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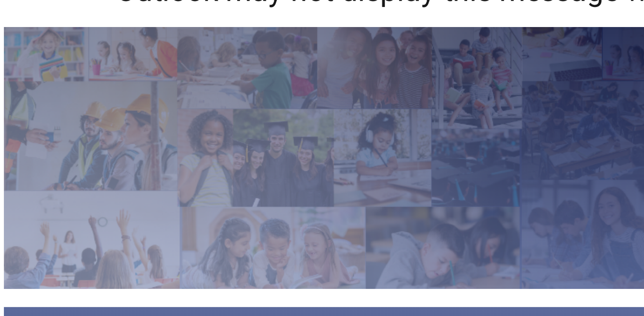
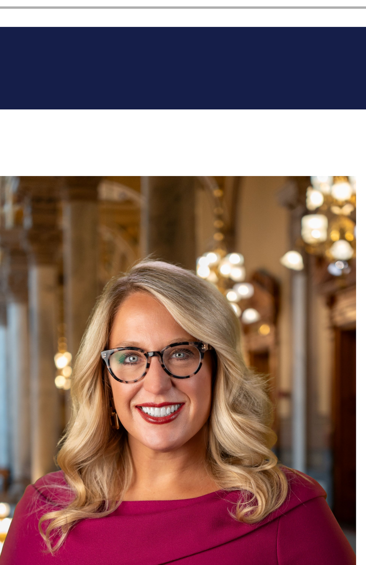


Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update

Weekly Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education

October 10, 2025

A Message from Dr. Katie Jenner



Like some of you, the fall season is my favorite time of year! The leaves are starting to change...the weather is chillier (finally!)...it's fall sports tournament time, including for my daughters who play soccer...and the weekends are filled with football tailgates, bonfires, and a big pot of soup or chili on the stove! In our K-12 schools, October also ushers in fall count day, first semester mid-terms, fall breaks, the chaos of Halloween (this year on a *Friday*), and **National Principals Month**!

Indiana is home to over 2,200 schools, and even more principals and assistant principals...I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you. Every day, you seek to lead with dedication, compassion, and vision—creating safe, supportive, and inspiring environments where students can thrive.

Your commitment to your students, staff, and communities makes a lasting difference. Whether you're greeting students at the door, guiding and supporting teachers in the good and challenging moments, building relationships with parents and families, or making tough decisions for the good of your school, your leadership shapes the future of Indiana's young people.

On behalf of all who benefit from your hard work and compassion, **thank you**! Indiana's schools and communities are stronger because of your leadership, perseverance, and care.

Enjoy this fall weekend, and as always, thank you for all that you do for Indiana students!

Office of Accountability

REMINDER: 2025 Mandatory and Voluntary Graduation Rate Audit is Now Open
The 2025 Voluntary and Mandatory Graduation Rate Audit is now open and will close on Friday, October 24. Every high school should review their 2025 cohort on the EdData Graduation Report. If there are students in the 2025 cohort with an incorrect cohort status, please submit those students on the voluntary graduation rate audit template. All schools are welcome to participate in the voluntary graduation rate audit, and it is the final opportunity to request a change to the 2025 cohort. If you are unsure if your school was selected for the Mandatory Graduation Rate Audit, please check the list of mandatory audit schools (Enrollment key: "AccountabilityCommunity"). Additional details about the 2025 Voluntary and Mandatory Graduation Rate Audit can be found here. Contact IDOE's Office of Accountability with any questions.

REMINDER: Indiana Blue Ribbon Schools Designation
To honor Indiana's most exemplary schools, Governor Mike Braun and Dr. Katie Jenner will announce later this month the honorees of the newly-established Indiana Blue Ribbon Schools designation. The schools will also be honored at this year's 4th annual Educational Excellence Awards Gala on Friday, November 21.

Office of Curriculum and Instruction, Digital Learning, and Kindergarten Readiness

NEW: Preparing for an Increasingly Data-Driven World
IDOE is partnering with Data Science for Everyone (DS4E) to convene a group of educators representing all grades and content areas to help shape the future of data science education in Indiana. If you are interested in expanding access to data science in Indiana classrooms and preparing students for an increasingly data-driven world, please complete this form by Friday, November 7. Contact the Office of Curriculum and Instruction with any questions.

NEW: Join the Conversation - Computer Science Education in Indiana
The implementation of the computer science (CS) high school graduation requirement, revisions to the Computer Science Teachers of America (CSTA) national standards, and changes in CS pedagogy in response to emerging technologies necessitate a revision of Indiana's CS strategic plan in 2026. IDOE seeks to collect feedback from K-12 CS teachers to highlight areas of need and identify ways educators can help plan for the future of CS education in Indiana. If you are interested in joining an introductory meeting on the strategic state plan revision process, please complete this form by Friday, October 24. Contact the Office of Curriculum and Instruction with any questions.

