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INDIANA
DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION

Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update

Weekly Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education

April 18, 2025

A Message from Dr. Katie Jenner

It was another busy week in Indiana…Title Con brought together several hundred educators to learn and work together to improve student outcomes, ILEARN assessment windows are currently open, and with so many spring events, it is absolutely starting to feel like the end of the school year is upon us with schedules picking up!

Today is a day where some schools are in session…and others may not see this message until Monday because you are off today! Looking across our state, we have students, families, and fellow educators who pause during this time to celebrate a variety of cultural and religious moments. To name a few, our Jewish friends are nearing the end of Passover, and our Christian friends celebrate Easter.

This is a weekend that my family often slows down a bit and gathers together in celebration of Easter. Quite a few of my family members come to my home in Madison, Indiana, where we will have relatives (and friends) in and out of the house all weekend, as well as at least five to seven dogs (I know…it's a lot…we're a dog family). Everyone pitches in and brings their favorite dish, we dye Easter eggs (yes, even with my 15-year-old twins…and 98 year old grandma), we go to church on Sunday, and throughout the weekend we talk and talk…and tell the same stories as in the past (occasionally some new, funny ones too!). I'm thankful for this time.

The time we have on this Earth is limited and precious – it seems like when we want time to slow down, it flies by that much faster…like watching our kids grow up or those moments when you just need a solid hour of peace and quiet! And, when we want time to speed up…like during a time of stress or on a Friday afternoon waiting for that seventh period bell to ring, it goes by sooooo slowly. There's a quote that goes, "There's never enough time to do everything, but there's always enough time to do the most important thing."

Regardless of whether you celebrate this weekend with religious services, a Reese's cup egg (I love those things), or have no plans at all…I hope you make the most of your time. Relax, recharge, spend time with family, or spend time doing something you enjoy. Take the time. Enjoy your weekend, so we'll be ready to get after it again next week.

Thanks for ALL you do for students.

Office of Accountability

REMINDER: School and Corporation Profile Amendment Window

The school and corporation profile amendment submission window for the 2025-2026 school year is open until Sunday, August 31. In order to ensure the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) maintains accurate information, all schools and school corporations must provide notice when changes are made that affect school openings, closures, and reconfigurations. Information on the submission process can be found here. Contact IDOE's Office of School Accountability with any questions.

Office of Assessment

REMINDER: ILEARN ELA Performance Task Student Writing Samples

IDOE collaborated with a sample of school corporations to collect student responses for the new ELA Performance Tasks. These student responses have been scored using the new ELA Writing Rubrics and are available to view here. IDOE will continue to build out this repository across grades and genres as new released items become available. Contact IDOE's Office of Student Assessment with any questions.

REMINDER: IREAD Office Hours

Join members of the Literacy Center, Office of Student Assessment, and Office of Special Education on Wednesday, April 23, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. ET to review legislation and commonly asked questions regarding IREAD testing, Good Cause Exemptions (GCEs), and summer school. This session will not include the responsibilities discussed during Q&A sessions specifically designed for Corporation Test Coordinators. Contact IDOE's Office of Student Assessment with any questions.

REMINDER: ILEARN 3-8, ILEARN Biology End-of-Course Assessment (ECA), & ILEARN U.S. Government ECA Spring 2025 Testing Windows Now Open

The ILEARN 3-8 Spring 2025 online testing window is now open through Friday, May 9. The ILEARN Biology and U.S. Government ECA Spring 2025 online testing window is Monday, April 15, through Friday, May 17. Paper-and-pencil testing windows close one week prior to the close of the online testing windows. As a reminder, participation in the ILEARN U.S. Government ECA is optional for students who have completed the high school U.S. government course and is only offered online. Students are required to participate in the ILEARN Biology ECA once upon completion of the high school biology course. View participation guidance here. Refer to the ILEARN 2024-2025 Milestones and ILEARN Biology ECA Test Window Checklist for an overview of deadlines. Contact IDOE's Office of Student Assessment with any questions.

Office of Educator Talent & Literacy Center

REMINDER: 2025-2026 Annual K-8 School Reading Plan

Indiana Code (IC) 20-32-8.5 and 511 Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) 6.2-3.1 require schools with students enrolled in kindergarten through grade eight to submit an annual reading plan to IDOE by Monday, June 30. IDOE's Literacy Center released the 2025 annual reading plan guidance. Contact IDOE's Literacy Center with additional questions.

