Depreciation Schedule Summary" link under the "Depreciation Schedule" heading has been changed to "Calculate Depreciation Allowance." If you made any changes to transportation assets after the August submit date, you must click on this link and update the Depreciation Schedule.
4. After all revisions have been made, click on the "Review & Submit Claim." All revised claims must be resubmitted to ISBE through the proper channels (document author to the district superintendent and district superintendent to ISBE).

No revisions to the claim will be accepted after midnight on Nov. 10.

If you have questions regarding the amendment process, contact Jamie Johnson at (217) 782-5256 or jjohnson@isbe.net.

School Business Services

Reorganization Feasibility Studies

ISBE is now accepting agreements for the fiscal year 2015 School District Reorganization Feasibility Studies.

Feasibility studies are a tool to be used by school districts wanting to investigate the advantages and/or disadvantages of reorganization options. Interested school districts should submit a proposed agreement with an independent contractor(s) to their Regional Office of Education (ROE) or Intermediate Service Center (ISC) in Cook County. The ROE/ISC will submit the agreement to ISBE for approval.

State funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Each study will be funded between $4,500 and $8,000 based on the number of school districts involved in the study and the combined student enrollment of the districts involved in the study. Any study cost above the state funding will be the responsibility of the participating districts. In order to
receive reorganization feasibility study funds in FY 2015, agreements must be approved by both the ROE/ISC and ISBE and studies must be completed and approved for payment no later than June 30, 2015.

Procedures, funding allotment, and sample forms are available at www.isbe.net/sfms/html/feasibility.htm.

If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Heninger, School Business Services, at (217) 785-8779 or mheninge@isbe.net.

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Alternate Fuel Programs for School Districts and School Bus Companies

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) has two funding programs for school buses owned and operated by school districts.

The Illinois Alternate Fuels Rebate Program, which covers school districts or school bus companies statewide, will provide up to $4,000 for the purchase of new natural gas, propane or electric school buses or school support vehicles. Conversions are also included. Funding is also available to use biodiesel (at at least 20 percent blend) in a fleet of existing diesel school buses. Please note that this rebate program is not a competitive grant program, and school districts/bus companies that meet the eligibility requirements will receive a rebate under this program.

The Chicago Area Green Fleet Grant Program, which covers school districts or school bus companies in the six-county Chicago area, will provide grants for 50 percent of the incremental purchase cost of a new natural gas or propane school bus versus its diesel counterpart. Conversions are also included. Funding is also available to use biodiesel (at at least 20 percent blend) in a fleet of existing diesel school buses. Please note that this rebate program is not a competitive grant program, and school districts/bus companies that meet the eligibility requirements will receive a rebate under this program.

For more information on the IEPA’s programs or to complete and submit application(s), go to www.illinoisgreenfleets.org.

Specific questions can be directed to Darwin Burkhart at (217) 524-5008 or Darwin.Burkhart@illinois.gov.

U.S. EPA Announces National Rebate Program for New School Buses

The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has just announced its “School Bus Rebate” funding.

School buses with engines model year (MY) 2006 and older may be replaced with new school buses (MY 2014 and newer) that operate on diesel, are hybrid-electrics or are alternative fuel school buses. Five million dollars is available nationally, and selections will be made on a random basis. Application forms, information, eligibility, funding amounts and other requirements are available here: http://epa.gov/cleandiesel/dera-rebate-schoolbus14.htm.

Applications are due by Nov. 17, and scrapping the same number of older buses is required. These applications go to the U.S. EPA and not to the Illinois EPA.


Data Analysis and Accountability
2014-15 Immunization/Health Examination Data Collection Now Available in IWAS

The Student Health Data – Immunization system is now available in IWAS for the 2014-15 school year data submission. Student data must be reported on the status of all students as of Oct. 15 in all grades serving in the school and submitted to ISBE no later than Nov. 17, 2014.

