



Illinois State Board of Education

Weekly Message

Gery J. Chico, Chairman
Steven R. Gilford, Vice Chair
Dr. Vinnie M. Hall, Board Secretary
James W. Baumann
Curtis W. Bradshaw
Dr. Andrea S. Brown
Dr. David L. Fields
Melinda A. LaBarre

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent

March 5, 2013

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

Last Thursday I had the opportunity to meet with many of you in Springfield at the Illinois Association of School Administrators Leadership Week. This was an opportunity for professional development and networking, but also time to engage legislators. I have met with many of our legislators over the past few weeks and will continue to do so as the spring session continues, but there is no substitute for local educators talking to legislators about how the decisions made in Springfield impact classrooms in their home districts.

The Illinois State Board of Education has recommended an aggressive budget request for FY 14 and we are working with a number of stakeholders to ensure each member understands the implications General State Aid proration and other cuts are having on local schools. However, we must all work together. Please continue to engage your legislators as we move through the spring and encourage your Board members and other local education stakeholders to do the same.

Today the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is releasing two items to help us as we move forward in implementing the new learning standards and plan for the new assessments.

The first item is an Assessment Administration Capacity Planning Tool that will allow districts to plug in their own data about devices, bandwidth and enrollment and other data. This tool will generate information that provides multiple school readiness scenarios in order to administer the new assessments. PARCC has previously released the minimum and recommended specifications that devices must meet for use in the new assessments. These specs will be updated every six months based on feedback from the field.

In addition to the capacity planning tool, PARCC is releasing guidance about estimated time on task for testing. This is a test that many educators have been asking for, for a long time. It's not simply filling in a bubble, but requires students to apply knowledge and a higher level of thinking. These assessments will require some additional time than what is currently required, however, each grade level will be assessed for writing in English Language Arts and extended explanation for calculations in math which is not occurring now and they will also be broken up to include separate sessions for performance-based and end-of-year assessments instead of one single window. Estimates for testing are as follows:

- Grade 3 – 8 hours
- Grades 4 and 5 – just more than 9 hours
- Grades 6,7 and 8 – a little less than 9.5 hours
- High School – a little less than 9.5 hours

There will be two four-week testing windows for test administration and the capacity planning tool will help determine how many days schools will need for testing. You can access the guidance and planning tools at www.isbe.net/assessment/parcc.htm or www.PARCCOnline.org.

Finally, I want to recognize the following individuals who have been selected by the Illinois Principals Association as Principals of the Year:

- Elementary – Kim Zinman, Joyce Kilmer Elementary School, Wheeling CCSD 21
- Middle School – Jeremie Smith, Mattoon Middle School, Mattoon CUSD 2
- High School – Lazaro Lopez, Wheeling High School, Township HSD 214
- Assistant – Jean Aucutt, Vernon Hills High School, CHSD 128

Congratulations, you have one of the toughest and most rewarding jobs in the world.

Thanks for all you do for our students!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

Please note this is not a complete list of dates 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>.

- **Part 35 (Mentoring Program for New Principals)** – Public comment period ends March 25
- **Part 375 (Student Records)** – Public comment period ends March 25
- **Part 405 (Payments to Certain Facilities under Section 14-7.05 of the School Code)** – Public comment period ends March 25
- **Part 475 (Contested Cases and Other Formal Hearings)** – Public comment period ends March 25
- **Part 565 (Class Size Reduction Grants)** – Public comment period ends March 25
- **Webinar on National School Lunch SY2013-2014 Paid Lunch Equity Requirement** – March 27 (Register at <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/638217793>)
- **Illinois School HealthierUS School Challenge Request for Proposal due date** – April 1 (For more information, visit <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/sos.htm#huscrrfp>)
- **Part 226 (Special Education)** – Public comment period ends April 22
- **Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) FY 2014 RFP** – Must be submitted to ISBE by 5 p.m. on April 22
- **Applications for the Exception to the 1.0 Percent Cap due** – May 17
- **Alternative Learning Opportunities Program (ALOP) Continuation Application deadline** – June 28 (Applications available at <http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/alop.htm>)
- **0-3 Prevention Initiative – Outcomes Questionnaire IWAS data entry deadline** – July 1 (IWAS Reporting Guide available at http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/pfa_prev_init.htm)
- **0-3 Prevention Initiative – Parent Questionnaire IWAS data entry deadline** – July 1 (IWAS Reporting Guide available at http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/pfa_prev_init.htm)
- **Student Health Data** – Vision system report deadline – July 1
- **Regional Safe Schools End of Year Data reporting deadline** – July 31 (User guide for the IWAS reporting system, http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/rssp_iwas_user_guide.pdf)
- **Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) reporting deadline** – July 31 (User guide for the IWAS reporting system, <ftp://help.isbe.net/webapps/taoep/pdf/TAOEP.pdf>)
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by General Assembly in Fall 2013** – Aug. 16 (see <http://www.isbe.net/isbewaivers/default.htm> for new public notice requirements for all waiver requests)

