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Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update

Weekly Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education

October 24, 2025

A Message from Dr. Katie Jenner

At this time last week, our team was putting the finishing touches on our state's federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility waiver request, which was [submitted](#) to the U.S. Department of Education late last Friday afternoon.

Since July, we have worked with Indiana stakeholders, including many of you, to gather feedback that ensures our waiver request reflects the perspectives of educators and parents across the state, and ultimately, provides the flexibility to keep driving forward for Indiana students!

In Indiana, we believe every child—regardless of their background, zip code, or circumstance—deserves an education that prepares them for a successful future and allows them to pursue their unique path.

We strive to spend every minute possible on actions directly serving that mission: it's about kids. This means not admiring the problem and instead focusing on data-informed solutions; this means measuring return on investment and being nimble enough to adjust our strategy as we learn more; and most importantly, this means ensuring we are laser-focused on improving *every school, every student, every day*. **All of this is possible because of your local leadership...thank YOU.**

Collectively, we have worked hard to remove barriers that get in the way of doing good work for students. With the opportunity to return education to the states, we have a great opportunity to further reduce burdensome compliance demands and empower you – our local leaders – in collaboration with parents/families to make informed decisions about what Indiana students need most.

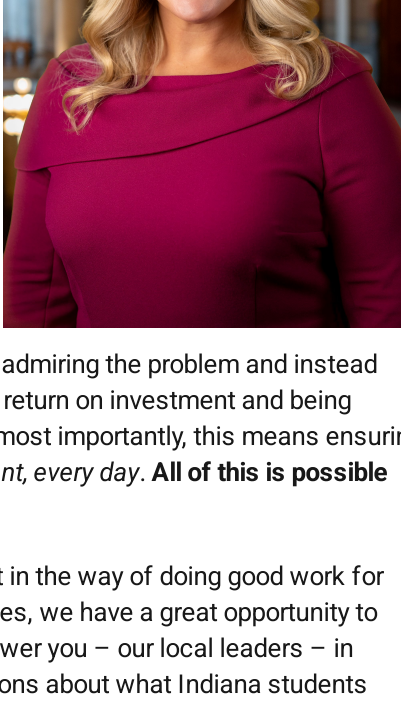
The goal of Indiana's request is simple: reduce unnecessary bureaucracy so schools can devote more time and resources to students.

Here's the goal of this waiver for Indiana educators and students:

- **Less Red Tape:** Streamlined federal reporting and compliance, giving local school corporations and schools more flexibility.
- **Smarter Accountability:** Understanding, improving accessibility, and leveraging data to drive better outcomes for our students.
- **Support for Vulnerable Students:** Resources and additional services focused on our most at-risk student populations.

It is an honor to be a part of the Indiana team with you. Together, we have proven over and over again that we are not going to admire the problem, and instead focus on solutions. This waiver will allow us additional flexibility to deploy locally-driven solutions faster, and ultimately, ensure better outcomes for Indiana students.

Thank you to each of you who have provided feedback and helped to finalize Indiana's waiver request. And as always, thank you for all that you do for students!



Office of Assessment

NEW: Indiana SAT Performance Level Descriptors

The Indiana SAT Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) for [English/Language Arts](#) and [Mathematics](#) are now available on the High School tab of the respective Indiana Assessment Framework ([English/Language Arts](#) | [Mathematics](#)). The PLDs provide information about the knowledge and skills students must demonstrate to achieve different performance levels on the SAT and directly relate those skills to Indiana Academic Standards. Contact the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) [Office of Student Assessment](#) with any questions.

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

NEW: Indiana Learns Enrollment

Beginning Monday, November 3, families can visit [IndianaLearns.org](#) to determine student eligibility and enroll in Indiana Learns – a statewide grant program that provides qualifying students with one-time \$1,000 grants for high-dosage math and reading tutoring. Families will need to enter a student's Student Test Number (STN) and date of birth to verify eligibility.

After enrolling, students can officially begin tutoring for the 2025–2026 program year on the following Monday, November 10.

At this time, to qualify for an Indiana Learns tutoring grant, a student must meet all of the following criteria:

- Student completed ILEARN testing and scored below proficiency in either Mathematics or English/Language Arts;
- Student resides in Indiana;
- Student is enrolled in and is attending a CSI, TSI or ATSI-designated school as a third through eighth grade student; and
- Student qualifies for the federal free or reduced lunch program.

For more information or assistance, families can visit [IndianaLearns.org](#) or contact info@indianalearns.org.

NEW: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidance Update

[Indiana's AI Guidance](#) has been updated to include key considerations related to AI policy and additional links available in the Indiana Learning Lab. It is designed to be easy to unpack, encourage conversation about each of the key topics, and share resources for further learning. Future resources and professional development will continue to be released to build on this document. Contact IDOE's [Digital Learning Team](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: 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.

REMINDER: 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 11:45 p.m. ET on Friday, October 24. Contact the [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

Office of Educator Talent and the Literacy Center

NEW: Continuum of Support

Pursuant to [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#) and [IC 20-32-5.1-20](#), IDOE developed the following [guidance](#) to help schools support students who are at risk of not being proficient in reading. This guidance focuses on using data and instruction to meet students' literacy needs. Access the [IDOE Instructional Frameworks](#), available in the Indiana Learning Lab, to learn more information regarding how the Indiana Academic Standards fit within this framework. Contact IDOE's [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

NEW: Webinar to Support Preferred Universal Screener Acadience Reading

Acadience Learning, Inc. will hold a webinar on Wednesday, November 5, at 10:30 A.M. ET. This session is designed to support your understanding of the data views in Acadience Learning Online (ALO). Participants will be guided through on how to navigate their current benchmark results in ALO, helping them move from raw data to actionable understanding. Click [here](#) to join. 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 IDOE's [Office of Educator Talent](#) with any questions.