REMINDER: Keys to Literacy Completion

Educators have until Monday, June 30, to complete all asynchronous coursework through Keys to Literacy to maintain stipend eligibility. For help accessing your course, please see this PDF of directions and FAQs for Teachable. Contact Keys to Literacy with any questions regarding your online course. If you have not yet enrolled in a Keys to Literacy course, you have until Thursday, May 15, to register in order to complete by Monday, June 30, and maintain stipend eligibility. Click here to register. Additionally if you have requested a Praxis voucher, the testing date can fall after June 30, 2025, but educators must schedule their exam by Monday, June 30. Contact IDOE's Literacy Center with questions.

REMINDER: Nominations Now Open for the 2026 RISE Classified Staff Award

Districts, charters, and non-public schools across the state are encouraged to nominate up to two classified school employees for the Recognizing Inspiring School Employees (RISE) Award. The RISE Award honors and promotes the excellence exhibited by classified school employees who provide exemplary service to students in pre-kindergarten through high school. The deadline to submit nominations is Monday, July 7, at 5 p.m. ET. Nominations can be submitted via JotForm. Contact IDOE's Office of Educator Talent with any questions.

REMINDER: 2026 Teacher of the Year Application is Now Available

The Indiana Teacher of the Year Program works to inspire, rejuvenate, and celebrate the teaching profession by recognizing outstanding teachers from across the state. Local schools are encouraged to participate in an annual selection process and local Teacher(s) of the Year are encouraged to complete the state application process by Monday, July 7. More Information on the 2026 Indiana Teacher of the Year selection process can be found here. For more information contact intoy@doe.in.gov.

REMINDER: Applications for Spanish Visiting Teacher Program

Details for the SY 2025-2026 Spanish Visiting Teacher Program can be found here, or to learn more about the responsibilities of being a host school please click here. If you were unable to attend the informational webinar you can view the recording here. Districts can express interest by completing the application form here. Contact IDOE's Office of Educator Talent with any questions.

REMINDER: Nominations Open for the Indiana History Teacher of the Year Award

In partnership with IDOE, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History awards the Indiana History Teacher of the Year title each year in its effort to promote the study and love of American history. State winners are then considered for the National History Teacher of the Year award. For more information about the nomination process and to nominate an Indiana history teacher, click here. Nominations must be submitted by Wednesday, April 30. Contact IDOE's Office of Educator Talent with any questions.

REMINDER: Early Literacy Endorsement Professional Development (PD) & Praxis Voucher Request

Educators who hold an Indiana professional educator license can register here for the flexible Keys to Literacy options. Educators planning to earn Indiana's Early Literacy Endorsement can follow the process outlined here to submit a request to verify completion of the approved 80 hours and request a Praxis voucher, if needed. Contact IDOE's Literacy Center with questions.

REMINDER: Additional Opportunities to Recognize Indiana Educators

Throughout the year, numerous opportunities arise nationwide to acknowledge the incredible work of Indiana educators. IDOE's Office of Educator Talent has developed this document which will be updated periodically with external opportunities to recognize educators. To submit an educator recognition opportunity not listed, contact IDOE's Office of Educator Talent.

Office of Information Technology

REMINDER: 2025 School Tech Plan Survey Closes Today, Friday, April 18

The 2025 School Tech Plan Survey closes today, Friday, April 18. Completion of this survey is a requirement for all public schools to qualify for the connectivity formula grant, the common school fund, and grants from IDOE's Office of Academics. While not required, non-public schools are encouraged to complete the survey to help other schools identify best practices. The survey can be completed here. Previous year public data may be found in the Digital Readiness Dashboard or through EdData. Contact Brad Hagg with any questions.

Office of School Finance

NEW: School Fees Dashboard Now Available

Pursuant to IC 20-40-22-8(d), the school fees dashboard for the 2024-2025 school year is now available. This School Fees Dashboard was released in embargoed form earlier this year and revised based on feedback from schools. The intent of the dashboard is to allow families to see fees charged to families by school and to allow comparisons across schools. Per the legislation, schools were required to report this data in order to receive reimbursement for curricular materials. Contact IDOE's Office of School Finance with any questions.