PARCC

Webinar on Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers

Join the Illinois State Board of Education on March 14 for an update and overview of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Space is limited for the webinar. Reserve a seat at <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/686760233>.

PARCC overview and update will be provided to include assessment design implications and technology specifications. ISBE encourages assessment and technology staff to partner for this webinar by calling in together and sharing this information jointly. The webinar will be recorded and made available on ISBE's Division of Assessment website at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/default.htm>, under the heading "Announcements" as soon as it is available.

- **Title:** Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Overview and Update
- **Date:** Thursday, March 14, 2013
- **Time:** 3-4 p.m. CDT
- **System Requirements:** Windows 7, Vista, XP or 2003 required for server PC-based attendees. Mac OS X 10.6 or newer required for Mac-based attendees. Android phone, Android tablet, iPhone or iPad required for Mobile attendees.

After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Center for Innovation and Improvement

Registration Open for Rising Star Capacity Builder Training Day I

ISBE Rising Star Capacity Builder Training Day I “Coaching for Capacity: Continuous Improvement Planning Using Indicators of Effective Practice” – Non-SSoS Districts who are new to federal or state status and/or do not have an externally appointed Rising Star Capacity Building Coach that are interested in attending Day I, “Coaching for Capacity,” must complete the online registration at <http://webapps.isbe.net/ISBEConference/>. This training will be held on March 20 and 21, 2013. Prior to this event, participants must view the archived webinar Rising Star: A New Direction for Illinois: http://www.brainshark.com/IllinoisPrincipalsAssoc/rising_star_iirc.

The Day I “Coaching for Capacity” training is offered by a Non-SSoS Rising Star Cadre to support districts in building internal capacity. Participants will:

- Review the three phases of highly effective Rising Star meetings
- Use consensus building techniques to help teams efficiently and effectively assess indicators
- Critique a Rising Star plan for an identified indicator
- Improve their ability to use the Rising Star Continuous Improvement Forum by incorporating thoughtful and reflective questions as a capacity-building coaching strategy.

Mathematics Curriculum Models Coming to Help Aid Common Core Implementation

The Illinois State Board of Education has been charged by the Illinois 97th General Assembly to implement

Public Act 97-704. The State Board of Education is to coordinate the acquisition, adaptation and development of middle and high school Mathematics Curriculum Models to aid school districts and teachers in implementing Common Core Mathematics State Standards for all students. The Public Act required representation from statewide educational organizations and stakeholders. A committee consisting of a middle school mathematics team and a high school mathematics team has been created to address this charge. The work of the committee was scheduled to be completed by mid-February 2013 and available to the General Assembly by March 1. It will be available to districts after this date.

The team for high school mathematics has chosen to focus on the integrated approach for the Mathematics Curriculum Model. The middle school Mathematics Curriculum Model will be aligned with the high school model. The resulting product will provide districts an opportunity to examine an integrated Mathematics Curriculum Models framework. This curriculum work is designed to be an example.

The curriculum examples will be shared with districts to help them in their implementation of the Mathematics Common Core Standards. The Mathematics Curriculum Models may be seen as tools for districts to use for the implementation of the Mathematics Common Core State Standards at the middle and high school level. Districts are not required to use this curriculum framework and may adopt or adapt this curriculum as they see fit.