Below are important links to reference when submitting your data. The links are available at www.isbe.net/research/htmls/immunization.htm#immu.
• Student Health Data – Immunization System – IWAS: https://sec1.isbe.net/iwas/asp/login.asp?js=true
• Immunization Data Entry Worksheet: http://www.isbe.net/research/xls/immunization_worksheet.xlsx
• How to Calculate Actual Unduplicated Count of Students: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/UnduplicatedCount.pdf
• Immunizations and Compliance with State Law: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/immunization_requirements.pdf

A report must be submitted for every eligible school, without exception. Schools that are not the home school for any student should submit the report by selecting the option that allows them to declare they have no data to report. All eligible schools should receive IWAS inbox messages regarding the Student Health Data -Immunization data collection. Please check your IWAS inbox for reminders and updates.

Please share this information with school nurses, health technicians and individuals responsible for submitting your immunization/health examination data to ISBE. For data entry assistance, contact ISBE’s Data Analysis and Accountability Division at (217) 782-3950. For school health issues, contact Jessica Gerdes, ISBE principal consultant and school nurse, at (312) 814-5560. For technical assistance, please contact ISBE’s Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

2014-15 Eye Examination Data Collection Now Available in IWAS

The Student Health Data – Vision system is now available in IWAS for the 2014-15 school year data submission. All students in kindergarten and any student enrolled for the first time in an Illinois school as of Oct. 15, 2014, must have their data reported. Completed reports must be received by ISBE no later than June 30, 2015.

Below are links to important related documents available at www.isbe.net/research/htmls/immunization.htm#eyes. Please use them for assistance with submitting your data.

• Eye Examination Data Entry Worksheet: www.isbe.net/research/xls/eye_exam_wksht.xls
• School Eye Examinations – Information Sheet: www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/eye_examinations.pdf

A report must be submitted for every eligible school, without exception. Schools that are not the home school for any student should submit the report by selecting the option that allows them to declare they have no data to report. This option may also be selected by home schools that do not serve kindergarten students and had no students in grades 1 through 12 enrolling for the first time in an Illinois school. All eligible schools should receive IWAS inbox messages regarding Student Health Data -Vision data collection. Please check your IWAS inbox for reminders and updates.

Please share this information with school nurses, health technicians and individuals responsible for submitting your eye examination data to ISBE. For questions related to the data entry, contact ISBE’s Data Analysis and Accountability Division at (217) 782-3950. For technical assistance, contact the ISBE Help Desk at (217) 558-3600.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

A set of proposed amendments recently reviewed by ISBE is available for public comment. The proposal has been posted on the agency’s website at www.isbe.net/rules; choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments.” Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

Part 30 (Programs for the Preparation of Principals in Illinois): Aligned Part 30 to the requirements of P.A. 98-917, effective Aug. 15, 2014, regarding the requirements for selection of candidates for principal preparation programs; includes a

**English Language Learning**

**Free One-Day Workshop on Differentiating Instruction for English Learners**

Registration is still open for a free one-day workshop about differentiating instruction for English learners. The “English Language Development Standards in Action: Differentiation Workshop” is scheduled for Nov. 19 in Springfield.

English language learners (ELLs) need instruction that is differentiated for their diverse proficiency levels. Participants will collaborate on how to customize instruction for ELLs utilizing World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) tools while taking academic language into consideration. This workshop is appropriate for classroom teachers, English language specialists, administrators, curriculum development specialists and support staff who are familiar with WIDA standards.

Participants will be able to:

- Define what language differentiation means in the instruction and assessment of ELLs.
- Describe how scaffolds and supports engage ELLs at various levels in the language and content of a lesson.
- Describe how content, product, process, and environment are taken into account for language differentiation.
- Describe the relationship between proficiency level and domain in differentiation.

Please visit the “Professional Development Opportunities At-a-Glance” at www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/prof-dev.htm for other free 2014-15 workshops related to English learners. Email Sonia Serrano at sserrano@isbe.net to register.

**School Health Issues**

**IDPH Issues Ebola Guidance for Schools**

The possibility of a school student or staff member or visitor having the infectious disease Ebola is exceedingly rare, and measures have been put in place to identify such carriers at entry points to this state and country.

However, because the possibility of transmission of any virus found in bodily fluids exists, ISBE is issuing this reminder that all schools should follow safe infection control measures and use personal protective equipment (gloves, masks and gowns) when handling any bodily fluids.

