

Educator named to state commission

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SPRINGFIELD – A man with DeKalb ties has been named to a newly created commission state officials say will help authorize more charter schools. Mike Jacoby of Geneva will serve on the nine-member Start Charter School Commission.

Jacoby is the executive director of the Illinois Association of School Business Officials, which has its headquarters at Northern Illinois University.

“I’m honored to be able to be involved in this commission,” Jacoby said. “I believe that it’s important for public educators to be as close to the charter school movement as possible to understand what works and what doesn’t.”

State lawmakers approved creating the commission earlier this year. Its primary purpose will be to consider appeals of charter agreements and proposals that have been denied, revoked or not renewed by local school boards, according to a news release from the state.

It will also have the power to authorize or deny charter school applications and monitor the performance and legal compliance of the state’s charter schools.

The nine members were selected and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

“These nine individuals provide a diverse range of expertise and real world experiences that will serve our state and schools well,” ISBE Chairman Gery Chico said in the news release.

The ISBE website lists 50 charter schools in the state during the 2010-2011 school year, with 37 of them in Chicago. There are none in DeKalb County.

Other members named to the commission are: former chairman and CEO of Caterpillar, Glen Barton; Illinois Education Association lobbyist Sean Denney; City Colleges of Chicago adviser Jaime Guzman; National Association of Charter School Authorizers President and CEO Greg Richmond; Joyce Foundation program officer Angela Renee Rudolph; former Joliet Township High School District 204 Superintendent Paul Swanstrom; Target Area Development Executive Director Patricia Van Pelt-Watkins; and Rudy Valdez with Hamilton Sunstrand in Rockford.