The Illinois Board of Education has not officially made a decision on whether the state model will be the traditional or the integrated approach at the high school level.

Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Deadline to Apply for HealthierUS School Challenge Grant Set for April 1

The due date for the Illinois School HealthierUS School Challenge Request for Proposal is April 1, 2013. Through USDA’s 2012 Team Nutrition and Training Grant, the Illinois State Board of Education’s Division of Nutrition and Wellness Programs will be awarding more than 40 schools with minigrants of \$940 to help them prepare to meet the HealthierUS School Challenge criteria.

The Request for Proposal for this competitive grant is posted at www.isbe.net/nutrition, under “What’s New?” or http://www.isbe.net/funding_opps/htmls/rfp.htm. The grant period begins May 1, 2013, and ends June 30, 2014.

USDA Proposed Rules on Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools

On Feb. 8, 2013, the USDA issued [“Proposed Rules on Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools that Participate in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.”](#)

In Illinois, state rules in Section 305.15 of the Illinois Administrative Code, School Food Service Rules govern what food and beverages may be sold to students in school buildings with grade 8 and below. ISBE has reviewed the USDA proposed rules and compared to the current Illinois School Food Service Rules in place since October 2006. The current state rules has an exemption for foods sold in the food service area during the meal periods for grades 8 and below. In addition, the state rules do not govern grades 9-12.

The USDA proposed rules imposes rules for ALL grade levels including 9-12 grades as well as ALL food and beverages including food in the food service area during meal periods. The USDA proposed rules would govern ALL food and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day, including 30 minutes at the end of the school day. The proposed USDA rules will impact a la carte offerings, vending machines and school stores.

To provide school personnel an overview of the proposed rules, the Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division hosted a webinar on Friday, Feb. 22, 2013. The webinar was recorded and will be available on our division website for schools who were unable to attend the live webinar. (Available on www.isbe.net/nutrition under What’s New?) Schools were provided instructions on how to comment to the USDA on these proposed rules, preferably via www.regulations.gov. Docket ID: FNS-2011-0019. Comments are being accepted by USDA through April 9, 2013.

ISBE Division Announces Variety of Upcoming Grant Opportunities

FUEL UP TO PLAY 60 FARM TO SCHOOL TOUCHDOWN WITH DAIRY GRANT: The Midwest Dairy Council will randomly select 15 schools that complete specific steps between Jan. 1, 2013, and

April 1, 2013, to win a Fuel Up to Play 60 Prize Pack valued at \$500. They will then randomly select one of those schools to win a dairy farm tour field trip for up to 100 students/teachers or a comparable prize pack. For more information, visit ISBE’s website at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/farm_school.htm.

USDA FARM TO SCHOOL GRANTS: The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA) states that the USDA will make available \$5 million annually for grants, technical assistance and the federal administrative costs related to F2S Programs. This year the USDA has determined they will focus the majority of those \$5 million on grants.

There will be three different types of grants available: Planning Grants, Implementation Grants and Support Service Grants. Planning and Implementation grants are geared towards schools in the National School Lunch Program. In order to assist those thinking about applying for one of the three grants listed above, the USDA will be hosting a series of webinars related to the application process:

- March 5, 2013, Noon (CST) – Planning Grants
- March 6, 2013, Noon (CST) – Implementation Grants
- March 7, 2013, Noon (CST) – Support Service Grants

The proposals for all grants are due April 24, 2013, (no later than 11 p.m. CST) and the awards will be announced in October 2013. For more information related to the USDA F2S grants, visit their website at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/f2s/f2_2013_grant_progra.htm.

USDA FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE

PROGRAM GRANT: The purpose of the program is to increase fresh fruit and fresh vegetable consumption in K-8 schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Priority is given to elementary schools based on free and reduced eligibility. This program is different from the Department of Defense (DoD) fruit and vegetable program and funding is to be used for fresh fruits and vegetables provided to children at no cost, outside of the reimbursable meal(s). Get started at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/ffv_program.htm.