Although ISBE staff members stand ready to assist schools with the threat of this disease, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is the lead agency regarding infectious diseases that pose a public health threat. Schools should follow recommendations from their state and local health departments related to prevention, protection, isolation, exclusion and any other measures related to this disease.

**Early Childhood**

**Preschool for All Administrators’ Forum Scheduled for Nov. 7 in Champaign**

All Illinois Preschool for All administrators are invited to the Biennial Preschool for All Administrators’ Forum. The forum is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Nov. 7 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1501 S. Neil St., in Champaign.

Dr. Steve Tozer, professor of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Illinois-Chicago, will provide the keynote address on Transformative Leadership (http://news.uic.edu/experts/steven-tozer).

The forum will provide updates from ISBE and the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development on state and federal initiatives affecting Preschool for All (PFA) programs. Information on budgets, bilingual rules, special education blending and teacher evaluation in early childhood education, including teacher practice and student growth, will be provided.

At least one representative from each program is encouraged to attend, and there is no fee to attend this forum.

A pre-event dessert reception is planned for Nov. 6 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. and will provide an opportunity
to meet informally with Reyna Hernandez, ISBE assistant superintendent for the Center for Language and Early Childhood Development, in addition to networking with other PFA administrators and representatives of the ISBE Early Childhood Division.

To register, visit the Early Childhood Center of Professional Development’s website at http://ec.thecenterweb.org/site.

**In Brief**

**Awards and Recognition**
- Nila Hawkins of Centralia City Schools received the School Nurse of the Year award during the Illinois Association of School Nurses (IASN) conference on Oct. 24-25 in Rockford.
- Monica Blum from the Marquardt School District in Glendale Heights received the School Nurse Administrator of the Year award during the IASN conference.
- Cheryl Hayes of the East Moline School District was recognized for her award of National Special Needs School Nurse of the Year from the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) during the IASN conference.

**Professional Development**
- Induction is the catalyst for a successful teaching career. It is the heartbeat that motivates new teachers to do their best. Join the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC) for its 10th annual Induction and Mentoring Conference, "The Heart of Teaching," on Feb. 24-25, 2015, in Springfield. Registration opens Nov. 1. More information is available online at http://intc.education.illinois.edu/conference.
- The Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (IAHPERD) state convention will be held Nov. 20-21 at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles. All health and physical education teachers, as well as others interested in promoting physical development and health, can register by clicking here.

**Educator Opportunities**
- The Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC) seeks applications for its Mining Awareness Educator Award. The first-place winner receives a gift certificate for $500 worth of classroom resource materials. For more information, visit www.imcc.isa.us/Awards.htm. Applications must be received by Feb. 1.

**Student Opportunities**
- A Health Careers Night is scheduled from 6 to 8 p.m. on Nov. 5 at the Advocate Lutheran General Hospital campus, 1775 Dempster St., in Park Ridge. Hospital representatives from about 50 different health careers are expected. The event is free, and no registration is required. Shuttles will be available from the parking lots.
- The 41st annual Illinois Young Author’s Conference will take place at Illinois State University in Bloomington-Normal on May 16, 2015. Sponsored by the Illinois Language and Literacy Council and Illinois Reading Council, this daylong event is designed to honor exceptional writing by K-8 students across the state. Guidelines and registration materials can be found at www.isbe.net/young-authors/default.htm. Volunteers are always needed and appreciated for this event. If interested, please email Dr. Christina Podraza at cpodraza@naperville203.org.
- High school and college students can enter the eighth annual $10,000 Create-A-Greeting-Card Scholarship contest sponsored by The Gallery Collection. The deadline for submissions is Feb. 18. Contest rules and other details are available at www.gallerycollection.com/greeting-cards-scholarship.htm.
- Illinois Partners for Clean Air has launched its annual Shoot for the Skies PSA Video Contest, a creative competition open to Chicago area high school students in Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties. The public service announcements should educate the general public about Chicago area air quality and ways to improve it. For more information, visit www.cleantheair.org/educational-programs/shoot-for-the-skies-psa-video-contest. The submission deadline is Dec. 10.

**Employment Opportunities**
- An External Vacancy List for ISBE is available at http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm.