



# Weekly Message

*January 21, 2009*

## Message from State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

I hope you are all managing to stay warm during the frigid cold this past week. Many schools closed as temperatures dipped to double digits below zero. To assist you with your calendar, information about emergency days is provided later in this message under Funding and Disbursements.

As we conclude our celebrations of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday and the inauguration of President Obama, it is a good time to remind you of our plans to ask students around the state to recite the Gettysburg Address at 9:30 a.m. on February 12, Lincoln’s birthday. A few days before the event, we will be sending out commemorative posters for distribution to students in grades 5 and 8, courtesy of JPMorgan Chase & Co. and The Chicago Community Trust. We’ll have more details on this event in the next few weeks.

Yesterday, we hosted a meeting of teachers and administrators from across the state to discuss the implementation of scientific-based interventions, such as Response to Intervention (RTI). We are interested in hearing what districts need from the agency to better determine learning needs and interventions for students at both the elementary and high school level. It was inspiring to hear how districts are moving to better assess learning needs and provide timely interventions. A total of 136 schools were able to demonstrate enough progress last year to be removed from improvement status under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 largely because of such a focus. My thanks to all those who attended.

Next week, the State Board members will be deciding on a proposed budget to provide to the Governor and General Assembly. The Finance and Audit Committee will meet at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, January 26, in Chicago to discuss the budget. The Board will give final approval to the committee’s recommendation the following morning.

Additionally, there will be a public hearing for Prairie Crossing Charter School, a state-chartered charter school located in Grayslake that serves about 350 children in kindergarten through grade 8. The hearing, scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 27, will be for the purpose of taking public comment about whether the charter should be renewed.

We’re beginning to see, in broad strokes, what will be included in the forthcoming federal economic stimulus package. As you know, I served on a new administration transition committee of the Council of Chief State School Officers earlier this year. While we don’t have a lot of details at this time, I did want to provide you with some idea of what may be coming down the pipeline.

### K-12 Education

School Construction: \$14 billion for renovation and modernization, including technology upgrades and energy efficiency improvements.

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Education Technology: \$1 billion for 21st century classrooms, including computer and science labs and teacher technology training.

IDEA: \$13 billion for formula grants to increase the federal share of special education costs and prevent these mandatory costs from forcing states to cut other areas of education.

Title I: \$13 billion for grants to help disadvantaged students reach high academic standards.

Statewide Data Systems: \$250 million for competitive grants to states to design and develop data systems that analyze individual student data to find ways to improve student achievement.

Education for Homeless Children and Youth: \$66 million for formula grants to states to provide services to homeless children, including meals and transportation, at a time when high unemployment and home foreclosures have created an increase in the number of children and youth who are homeless.

Improving Teacher Quality: \$300 million, of which \$200 million is for competitive grants to school districts and states to provide financial incentives for teachers and principals who raise student achievement and close the achievement gaps in high-need schools and \$100 million is for competitive grants to states to address teacher shortages and modernize the teaching workforce.

### **Early Childhood Development**

Child Care Development Block Grant: \$2 billion to provide child care services for an additional 300,000 children in low-income families while their parents go to work.

Head Start: \$2.1 billion to provide comprehensive development services to help an additional 110,000 children succeed in school.

IDEA (infants and families): \$600 million for formula grants to help states serve children with disabilities, ages 2 and younger.

Last week the 96th General Assembly was sworn in and I sent to all members a letter regarding the importance of maintaining their commitment to schools with the FY 2009 appropriation. I encourage you all to reinforce this point with your elected officials.

Have a great week and stay warm!

Chris

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## **Upcoming Dates & Deadlines**

- **The 2010 school year annual commodity order period** – January 2 – February 1
- **Textbook Loan Program requests entered online** – January 6 – March 16
- **Deadline to Enter PSAE Orders on *PSAE TestSites Online Website*** – January 30
- **Receipt Deadline for Schools to Submit PSAE Day 1 ACT-Approved Accommodations Requests to ACT** – February 2
- **School Breakfast Survey** – February 6
- **Deadline for Home School Districts to Submit Pre-ID Label Information for PSAE on SIS Website** – February 19

- **Looking for Your Lincoln Hero submissions** – March 1
- **History Teacher of the Year Award first round nominations** – March 2
- **Migrant supplemental education services funding applications for summer 2009** – March 2
- **Receipt Deadline for Schools to Submit PSAE Day 1 State-Allowed Accommodations Applications to ACT** – March 6
- **Illinois Young Author’s Program entries** – March 27

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## Funding & Disbursements

### Public School Calendar issues regarding District-wide Emergency, Act of God, Interrupted and Delayed Start days

This has been an extremely rough school year with weather-related conditions causing school district interruptions, delayed starts and closures. This information serves as a refresher for completing an Amended Public School Calendar via the IWAS system.

Section 18-12 of the Illinois School Code **requires** that an Amended Public School Calendar be completed and submitted for approval within 30 days of the occurrence of an Interrupted or Delayed Start Day. Section 10-19 of the School code states that the calendar for the school term and any changes must be submitted to and approved by the regional superintendent of schools before the calendar or changes may take effect. Therefore, the State Board recommends that an Amended Public School Calendar be completed and submitted within 30 days after an Emergency or Act of God Day is taken. The completion of an Amended Public School Calendar ensures that the most up-to-date approved Public School Calendar is on file via the ISBE School Calendar Inquiry website that can be accessed at <http://webprod1.isbe.net/SchCallInquiry/SchCallInquiry.aspx>

An **Emergency Day** is used at the discretion of the district for whatever is locally deemed an emergency. An Emergency Day must be made up prior to the end of the school year. The calendar code for this day is ED and does not require any student attendance times or a brief explanation, but does require that a Proposed Emergency Day built into the Proposed Public School Calendar be converted to a pupil attendance day.

An **Act of God Day** is only accessible after all of the Proposed Emergency Days built into the Proposed

Public School Calendar have been converted to pupil attendance days. The calendar code for this day is AOG and does require a brief explanation when completing the Amended Public School Calendar. An approved Act of God Day is not required to be made up but it does count as a calendar day towards the statutorily required minimum of 180 days.

An **Interrupted Day** is a day that the district has provided at least one hour of instruction but must close due to adverse weather conditions or a condition beyond the control of the school district that poses a hazardous threat to the health and safety of pupils prior to providing the minimum minutes of **instruction** (i.e. 300 minutes) required for a full day of attendance. The calendar code for this day is XID and requires completion of the student attendance time and a brief explanation when completing the Amended Public School Calendar. These approved days may be counted as a full day of student attendance for students enrolled full time who were in attendance and received the complete instructional time provided for such day. Students enrolled part-time or not present for the complete instructional time provided must have their attendance reported appropriately for the instructional time received.

A **Delayed Start Day** is a day that the district must delay the start of the school day due to adverse weather conditions and this delay prevents the district from providing the minimum minutes of **instruction** (i.e. 300 minutes) required for a full day of attendance. The calendar code for this day is XDS and requires completion of the student attendance time and a brief explanation when completing the Amended Public School Calendar. These approved days count as a full day of student attendance for students enrolled full time who were in attendance and received the complete instructional time provided for such day. Students enrolled part-time or not present for the complete instructional time provided must have their attendance reported appropriately for the instructional time received.

The Public School Calendar guidelines may be found at [http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/ps\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/ps_guidelines.pdf)

Student attendance questions as they relate to General State Aid can be found at [http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/gsa\\_faq.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/gsa_faq.pdf)

Questions regarding completion of the Amended Public School Calendar can be directed to your Regional Office of Education or contact **Marj Beck** at [mbeck@isbe.net](mailto:mbeck@isbe.net).

Questions related to General State Aid and student attendance can be directed to **Jim Mathes** [jmathes@isbe.net](mailto:jmathes@isbe.net).

**Marj and Jim** can be reached at 217-782-5256.

### **New Census Estimates Released for FY10 Title I Low Income**

The U.S. Department of Education has released the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for income year 2007. These estimates will be used to calculate FY10 Title I Allocations. A file of 2007 Poverty Data, by Local Education Agency (LEA) is provided in an alphabetical listing of LEAs, Poverty Count, 5-17 Population, Poverty Percentage and Total Population online at [Illinois Census 2007 with Poverty %](#).

With this data, LEAs can determine their potential eligibility for Basic, Concentration, Targeted and Education Finance Incentive Grants (EFIG).

**Basic Grant eligibility:** an LEA must have at least 10 poverty children and the number of poverty children must be greater than 2 percent of the LEA population of children ages 5-17.

**Concentration Grant eligibility:** an LEA must have at least 6,500 poverty children or the number of those children exceeds 15% of the total 5-17 population.

**Targeted and EFIG grant qualifications:** an LEA must have at least 10 poverty children and that number must be at least 5 percent of the 5-17 population.

The following link to the Census Bureau, [www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/index.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/index.html), provides various aspects of the SAIPE count. We will be using the 2007 data to calculate SY 2009-10 Title I, Part A

allocations because they are the most recent available data. Note that with the 2007 data the Census Bureau has made the LEA data more current by reducing the lag time to two years between the time of the data and the time when they become available for use in calculating Title I allocations.