For more information on grant opportunities related to nutrition and wellness visit our Spotlight on School page at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/ffv_program.htm.

SES

Annual Evaluation of Supplemental Educational Services Under Way Soon

The Center for Research in Educational Policy (CREP) at the University of Memphis conducts an annual evaluation for the Illinois State Board of Education of Supplemental Educational Services (SES).

As many of you are aware, SES is a component of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act, which provides extra academic assistance for students from low-income families attending designated Title I schools (those in their second year of school improvement, in corrective action, or in restructuring status).

The evaluation conducted by CREP in Memphis assists ISBE in monitoring the effectiveness of providers approved to offer SES in the state of Illinois. The primary components of the evaluation are: SES student achievement outcomes, SES student attendance, and the perceptions of parents with children attending SES.

Parental feedback plays a critical role in the evaluation of SES providers. Increasing the level of input from parents, through increasing the survey response rate, will ensure the evaluation contains accurate, reliable information.

In April, schools that are designated SES-eligible will begin receiving boxes containing parent surveys in English and in Spanish and instructions for returning surveys.

Please alert district Title I coordinators that SES parent surveys will be arriving in April to their district's SES-eligible schools. We ask that Title I district coordinators share this information with their schools and emphasize the importance of the survey distribution and return in an effort to increase the rate of survey submissions.

For questions or additional information regarding the parent survey, please contact Beth Murphy, Research Assistant, Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis at kmurphy3@memphis.edu or (866) 670-6147.

Illinois Education Research Council

Feedback Requested for Evaluation of Illinois High School to College Success Report

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has contracted with the Illinois Education Research Council and Applied Research Consultants to conduct an evaluation of the dissemination and usefulness of the High School to College Success Report (HS2CSR).

Email invitations are currently being distributed to principals, superintendents, workshop participants and postsecondary administrators asking for their participation in an online survey and in focus groups.

Individuals will be asked to provide information regarding their knowledge and opinions about the HS2CSR. Additionally, descriptions of collaborative efforts utilizing this report and input regarding potential changes for future reports are requested.

If you have not used the HS2CSR, your input is also needed to find out what prevents you from doing so and suggestions you have for improving the report.

If you have any questions about the evaluation study, please contact the IERC at 866-799-4372 (toll-free).

Assessment

Administration of the Ninth and 10th Grade EXPLORE/PLAN – Fall 2013

We are pleased to announce the continued availability of EXPLORE/PLAN for all ninth- and 10th-grade students as part of our reform agenda and move toward a growth model of accountability. The high school assessment plan will provide schools and districts a complete picture of student progress from grades 3 through 11 and provide data for the calculation of student growth.

Please Note: The opportunity to participate in these assessments will be the only state-funded path to administer the EXPLORE and PLAN in the 2013-14 school year. Test administration must take place between Sept. 16 and Nov. 8. The state will pay only for the administration of EXPLORE at grade 9 and PLAN at grade 10 during this testing window.

Early Childhood

Request for Proposals Sought for Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM)

The Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (RFP) was released Feb. 19, 2013. ISBE is seeking applications from eligible entities that will maintain and further refine an Illinois early childhood asset mapping website

(IECAM) for early childhood personnel, state agency personnel and the general public.

Specifically, the website should provide online access to demographic data on young children and data on early care and education services in Illinois. Applicants must explain how they will combine up-to-date demographic information with early childhood program information from PI and PFA, Head Start, and child care. The website should use a sophisticated electronic coding/mapping function to locate early childhood programs correlated with demographic data across multiple sectors of the state. It is anticipated that the successful applicant will have access to the existing pages and resources of the current site in order to make the transition to the applicant's system and to support the site with its own infrastructure.

The current IECAM website is located at <http://iecam.crc.uiuc.edu/>. The RFP is available at http://isbe.net/funding_opps/htmls/rfp.htm, and must be received at ISBE no later than 4 p.m. on April 8, 2013. The RFP can also be obtained by contacting the Early Childhood Division at (217) 524-4835.