Office of School Support and Transformation

REMINDER: Request for Information (RFI) for Next Generation School Improvement Grant (Next Gen SIG) Prioritized Expert Partners Now Open

IDOE's Office of School Support and Transformation is now accepting applications for Prioritized Expert Partners for Next Gen SIG. IDOE seeks prioritized expert partners that demonstrate a strong commitment to a transformative vision for the schools in the Next Gen SIG program. These partners will have a theory of change that prioritized rigorous analysis, partnership, and commitment to systemic reform over one-size-fits-all or pre-planned interventions and/or solutions. Interested applicants can find the application and other pertinent information about this opportunity on the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA) Current Business Opportunities page. Contact KMarch@idoa.IN.gov with any questions.

REMINDER: Next Gen SIG Now Open

Next Gen SIG is a competitive grant for school transformation. Eligibility for this grant extends to all schools currently identified as Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) under Indiana's ESSA Plan. Interested school officials can read more about the grant program in the Next Gen SIG memo. A list of eligible schools can be found here. IDOE's Office of School Support and Transformation will be accepting applications through Friday, May 30, with finalists announced mid-summer. A PDF version of the application can be found here. The scoring rubric for the application can be found here. The online application can be found here. Contact IDOE's Office of School Support and Transformation with any questions.

REMINDER: Annual 1003 Flexibility Waivers

IDOE's Office of School Support and Transformation is now accepting applications for 1003 Flexibility Waivers. Flexibility through waivers is offered to help support schools in their design efforts to improve student performance and outcomes, improve the efficiency of school operations, and promote innovative educational approaches to student learning. Interested officials can read more about the opportunity in the memo and the Flexibility Guide for Indiana's K-12 Schools. Applications are now open and will be accepted on a rolling basis through Friday, April 25. Contact Georgia Watson with any questions.

Office of Student Pathways and Opportunities

REMINDER: New Indiana Diploma Implementation Support, Final Course Eligibility

As Indiana transitions to the **new high school diploma**, IDOE has developed this guidance on eligible courses to support planning for the 2025-2026 school year. Contact IDOE's Office of Student Pathways and Opportunities with any questions.

REMINDER: 2025-2026 Locally Created Pathway Applications Now Open

Schools may apply to develop Locally Created Pathways (LCPs) and related assessments for students to demonstrate college- and career-readiness. These LCPs augment the current list of Postsecondary-Ready Competencies already included in the established policy. Any districts seeking to submit an application for a new LCP beginning in the 2025-2026 school year should review the application process document, its rubric and scoring guide, as well as the approved current LCP list. Review the resource below:

- New LCP Application
- LCP Application Rubric & Scoring Sheet
- Approved LCPs
- Adopting LCPs Guidance
- Adopting an Approved LCP Notification Form
- LCP Informational Webinar

Applications close on Wednesday, April 30. Contact IDOE's Office of Student Pathways with additional questions.

Office of Special Education, English Learning, and Migrant Education

NEW: Ombudsman Office Hours

IDOE's Equitable Services Ombudsman will host an office hours session for staff that support IDEA Part B proportionate share equitable services to non-public schools. The session will share best practices with initial and ongoing consultation requirements for LEAs. Please join us on Microsoft Teams during one of the scheduled sessions. The session will be offered twice; however, the content will be the same so LEAs only need to participate in one session.

- Monday, April 28, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. ET
- Monday, May 5, from 9 to 10 a.m. ET

Contact ombudsman@doe.in.gov with any questions.

NEW: Early Childhood Community of Practice

Based on Early Childhood Special Education Collaborative suggestions for field collaboration opportunities, the Office of Special Education is hosting its first virtual, quarterly Community of Practice for early childhood on Tuesday, April 29, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET. Subsequent meetings will be held in September, January, and April each year with a less-structured summer session each July. Use this link to join the April session. Contact IDOE's Office of Special Education with any questions.

UPDATE: English Learner (EL) Exit Criteria Training on Thursday, April 24

IDOE's EL team will host a training on the process to exit eligible students from EL status through an additional evidence review on Thursday, April 24, from 3 to 4:30 E.T. The training will occur alongside the release of updated guidance, which will feature the review process for students taking Alternate ACCESS and include other key updates for students taking standard ACCESS. The meeting link can be found on the Indiana EL Professional Development Calendar. Contact IDOE's Office of English Learning and Migrant Education with questions.