Superintendents, business managers, and Title I directors should carefully examine the data for their LEA as this will be the first indication as to whether your LEA may be gaining or losing in eligibility for Title I funds in FY10. ISBE neither controls nor generates the data.

Note that this preliminary data does not include other non-census information, such as foster, neglected, or delinquent counts that may be used to calculate Title I allocations.

Also, FY09 nationwide Title I allocations were revised in October, and Illinois received an additional \$169,748. Due to final allocations already provided to our LEAs at the time of the release of additional funds, we will provide the additional portion of this FY09 allocation with the final FY10 allocations this fall. As we stated in the October 14<sup>th</sup> *Weekly Message*, many LEAs will not be affected by this small increase. For those affected, the increase will be minimal.

For questions, contact **Sally Cray** or **Kim Lewis** in the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256

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## **Student Assessment**

### **Upcoming PSAE Deadlines**

- Deadline to Enter PSAE Orders on *PSAE TestSites Online* website – **January 30**
- Receipt Deadline for Schools to Submit PSAE Day 1 ACT-Approved Accommodations Requests to ACT – **February 2**
- Deadline for Home School Districts to Submit Pre-ID Label Information for PSAE on SIS website – **February 19**
- Receipt Deadline for Schools to Submit PSAE Day 1 State-Allowed Accommodations Applications to ACT – **March 6**

## 2009 IAA Regional Training Registration

There are still openings for the IAA Regional training for the spring 2009 Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA) for the week of **February 2 – 6 in southern and central Illinois**.

New teachers and all IAA Coordinators are especially encouraged to attend one session. All sessions will cover the same material.

Registration can be accessed through the [www.pearsonaccess.com/il](http://www.pearsonaccess.com/il) website. The training registration schedule with times, locations and contact information for questions is also available on this webpage.

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## Educator Preparation & Recertification

### Recruiting a Chinese Teacher from Taiwan

The State Board is working with the Cultural Division of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, the representative arm of the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Taiwan, on an agreement to support a teacher exchange program.

Through the Visiting Chinese Teachers from Taiwan Program, the Ministry invites superintendents and principals who plan to recruit a Chinese teacher from Taiwan to visit university language centers and K-12 schools throughout the country. This is an excellent way for Illinois administrators to interview and hire a highly qualified teacher from Taiwan.

The program also enables participants to learn more about Taiwan's outstanding Chinese language teacher training programs. The MOE covers the expenses for roundtrip airfare and accommodation for one week. The trip is tentatively scheduled for April 3 -12.

For complete information on the process school districts must follow to recruit and hire a Chinese teacher from Taiwan, please contact the **Director Huei-wen Hsu** at the Cultural Division, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago at 312-616-0805. Those districts interested in participating, should contact Dr. Hsu no later than **Tuesday, February 10.**

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## English Language Learning

### Funding Available for Districts Serving Migratory Children

The State Board is accepting applications for funding migrant supplemental education services for summer 2009 in districts with qualifying migrant students under Title I, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The application is available at [http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/20-37\\_migrant\\_app.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/20-37_migrant_app.pdf). The application deadline is **Monday, March 2.**

**Eligibility:** Students who are 0-21 years old and have not graduated from high school may be eligible if they have moved within the past three years across state or school district lines with a parent or guardian or on their own to obtain temporary or seasonal work in agricultural production, fishing or food processing industries. A certified recruiter must document that children qualify as migrant students.

The State Board can assist districts in identifying eligible migrant children. A survey is available at [http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/migrant\\_survey.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/migrant_survey.pdf)

For more information, contact **Beth Robinson** at 312-814-3850.

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## Department of Public Health

### MRSA Information

The Illinois Department of Public Health has released guidance on how schools can fight against the spread of Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, commonly known as "MRSA."

The guidance includes sample letters to parents and infection control checklists, including information on issues related to policy, infection control, and education/increased awareness. The guidance documents can be found on the ISBE website at [www.isbe.net/esd](http://www.isbe.net/esd).

For additional questions related to MRSA or other staphylococcal infections in schools, contact **Judy Conway, R.N.**, CIC, Infection Control Administrator at [judith.conway@illinois.gov](mailto:judith.conway@illinois.gov), or **Craig Conover, M.D.**, Medical Director, Office of Health Protection, at [craig.conover@illinois.gov](mailto:craig.conover@illinois.gov).

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## Curriculum & Instruction

### Illinois Young Authors Program

Guidelines for the 2009 Young Author’s Conference will be available online on the Curriculum & Instruction webpage **Friday, January 23**.