Special Education Services

Information on the Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program RFP

The bidders' conferences for the Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) Request for Proposal (RFP) will be 9:15-11 a.m. Friday, March 8, at the Doubletree Hotel and Conference Center in Bloomington and through a webinar from 9 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, March 13. To register for the webinar, go to <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/598670545>.

The deadline for submitting the TAOEP RFP is Monday, April 22. The FY 2014 TAOEP RFP can be found at <http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/taoep.htm>.

For additional information, contact Sally Veach or V. Sue Taylor in ISBE's Special Education Services Division at (217) 782-5589 and sveach@isbe.net or vtaylor@isbe.net.

Application for the Exception to the 1% Cap Reminder

If more than 1 percent of your students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 are identified as significantly cognitively disabled, it is time to prepare your district's application for an exception to the 1 percent cap. If the

conditions for the exception are approved, then all "progressing" and "attaining" scores earned by students taking the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA) will be counted as proficient in making determinations for school, district and state AYP.

K-8 Districts: Apply after the ISAT testing is completed (March 15 for most districts).

High School and K-12 Districts: Apply after the PSAT makeup date has passed (May 8).

The 2012-2013 applications are due on or before May 17, 2013. The form is available at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/37-58_percent_cap_form.pdf. Instructions are available at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/waiver_guidance.pdf. For more information, please contact Kelly Wojcik at kwojcik@isbe.net or at (217) 782-5589.

Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth Conference Set for March 7-8 in Bloomington

The Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth will host its annual statewide conference March 7-8 at the Doubletree Hotel and Convention Center in Bloomington.

The keynote speaker for Thursday is Darrius Garrett, the author of the upcoming book "Diary of a Freedom Writer" and one of the student "Freedom Writers" in the best-selling book by teacher Erin Gruwell.

The book was the inspiration for the 2007 movie "Freedom Writers," starring Hilary Swank and Patrick Dempsey. Darrius will share stories of his educational experience and the role that education, especially writing and reading, played in helping him change the direction of his life.

Friday's keynote is Deadre Stanton, a teacher of English, speech and theater. Coming from an in-the-trenches perspective, Stanton will draw on real life examples and humor to reaffirm that your choices in life are good ones.

Several breakout sessions are also available on such topics as online learning, Common Core, writing, ADD/ADHD and more.

For more information on the conference and to register, go to <http://www.iceary.org> and click on "conferences and trainings."

Governmental Relations

Reminder Regarding the Abolishment of General Assembly Legislative Scholarships

On July 11, 2012, the governor signed legislation abolishing the General Assembly scholarship program in Illinois. Public Act 97-0772 can be viewed at <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/97/PDF/097-0772.pdf>.

Previously, Illinois law provided for each member of the General Assembly to annually nominate two persons of school age and otherwise eligible, from his or her district to receive a certificate of scholarship in any state supported university designated by the member.

For questions, contact ISBE Public Information Division at (217) 782-4648.

Public Act

PA 97-742: 5 Hours of Instruction on First and Last Day of School (Effective June 30, 2013)

Senate Bill 2850 was signed by Gov. Pat Quinn on July 5, 2012, to become Public Act 97-0742 and has an effective date of June 30, 2013. This public act repeals Section 18-8.05 (F)(2)(b) of the School Code, which allows the first and last day of student attendance to be less than 5 instructional hours. Except as otherwise provided in Section 18-8.05 of the School Code, beginning with the 2013-14 school year calendar, for Public School Calendar and General State Aid attendance calculation purposes, days of attendance by pupils, including the first and last day of pupil attendance, shall be counted only for sessions of not less than five clock hours of school work per day.

For more detailed information regarding the new public act, go to <http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/pa97-0742guidelines.pdf>. If you have questions regarding this information please contact Marj Beck at mbeck@isbe.net or (217) 782-5256.

Rules and Waivers

Invitation to Comment on Rules

A set of proposed amendments recently reviewed by the Illinois State Board of Education is available for public comment. The proposal has been posted on the agency's Web site at <http://www.isbe.net/rules>; choose "Proposed

Rules and Amendments." Please submit any comments or suggestions to rules@isbe.net.