REMINDER: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Annual State Application

All states applying for funding under IDEA Part B are required to allow public review and comment on the application and proposed budget. The application, developed by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) includes a summary of assurances, certifications, and fund usage descriptions that Indiana will use to fulfill IDEA Part B requirements. Access the application on IDOE's Special Education webpage for review, and feedback may be submitted as a Public Comment for Part B through Monday, April 21. Upon OSEP's approval of Indiana's Part B application, the state will receive a federal grant award to implement necessary services for students with disabilities from July 1, 2025, through September 30, 2027. Contact IDOE's Office of Special Education Part B team with any questions.

Office of Teaching and Learning, Digital Learning, and Kindergarten Readiness

NEW: 2025 2026 K-12 Robotics Competition Grant Application

The 2025-2026 K-12 Robotics Competition Grant is designed to support state-accredited schools and other eligible organizations in establishing or maintaining robotics competition programs to expand opportunities to increase interest and improve skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) through participation in competitive robotics programs. Interested applicants are encouraged to apply HERE. Please note that all 2025 2026 K-12 Robotics Competition Grant Applications are due by 11:45 p.m. on Friday, May 16, 2025. A virtual information session was held on Tuesday, April 15 to explain the grant and application process. Please view these slides from that meeting for more information. Contact TLgrants@doe.in.gov with any questions.

NEW: Corporation and Building Leadership - Artificial Intelligence (AI) Professional Development (PD)

Corporation and building leadership are invited to join Dr. Sabba Quidwai for two sessions about AI in education in the Indiana Learning Lab. Join Foresight and Foundations: Designing the Future of Education with AI on Tuesday, May 6, at 10 a.m. ET and From Tools to Teammates: Redesigning Education with AI and Human Collaboration on Tuesday, May 13, at 10 a.m. ET. Register to attend here. Contact IDOE's Office of Digital Learning with any questions.

UPDATED: Digital Learning Grant and Digital Intervention Training & Implementation Grant

Two grant opportunities are now available and accepting applications until Friday, May 16: the 2025 Digital Learning Grant and the Indiana Digital Intervention Training and Implementation Grant. More information on both competitive grants can be found on the respective memos. The recording for the grant information session can be found here. Contact IDOE's Office of Digital Learning with any questions.

Office of Title Grants and Support

REMINDER: ESSER Data Collection

On Tuesday, April 8, the U.S. Department of Education shared this notice with state education agencies regarding data collection for ESSER, GEER, and EANS. Please contact Frank Chiki with any questions.

Indiana Commission for Higher Education

NEW: Shoals High School Named a 2024 School of Excellence

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education selected Shoals High School as Indiana's American College Application Campaign (ACAC) School of Excellence Award winner. Indiana joins 25 other states in celebrating exemplary schools dedicated to increasing postsecondary success, specifically for students from low-income backgrounds.

Awardees are selected based on their participation in their state's college application campaign. Shoals' Junior and Senior High Schools' student body of 690 participated in Indiana's College GO! week. The school's 45-student senior class combined to fill out 85 college applications during the campaign. In addition, students from Shoals elementary, middle, and high schools participated in activities each day and received information about 529 Savings Plans for their parents. Read the press release here.

News From Our Partners

NEW FROM THE INDIANA SUPREME COURT: Constitution Day

Judicial officers are available to speak in classrooms on or around Wednesday, September 17, in celebration of Constitution Day. Consider reaching out to a judge from the Judicial Speakers Bureau now to make preliminary plans for the fall.

NEW from KEEP INDIANA LEARNING: Teacher Evaluation Virtual Training & RISE Certification

Effective teacher evaluations play a critical role in both recognizing and retaining educators. Join this virtual training session where we will explore the RISE rubric and learn to deliver constructive feedback designed to foster professional growth. This training will provide practical strategies for conducting classroom observations and establishing meaningful goal-setting processes. Learn more and register. Please contact Keep Indiana Learning with questions.

REMINDER FROM THE OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR TODD YOUNG: Virtual Academy Day

Each year, members of Congress have the privilege of recommending a select group of individuals for admission to the U.S. service academies. Senator Young is honored to nominate a number of highly-qualified young men and women to the nation's service academies. On Monday, April 28, Senator Young will host a virtual academy day from 6:30 to 8 p.m. ET. This information session is planned for students interested in learning more about America's service academies. Representatives from each academy will be available to answer questions. While attendance is certainly not required to obtain a nomination, representatives present at Academy Day can help answer specific questions potential applicants may have about a particular academy or the congressional nominations process. To RSVP, contact Academy_Nominations@young.senate.gov.