This year’s conference will be held once again at Illinois State University on **Saturday, May 16**. Guidelines and conference registration information are available at [www.isbe.net/curriculum](http://www.isbe.net/curriculum). Completed entries should be mailed to Illinois State University Conference Services, Young Author’s Conference, Campus Box 8610, Normal, IL 61790-8610.

Entry deadline is **Friday, March 27**. E-mail questions to the Young Author’s Conference Coordinator, **Christina Podraza** at [cpodraza@lisle202.org](mailto:cpodraza@lisle202.org).

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## No Child Left Behind

### Title VI and Public School Choice

The Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education issued the attached guidance in order to provide state education agencies and local education agencies information to ensure the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

This guidance is in regard to access to, participation in, and administration of, public school choice being implemented in a nondiscriminatory manner that is consistent with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations.

We encourage you to share the information in this letter with your staff.

The “Dear Colleague Letter on Title VI and Public School Choice” is available for viewing at: <http://www.edpubs.org/lyris/DearColleagueLetter1-8-09.pdf>.

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## Fiscal & Procurement

### 2009 Illinois Textbook Loan Program

The 2009 Illinois Textbook Loan Program (ITLP) is targeted for students in grades 7-12. Schools may enter

their requests online through the **Monday, March 16**, deadline.

More than 100 publishers/vendors have listed their educational resources. Schools have the flexibility to select curriculum needs from thousands of items including textbooks, multimedia, manipulatives, and instructional computer software.

Districts and schools will receive a letter regarding the district/school’s 2009 allotment and ordering instructions. [School allotment](#) information has also been posted via the ITLP website. The appropriation for this year is \$42,826,500. The amount allotted per pupil is approximately \$40 with the ITLP paying shipping charges.

More information can be obtained in the ITLP website at <http://isbe.net/htmls/textbook.htm>. For questions, contact the Illinois Textbook Loan Program staff at 217-782-0734.

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## E-Bulletins

### Set-Aside Requirements for Students who are Homeless

This E-Bulletin addresses the set-aside requirements for children and youth who are homeless. These children are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services whether or not they reside in a Title I attendance area or meet the academic standards required of other children for eligibility. According to Title I, Part A, LEAs must reserve (or set-aside) such funds as are necessary to provide comparable services to homeless children who are not attending Title I schools.

### Supplement vs. Supplant Provisions

This E-Bulletin serves as a brief reminder of the supplement not supplant provision that requires federal funds be used to augment the regular educational program. No Child Left Behind requires that state and local educational agencies (SEAs and LEAs) use federal funds received under Title I only to supplement the amount of funds available from non-federal sources for the education of students participating in Title I services.

To access these E-Bulletins and previous editions, go to ISBE's website at <http://www.isbe.net/e-bulletins/default.htm>.

If you have a suggestion for an E-Bulletin topic, e-mail it to [NCLB@isbe.net](mailto:NCLB@isbe.net).

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## Nutrition

### School Wellness Policies: Striving For Excellence - March 2009 Conferences

Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program staff are hosting three *School Wellness Policies: Striving for Excellence* conferences this March.

Participants will learn about evaluation strategies and resources, grant opportunities to support student wellness activities, and inspiration from Illinois schools recognized for their wellness initiatives.

Download the registration form at [www.kidseatwell.org/local-wellness-policy.htm](http://www.kidseatwell.org/local-wellness-policy.htm) and click on New! School Wellness Policies: Striving for Excellence-March 2009 Conferences.

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## Grants & Programs

### Illinois Students Selected as U.S. Senate Youth Program Delegates

The following youth have been selected as 2009 Illinois delegates to the U.S. Senate Youth Program (USSYP) sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation: **Megan Nino**, North Grand High School, Chicago, and **Isaac Chambers**, University of Illinois High School, Urbana.

As Illinois delegates, these students will attend Washington Week 2009 in March. Washington Week is an intensive week of educational activities designed to deepen the student delegates' understanding of the federal government.

In addition, students who serve as USSYP delegates to Washington Week receive a \$5,000 undergraduate college scholarship from the Hearst Foundation.

For more information about this merit-based program sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, visit <http://www.ussenateyouth.org/>, or contact **Carol McCue** at 217-524-4832.

### FY 2010 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers RFP

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) was posted at [www.isbe.net/21cclc](http://www.isbe.net/21cclc) on **Friday, January 16**, with a deadline of **March 16**.

This is a reminder that **Technical Assistance Conferences** will be held per the schedule below from 9 a.m. until noon. Attendance is not required to submit a proposal and there is no pre-registration required.