NEW: Accelerate Your School's IT Success with Ivy Tech
Bolster your IT support team through work-based learning, while also providing unique college and career opportunities for your students. Join Michael Bottorff, Vice President, School of Information Technology at Ivy Tech Community College, as he provides an overview of Indiana's dual credit IT career and technical education (CTE) pathways on Wednesday, October 29, at 1 p.m. ET in the Indiana Learning Lab. The session includes a deeper dive into credentials of value, ways to establish IT pathways and dual credit courses at your school, and how they meet Indiana's new diploma requirements. Click here for more information or to register.

REMINDER: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Platforms in Indiana Schools Series - On Demand
Eight sessions highlighting AI Platforms being used in Indiana schools are now available on demand in the Indiana Learning Lab. Each featured platform was selected by at least one corporation during recent grant opportunities and met IDOE's vendor requirements. Contact IDOE's Digital Learning Team with any questions.

Office of Educator Talent and the Literacy Center

REMINDER: Monthly Data Interpretation Office Hours - Acadience Reading Preferred Universal Screener
Acadience Learning, Inc. will host monthly office hours this fall to support school leaders and educators as they interpret the data from the state's preferred screener. Office hours will begin at 10:30 a.m. ET and are scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, Wednesday, November 19, and Wednesday, December 10. Click here to join. Learn more by visiting the Indiana Acadience webpage here. Contact IDOE's Literacy Center with any questions.

REMINDER: Free Recruitment & Hiring Resources Through IDOE/Nimble Partnership
IDOE is excited to continue our partnership with Nimble to provide Indiana schools with free access to Nimble's applicant tracking system and access to post on the statewide job board, used by more than 100,000 job seekers annually. We have also expanded the engagement to further support schools in their teacher recruitment efforts. New in 2026, all schools will have access to a premium recruiting service that delivers high-quality candidates looking for teaching positions in your area. To learn more, register for an informational webinar on Tuesday, October 28 at 3 p.m. ET. You can also schedule a call with our partners at Nimble or contact the Office of Educator Talent with any questions.

Office of Information Technology

REMINDER: October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month
Now is a great time to begin preparing for Cybersecurity Awareness Month, which occurs each October. Here is a resource with links to free toolkits you can use to plan activities to improve the cybersecurity awareness and posture of your staff members. Remember that schools are eligible for a no-cost cybersecurity assessment from a joint team from Purdue and Indiana University. Schools will receive an actionable report that can be shared with school leaders and school board members.

Office of School and Community Nutrition

NEW: October is Farm to School Month
Indiana Food Day and Indiana Apple Crunch are two promotional events perfect for schools during Farm to School Month. Food Day focuses on a different food item every year, and this year it's corn. We provide stickers and posters for participating schools, along with access to electronic toolkits with corn recipes, lessons, and activities for the whole school. Additional information about Food Day can be found here. Indiana Apple Crunch is another fun way to celebrate National Farm to School Month. Each year, Indiana schools, businesses, youth organizations, and groups are encouraged to purchase local apples, educate their group about apples, and *crunch* into an apple together. Pick any day in October, and start thinking about where you will buy your apples and what you want to do to have a crunchtastic event! Register for resources and learn more here.

Office of School Finance

NEW: Membership Conflict Petition Process
Please read this memo regarding the membership conflict petition process. Friday, November 7, is the deadline for a school corporation or charter school to file a petition. Contact IDOE's Office of School Finance with any questions.

NEW: Form 9 Application Updates
The Office of School Finance invites you to join us on Monday, October 27, from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. to review the coming updates to the Form 9 application. The updated version will feature a refreshed design along with new, optional capabilities intended to enhance functionality and support ease of use over time. Additionally, for anyone who is unable to attend the first meeting, a duplicate meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 29, at 2 p.m. ET.

NEW: Alignment of K-12 Funding with the New Indiana Diploma
Indiana's new high school diploma requirements were strategically designed to better connect students with their unique path ahead, whether they plan to continue their education after high school, go straight into a career, or serve in our Nation's military. With the increased flexibility in the diploma, new readiness seals provide students and parents with a blueprint for success to achieve their unique goals and aspirations. As part of the ongoing implementation, Indiana is aligning the K-12 funding formula to incentivize the early adoption of the new diploma, specifically through funding incentives for schools to offer and graduate students with honors and honors plus seals in one of the three pathways. Additional information can be found here. Contact IDOE's Office of School Finance with additional questions.