Office of School Finance

REMINDER: Common School Loans

IDOE's Office of School Finance is now accepting applications for construction and technology common school loans from corporations, charter schools, and school corporation career and technical education schools through Friday, November 21. The application and details can be found in the [Public School Finance Community in Moodle](#) under Common School Funds – Fall. Contact IDOE's [Office of School Finance](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: 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.

REMINDER: 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.

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: Virtual English Learner (EL) Leadership Meeting Date Changed to Thursday, December 4

IDOE's Office of English Learning and Migrant Education will host the next virtual EL Leadership Meeting – previously scheduled for Thursday, November 6 – on Thursday, December 4, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. ET. This meeting is intended for Indiana K-12 EL leaders and administrators and will consist of updates and interaction on timely EL topics. Registration is not required. Visit the [Indiana EL Professional Development Opportunities Calendar](#) for the meeting link. Contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Migrant Education](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: In-Person WIDA Workshop - Instructional Planning for the Bilingual Classroom

WIDA will be facilitating an in-person, all-day workshop on Thursday, November 20, at MSD Warren Township. This free, interactive workshop is designed for Spanish bilingual education or dual language teachers and will focus on instructional planning that will elevate the assets of their multilingual learners. This session will be delivered primarily in Spanish. Registration is required via [Joinform](#) by Friday, October 31. Space is limited, and LEAs may send three participants. Contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Migrant Education](#) with any questions.

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 paid to the LEA 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

REMINDER: 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 period of allowability has 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: Federal Government Shutdown

IDOE will continue the normal operations of programs funded by federal grants, as the majority of IDOE's federal funding is already authorized for the 2025-2026 school year. If the shutdown lasts for an extended period, IDOE will re-evaluate the situation, along with our state-level partners, and will notify schools accordingly.

Indiana Commission for Higher Education

REMINDER: Industry Certification Reimbursement

Schools will soon receive reimbursement payments for industry certification exams taken during the 2024-2025 school year. Eligible entities (school corporations, charter schools, and accredited nonpublic schools) can find the amount they are slated to receive [here](#). As [previously](#), Indiana Commission for Higher Education's CTE team prior to Friday, September 5.

Funds will be distributed by CHE with the following subject line – "FY 2024-2025 Industry Cert Reimbursement." Schools that receive this funding will utilize Fund 3749 with the receipt account number of 3293. There are no specific restrictions on the usage of the funds.

In addition to finding total reimbursement amounts in the document linked above, high schools or CTE districts can also run a report in [IntERS](#) showing all certifications reported by their school or district for reimbursement and the reimbursement rate for each eligible certification. Instructions to run that report can be found [here](#). Questions regarding the industry certification reimbursement process can be shared with CTE@che.in.gov.

Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

NEW: Strategies to Support Students who are Blind or Low Vision with Homework

Join the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ISBVI) Family Engagement Team for their next virtual session focused on strategies to make homework time less stressful and more successful! This session will take place on Wednesday, November 12, from 6 to 7 [p.m. ET](#). Educators and families will explore practical strategies that can be used to:

- Encourage independence and self-advocacy during homework time;
- Create accessible routines and study spaces;
- Integrate ECC skills like organization, assistive technology, and time management into daily tasks; and
- Strengthen home-school collaboration around homework expectations.

Click [here](#) to register.

News From Our Partners

NEW FROM THE NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION: Researching School Cell Phone Policies

On behalf of the National Governors Association, Dr. Angela Duckworth (author of Grit) is asking Indiana educators to join a landmark study on school cell phone policies. Share what you think is the best way to handle student cell phones! This brief survey will take less than five minutes and is completely confidential. Educators will be entered to win one of 10 \$500 gift cards for participating. Make your voice heard and complete the survey today by clicking [here](#).

REMINDER: AP-TIP Annual Online Fall Conference Scheduled for the Week of October 27

This year's event will focus on *The Art & Science of Engagement*. Jennifer Fredricks, PhD will present the keynote session on Monday, October 27, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. ET.

Content sessions run from Tuesday, October 28 through Thursday, October 30, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET, with one hour for lunch.

- English: Tuesday, October 28
- Math: Wednesday, October 29
- Science: Thursday, October 30

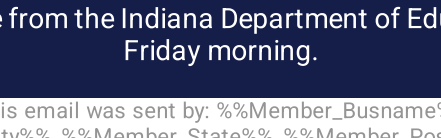
Download the [2025 Fall Conference Book](#) to view schedules and session descriptions, and [register online](#). Contact [Stephanie Kuscera](#) with any questions.

REMINDER FROM IVY TECH: Accelerate Your School's IT Success

Booster 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 a clear and concise 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 FROM PROJECT LEAD THE WAY: Demystifying AI in Education - Professional Learning Opportunity

Project Lead The Way (PLTW) has developed an immersive training experience to empower educators with the knowledge and skills to harness generative AI in the classroom. Facilitated by PLTW Master Teachers (virtually or in-person), these hands-on sessions provide a unique opportunity to explore cutting-edge tools and engage in meaningful discourse about the benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations of AI in the classroom. Generous support from donors currently allows PLTW to cover registration costs for several Indiana district cohorts. If you are interested in this opportunity to bring AI training to your teachers at no cost, contact [Britt Fennessy](#).



Weekly Updates

View previous weekly updates from Dr. Katie Jenner [here](#).

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