**Thursday, January 22:** Holiday Inn Select, 18501 S. Harlem Ave., Tinley Park

**Friday, January 23:** Hilton Garden Inn, 10 E. Grand Ave., Chicago

**Monday, February 2:** Hilton Garden Inn, 3100 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield

For questions regarding these conferences or the RFP, contact Gail Meisner, Grants & Programs Division, 217-524-4832 or [gmeisner@isbe.net](mailto:gmeisner@isbe.net).

### Homeless Education Disaster Assistance Grant

The application period for the Homeless Education Disaster Assistance grant administered by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) is open through **Monday, February 9, at 4:30 p.m. EST**.

Eligible applicants are local education agencies (LEAs) (school districts or school attendance centers) or consortia of LEAs that had 50 or more students age 0 – 18 or IDEA age limits made homeless by a federally-declared natural disaster in 2008. The Homeless Education Disaster Assistance covers only the following FEMA disasters in Illinois: 3/7/08 Disaster Number 1747; 6/24/08 Disaster Number 1771; and 10/3/08 Disaster Number 1800.

The Federal Register notice inviting applications was published on **Friday, January 9**, and is located at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/> by searching for CFDA No. 84.383A. **The application can only be made on-line via ED's e-application portal.** The link to initiate an electronic application is as follows: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>. **New users must register before accessing or initiating an application.**

A webpage for the grant is expected to be launched today at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/heda/index.html>.

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## Awards & Grants

### Green Youth Awards

Illinois students who are working on environmental protection and conservation projects are encouraged to apply for the annual Governor's Green Youth Awards. The awards, which are coordinated by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, recognize the outstanding and inventive efforts of Illinois youth.

Students in grades K-12 at public, private, or home schools, along with clubs and organizations, are eligible to apply.

For an application and additional information, go to <http://www.epa.state.il.us/green-youth/> or call 217-557-7826. Applications are due by **Friday, March 20**.

### 2009 Richard C. Bartlett Environmental Education Award

This award is given annually by the National Environmental Education Foundation to an outstanding teacher in grades 5 – 12 that has successfully integrated environmental education into the daily lesson plan. A \$5,000 cash award is given to assist an educator with work in environmental education.

If you know such an educator, submit your nomination at <http://www.neefusa.org/bartlettaward.htm>. The deadline for submission is **Friday, February 13**.

### Apply for Earth Day in the Parks

Earth Day in the Parks is an event to promote stewardship of our natural resources by Illinois children. During one day in April, students and their teachers will go to participating Illinois state parks to take part in outdoor activities that help the environment and wildlife. Students will also increase their fitness and learn that their actions can make a difference in the world.

For an application form, a list of participating parks and general information go to: <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/EDITPinstruct.htm>.

One class at each participating state park will be selected as a winner. Applications will be accepted **January 1– February 28**.

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## Professional Development

### AeA 21st Century Learning Environment Symposium

The AeA 21st Century Learning Environment Symposium is scheduled in Springfield on **Tuesday, February 24**. The Symposium is organized around the challenge that despite our best effort, we still struggle with how to fully use technology in the K-12 curriculum to improve performance for all students and reduce dropout rates.

Panel discussions with public officials and leading IT education specialists will focus on leading trends, using technology in the classroom, and how to best integrate the National Education Technology Standards (NETS) into schools.

This event is a key component in the Illinois Innovation Talent Sustainability Strategy and addresses how to promote innovation-centered learning environments.

Online registration and an agenda are available at <http://www.aeanet.org/ILlearning>  
[http://www.aeanet.org/weblink/?b=090115\\_102751edlong&u=352318&h=24C60959B77A711874D7103536ABF8CA&l=http://www.aeanet.org/ILlearning](http://www.aeanet.org/weblink/?b=090115_102751edlong&u=352318&h=24C60959B77A711874D7103536ABF8CA&l=http://www.aeanet.org/ILlearning).

Government and education participants at no cost, but need to register by phone, e-mail or fax.

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## Student Opportunities

### FCC's Student Volunteer Program

On **Tuesday, February 17**, the United States broadcasting industry will transition from analog to digital signals. The FCC's school volunteer program offers students an important opportunity to use their know-how to help older people in the community.

The FCC's website has numerous materials posted to assist teachers as we approach the transition date at [www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov).



A student-based program offers young people and their advisors offers ways to assist people in the community with the transition. Information can be found at <http://www.dtv.gov/students/index.html>.

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## **Employment Opportunities**

### **ISBE External Vacancy List**

An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at:  
<http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm>.

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## **In the News**

### **Weekly News Clips**

ISBE has posted highlights from last week's education news clips at:  
<http://www.isbe.net/news/2009/newsclips/090116.htm>

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