REMINDER: October Certification Due Friday, October 10
October certification closes on Friday, October 10. The October certification includes membership and multilingual learner counts that generate funding in the state tuition support formula. Contact IDOE's Office of School Finance with additional questions.

Office of Student Pathways and Opportunities

REMINDER: Alternative Education New Program Proposal Submissions for the 2026-2027 School Year
The submission window for Alternative Education New Program Proposals for operation in the 2026-2027 school year that do not have a currently approved alternative education program is now open through March 31, 2026. The proposal link can be found here, under Documents and Resources. Currently approved alternative education programs that wish to establish a new alternative education program should consult with the IDOE's Alternative Education Team for guidance. Contact the IDOE's Alternative Education Team with any questions.

Offices of Special Education, English Learning, and Migrant Education

NEW: Special Education Director Outreach Opportunities
IDOE's Office of Special Education is offering multiple support opportunities for Indiana special education directors and administrators throughout the 2025-2026 school year. Join the October sessions to learn more about Manifestation Determination Meetings and Parent Involvement with guest speakers from Pre-ETS and INSOURCE.

- The Directors Symposium is held monthly to provide relevant policy and resource updates that support directors in strengthening compliance in their corporation's reporting.
- Lead and Listen sessions enable the OSE director and specialists to address submitted follow-up questions regarding the Directors' Symposium.
- New Director Community Chats are also held monthly for special education directors and administrators, new to their positions within the last three years, to ask questions and gain additional information following the Directors Symposium.

Specific information, including dates, times, and registration information, can be found here. Please direct any questions about director outreach opportunities to spedassistance@doe.in.gov.

UPDATED: FY2026 IDEA, Part B Applications
FY 2026 Part B Applications and Instructions are available on Moodle in the FY 2026 Grant Information folder. Applications for 611 and 619 are due to the grant management system (https://grantmanagement.doe.in.gov) on/before the following dates:

- 611: October 3, 2025 (**Extended to October 10, 2025**)
- 619: October 3, 2025 (**Extended to October 10, 2025**)
- **Mandatory CCEIS: October 25, 2025**

A checklist has been inserted into each application to assist with completion.

New charter schools for 2025-2026 will be eligible for Part B funding in January 2026 and will be contacted by our office with instructions at that time.

All questions and concerns should be directed to your LEA's assigned fiscal specialist. The volume of email and phone calls typically increase during this time of year, and this allows the fiscal team to give the most effective customer service possible. A list of the LEA fiscal specialist assignments can be found in the Office of Special Education Moodle Community> Fiscal> Part B Grants for Special Education> LEA Assigned Specialists.

REMINDER: Multilingual Learner Report and EL Counts Captured on October 1
The Multilingual Learner Report in Data Exchange (DEX-LM) collects information on students with a home language other than English, determines the enrollment count of identified English learner students, and generates funding for schools via the federal Title III grant and the state Non-English Speaking Program (NESP). Any students with errors or exclusions will not be certified and included in the finalized Multilingual Learner Report. The certification window is open through Friday, October 10, at 4 p.m. ET.

REMINDER: FY24 IDEA Part B 611 & 619 Reimbursement Requests Required Back Up
IDOE is required to obtain all supporting documentation for reimbursement requests beyond the end date of the grant award (i.e., federal award ending 09/30 requires reimbursement request received from 10/01 - 12/15 on the closing grant), have supporting documentation accompanying the reimbursement request to ensure that all activities and related expenses took place within the associated period of availability for the federal project being charged.

Document(s) supporting the reimbursement request to ensure grantees are accounting for the total amount requested and that expenses were properly encumbered by 9/30 must be submitted.

Acceptable documentation may include:

- Paid dates
- Receipts or invoices showing as payment
- Purchase order or encumbrance dates (handwritten is not acceptable)
- Ledger or computer document showing dates and expenses (Excel is not acceptable)
- Amounts total the reimbursement request reviewed

Contact IDOE's Office of Special Education with questions

Office of Title Grants and Support

NEW: FFY23 Period of Allowability
All LEAs recently received a memo regarding an extension to the FFY23 period of allowability for the following:

- Title II, Part A
- Title III, Part A
- Title IV, Part A
- Title IV, Part B

The updated encumbrance date for FFY23 is now September 30, 2026. If any FFY23 funds have not been encumbered to date, LEAs may continue to encumber funds and submit amendments through September 2026. If you have any questions regarding this extension, please contact your assigned federal grant specialist.

Please note, there is no extension on the grant cycle for FY25 Title I funds.