Part 226 (Special Education): Would eliminate the definition of "general education classroom" for the purpose of determining class sizes, as well as the class size restrictions for self-contained special education classrooms. A section addressing class sizes for school years 2007-08 and 2008-09 also is being repealed since its provisions no longer apply.

Public comment period ends April 22, 2013.

American Academy of Pediatrics

TEAMS Project Helps Districts Strengthen School Health Services

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is requesting applications from school districts to participate in the second cohort of the Enhancing School Health Services through Training, Education, Assistance, Mentorship, and Support (TEAMS) project.

Through the TEAMS project, the AAP provides customized training, resources and technical assistance to school districts that are interested in strengthening their school health services. To participate, districts must assemble a three-member team, including a district health services representative, health department partner and physician partner.

This is an exciting opportunity for districts to gain access to the extensive resources and expertise available through the AAP and the CDC, two of the premier national organizations working to improve school health. The project offers the opportunity to strengthen local partnerships and to participate in a community of other school district teams from across the country that can support each other in making school health services improvements. In addition, participating teams will have their accomplishments showcased at a state and national level.

Ten districts will be selected to participate in the second cohort. Public school districts in Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Maine, North Carolina, Oregon and South Carolina, as well as those within the Navajo Nation, are eligible to apply. The deadline is March 15. Visit <https://schoolhealthteams.aap.org/uploads/ckeditor/files/TEAMS%202013%20RFA.pdf>. If you have any

questions about this project, please contact Laura DeStigter, Program Manager, at (847) 434-7127 or ldestigter@aap.org.

U.S. Department of Education

Training Toolkit Addressing Teenage Dating Abuse Available Online

Last month was National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. (Read the letter from U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/130228.html>). A toolkit that addresses teenage dating abuse is available online.

“Preventing, Assessing, and Intervening in Teenage Dating Abuse: A Training for Specialized Instructional Support Personnel” is free and takes an estimated 4.5 hours to complete. Materials include a PowerPoint and handouts. For more information, go to <http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/index.php?id=1511>.

Illinois Public Broadcasters

Webinar Takes a Look at PBS Resources and Technology Used in the Classroom

Illinois Public Broadcasters will host a free PBS LearningMedia webinar for Illinois teachers at 4 p.m. Thursday, March 4. This webinar will qualify for professional development credit.

Educators can learn more about how to use PBS LearningMedia, a free resource available to teachers throughout the nation. The webinar will feature Marybeth McCormick of Sparta, Ill., who has 12 years experience teaching grades 2-4. McCormick integrates technology throughout her lessons via the Smart Board, Smart Slate and student use of iPads.

PBS LearningMedia features many classroom-ready, digital resources, including videos, games, audio clips, photos, lesson plans and more.

To register and for more information about the webinar, “Ignite Your Lessons With PBS LearningMedia!” go to https://wgbh1.adobeconnect.com/e3illg5xtsc/event/event_info.html.

In Brief

Student Opportunities

- Illinois Partners for Clean Air have launched the **Shoot for the Skies PSA Video Contest** for Chicago area high school students. Students are asked to create a public service announcement about Chicago area air quality and actions to improve it. For more information, go to www.cleantheair.org. The deadline for entries is March 15.
- The **National World War II Museum** is seeking entries for its annual essay contests for middle school and high school students. This year’s theme asks, “How can people who disagree still work together for victory?” The deadline for submissions is 5 p.m. March 29. For more information, visit <http://www.nationalww2museum.org/essaycontests>.

Educator Opportunities

- Registration for the spring sessions of **The Stock Market Game Program** for grade 4-12 teachers and their students is open through March 1. For more information, including a schedule for teacher training onsite workshops and online webinars, visit Econ Illinois at www.econed-il.org/icee/smg.shtml.
- The 45th annual **Illinois Reading Council Conference**, Literacy for Life, is scheduled for March 14-16 in Springfield. For more information, visit www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org. Read about the IRC’s new statewide reading initiative Illinois Reads at www.illinoisreads.org.

Weekly News Clips

- The Illinois State Board of Education has posted highlights from recent **education news clips** at <http://www.isbe.net/news/2013/newsclips/130304.htm>.

Employment Opportunities

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