REMINDER FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF INDIANA: Bringing Calumet Youth Outdoors - Outdoor Learning Professional Development

No matter what subject you teach or where your school is located, there are ways to incorporate outdoor education into your curriculum - and amazing benefits to doing so. On Saturday, May 10, the Environmental Education Associations of Indiana and Illinois are teaming up to bring this outdoor learning professional development event to Calumet educators, administrators and support staff. Participants will explore strategies for incorporating environmental and outdoor education into their students' learning experience regardless of green space access and will receive hands-on training in sample lessons from Project WET, Project WILD and Project Learning Tree. Professional Growth Plan (PGP) points will be available to participating educators.

REMINDER FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF INDIANA: Choose Your Own EE Adventure - A Day of Place-Based Learning

The Environmental Education Association of Indiana is partnering with Riverside Intermediate School to bring a unique professional development experience to central Indiana on Saturday, April 26. Choose Your Own EE Adventure: A Day of Place-Based Learning will give participants the opportunity to tour Riverside Intermediate's property and extensive outdoor education spaces, meeting with teachers, students, and program partners along the way. Participants will also have the chance to attend sessions on a variety of topics throughout the day, designed to equip educators to implement more outdoor, environmental education, and place-based learning activities. Lunch is provided and PGP points will be available for participating educators.

REMINDER FROM THE ASVAB CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM (CEP): 2024-2025 National Financial Literacy Month

Future planning starts today! Help students build financial literacy and set goals for success. ASVAB focuses on financial literacy, goal setting and ASVAB CEP resources. More information can be found here.

REMINDER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA: QUANTITATIVE REASONING CONFERENCE

The University of Southern Indiana's Mathematical Sciences Department will host its annual Quantitative Reasoning Conference on Tuesday, June 17, through Wednesday, June 18, on the USI campus in Evansville. This conference is intended for Indiana public high school teachers who offer a Quantitative Reasoning course, are planning to offer it in the future, or want to learn more about teaching Quantitative Reasoning. Participating teachers will receive a $240 stipend to attend and hotel accommodations will be provided for two nights for individuals who live more than 60 miles from Evansville. Applications must be received by Friday, May 2. Find more information and register here. The conference is sponsored by a grant from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education's STEM Teacher Recruitment Fund.

REMINDER FROM AP-TIP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME: 2025 Summer Institute

AP-TIP's 2025 Summer Institute for AP and dual credit educators will be held on Tuesday, July 8, through Friday, July 11, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET at Pike High School in Indianapolis. Participants will engage in conference-style training designed to strengthen instructional practice. AP teachers meet College Board requirements for training during the four-day Summer Institute. Dual credit teachers are invited to join the Summer Institute on Wednesday, July 9, and Thursday, July 10, for a variety of conference sessions that emphasize shared approaches for engaging and challenging all students of advanced coursework. Register for the Summer Institute here.

REMINDER FROM THE LILLY ENDOWMENT: Renewal Grants for Indiana K-12 Educators

The Lilly Endowment is accepting applications for its Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program. This program supports educators throughout Indiana by providing resources for them to take time for meaningful renewal. The Endowment believes that through new experiences, exploration, and reflection educators can generate renewed energy in their careers, innovative approaches to teaching and educational leadership, and thoughtful ways to encourage students' creative thinking. The Endowment expects to award approximately 125 grants, each totaling up to $15,000, in 2026. The application deadline is 6 p.m. ET on Monday, September 8. Four information sessions will be held in 2025:

- Thursday, April 24,
- Thursday, August 7, and
- Tuesday, August 19.

To learn more or register for one of these sessions, visit the Lilly Endowment website. Contact Lilly Endowment staff at teachercreativity@lei.org with any questions.

REMINDER FROM TEACH INDY: Indy Ignite Volleyball Teacher Appreciation Night

Join Indy Ignite and Teach Indy as we make history with Indiana's first pro women's volleyball team! We want to say thank you to teachers for all you do for students—celebrate with us at Teacher Appreciation Night on Friday, April 25, at 7 p.m. at the Fishers Event Center. Grab your discounted tickets now and be part of the excitement! Purchase Tickets here. If you are a school leader or community partner interested in bringing a group of 10 or more to this event, contact Marie Butler.

Weekly Updates

View previous weekly updates from Dr. Katie Jenner here.

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

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