REMINDER: October Coffee Chat
Join the Title Grants and Support team for monthly Coffee Chats! Coffee Chats are the last Thursday of the month at 10 a.m. ET. October's topic will cover best practices in completing Final Expenditure Reports (FER). Please join us via Microsoft Teams here on Thursday, October 30, and forward this link to necessary stakeholders within your district. Please contact TitleI@doe.in.gov with any questions.

REMINDER: October Count Certification
Valid and reliable data reported and certified via Data Exchange (DEX), is a critical component of determining accurate Title I, II, and IV allocations. Poverty counts for your LEA included during the October 1 ADM count are necessary to ensure federal funding allocations are complete and accurate. Only certified counts available in DEX will be utilized to calculate final allocations for the above federal Title grants.

To avoid inaccuracies in the certified count information, potential errors or discrepancies in DEX must be reviewed and corrected no later than Friday, October 10, by 4 p.m. ET. If any discrepancies are found, please work with your LEA's DEX Data Manager on corrections.

Indiana Education Employment Relations Board

NEW: Notice Regarding Teacher Appreciation Grant (TAG)
The following notice was sent earlier this week to superintendents, school board presidents, and exclusive representative presidents regarding the scope of collective bargaining. As a reminder, it is expressly prohibited under Indiana law to bargain anything related to Teacher Appreciation Grant (TAG) stipends (IC 20-29-6-4.5, IC 20-43-16-12).

News From Our Partners

NEW FROM THE COLLEGE BOARD: Securing the Future - Bringing AP Cybersecurity to Indiana Classrooms
Discover how AP Cybersecurity is shaping the future of digital education in Indiana through an upcoming webinar on Wednesday, October 22, from 3 to 4 p.m. ET. During this session, College Board program experts will share insights into the course framework, learning goals, and the exciting opportunities this course provides for students. You'll also hear directly from an Indiana educator currently piloting the course, who will provide practical perspectives on implementation and classroom impact. Register here to learn how your school can empower students to become the next generation of cyber-savvy problem solvers.

NEW FROM THE EDUCATION SERVICE CENTERS of INDIANA (ECSI): Guardrails to Greenlights - A District Playbook for AI Policy & Planning
The ECSI are hosting Pete Just for AI Policy & Planning on Friday October 31. This event is considered "hybrid," as participants will join a room of school staff from districts across each region to engage in activities and discussions guided by an on-site facilitator. Meanwhile, the presenter will participate virtually, sharing their expertise and leading coordinated activities with multiple locations across Indiana. This format provides access to high-quality presenters who might not otherwise be available in person. Click here for more details.

NEW FROM NEXTECH: District Computer Science Planning Workshops
Are you ready to create a computer science (CS) and AI implementation plan for your district? The SCRIPT (Strategic CSforALL Resource and Implementation Planning Tool) is a nationally-recognized workshop offered across the country to help districts prepare a custom strategic plan for K-12 CS and AI education in their district. Nextech is offering three day-long workshops in the fall — all virtual — so your team can intentionally meet and take dedicated time to approach CS and AI for your students. Learn more about the opportunity here. Contact Stephanie Zircher with any questions.

NEW FROM NEXTECH: CSforGood Competition
Challenge your students to help solve a problem in their community using computer science (CS) or AI! Working with a teacher sponsor, teams of students across three divisions: elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school, will submit a technology project - either an app, website, physical computing device or prototype - that they created to demonstrate how CS and AI can be used for good when applied to real problems that affect their schools and communities. Finalists from each division will be invited to the Indiana Statehouse to showcase their projects! Click here to learn more and register your intent to submit projects. Contact Sarah DeLong with any questions.

NEW FROM THE CENTRAL INDIANA EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER (CIESC): Early Childhood Convening
CIESC is excited to host the Early Childhood Convening on Thursday, October 23. This is an opportunity to join other leaders in a free day of learning focused on Indiana's earliest learners. Whether you lead an early learning program, shape policy, support educators, or advocate for families, this event is for you. Click here to register, as space is limited. Contact Jessica Martin with any questions.

NEW FROM INDIANA CONNECTED EDUCATORS: 2025 Beyond the Cape Conference
The full conference schedule for the 2025 Indiana Connected Educator Conference is now live! Registration remains open for any superhero who would like to attend on Tuesday, October 21, at Ivy Tech Community College Bloomington. Join educators from across the state as they engage with keynote, Makenzie Gilkison, speaker Matt Miller, and more! Coaches are welcome to join a day early to take part in the free Coach Con on Monday, October 20. Visit the conference website to register and for more information.

Weekly Updates

View previous weekly updates from Dr. Katie Jenner here.

Stay Informed

Did you miss a message? View previous weekly emails here.

Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update from the Indiana Department of Education is distributed every Friday morning.

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