



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

January 28, 2026

This monthly newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) Office of Special Education (OSE) includes resources, guidance, and support for special education directors, educators, and administrators who provide essential services that Indiana's students with disabilities need to learn and thrive.

Data

Special Education Data Certification Wrap Up

The December 1, 2025, data certification for special education was successfully concluded on Friday, January 9. Our final certification percentage was 99.6% of schools signing off on their data. This is likely the highest percentage sign-off of any collection since the launch of Data Exchange in 2020. Thanks to all who invested so much time in learning the nuances of the new system integration with PowerSchool Special Programs. We are working with PowerSchool on a list of improvements and are also examining our Data Exchange processes so we can keep improving the efficiency of our data certification process. The next count day for special education is Wednesday, April 1.

Fiscal

Proportionate Share/CEIS/CCEIS Monitoring Reports

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B FY24-FY26 proportionate share/CEIS/CCEIS semi-annual monitoring reports for the period July 1 through December 31, 2025, are due on Friday, January 30. The monitoring reports can be found in the [Office of Special Education Community Moodle](#). Submit the completed workbook and signed PDF to the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) [Office of Special Education Part B grants team](#) and contact your fiscal specialist with additional questions.

IDOE Special Programs

2026 IDOE Special Programs Training

An updated Special Programs Academy course is now available for new hires. The [Training Assistance Request Form](#) must be used to enroll new hires in this course. All users certified in 2025 have been automatically enrolled in the Beyond Certification course, which includes updated training materials.

- Note: Schoology account holders who did not complete their training by December 31, 2025, were deactivated.

National Special Programs PowerUp Event

Join the upcoming Special Programs webinar, hosted by PowerSchool, to learn how to streamline workflows, ensure compliance, and save time with powerful features like:

- Progress Monitoring,
- Accommodations Reporting,
- Communication Tools,
- My Student Table data,
- File-Based Documents,
- Audit & Event Logs,
- Related Services Data Monitoring,
- And more!

The next webinar will take place on Tuesday, February 10, at 1 p.m. ET. Click [here](#) to register.

Technical Assistance and Professional Development

Educational Benefit Review Pilot Grant Opportunity

IDOE's Office of Special Education is inviting 15 local educational agencies (LEAs) and charter schools to participate in [piloting an Educational Benefit Review \(EBR\) process](#) through a new grant opportunity. Total grant awards will range from \$5,000 to \$25,000. An EBR is a structured process for evaluating whether an IEP is reasonably calculated to provide educational benefits to a student with a disability. This involves examining past and present IEPs (usually three years) to determine if the student is making appropriate progress and if the IEP is being adjusted correctly to meet changing needs. This grant provides funding for substitute teachers, travel, and associated costs that enable training of the LEA's EBR team. Apply for the Educational Benefit Review Pilot Grant [here](#). Please contact EBRPilotgrant@doe.in.gov with questions.

2026 Special Education Director Outreach Opportunities

The IDOE Office of Special Education (OSE) is offering multiple support opportunities for Indiana special education directors and administrators in 2026. Join the February sessions to learn more about Statewide Assessment Accommodations and Accountability. The Tuesday, February 24, Lead and Listen session will also share updates regarding the federal 1% cap on alternate assessments.

- 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. Updates regarding the federal 1% cap on alternate assessments will also be shared in February.
- [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.

2026 Special Education Teacher Workshop Series

IDOE's Office of Special Education, Technical Assistance (TA) team is providing a series of free webinars for new special education teachers, or those looking for a refresher, once a month in the Indiana Learning Lab. These trainings will cover a variety of special education-related topics and will also provide an opportunity for teachers of record (TORs) to ask questions. The next live webinar will be held on Tuesday, February 10, from noon to 1 p.m. ET, and will focus on specially designed instruction. In March, we will focus on manifestation determination meetings. Can't make the live session? All webinars will be recorded and uploaded into the Learning Lab to watch at your convenience. To watch recorded sessions or register to attend live, click [here](#). Contact IDOE's [Office of Special Education](#) with any questions.

Special Education, Licensure, Recruitment, and Recognition

New and Improved Statewide Educator Job Board Now LIVE

IDOE is excited to announce an improved [statewide educator job board](#) hosted by [Nimble](#). These improvements are designed to make it even easier for teachers to discover Indiana teaching jobs and for districts to get in front of more applicants.

With the improved job board, teachers can:

- Browse statewide teaching vacancies all in one place
- Use advanced search filters to find roles aligned with their preferences
- View key information upfront, including salary schedules and commute times
- Connect directly with principals for real conversations
- Receive personalized recommendations for schools that align with their values, strengths, and needs
- Create one Nimble profile to easily apply to schools statewide

Stay tuned for additional improvements, including a new teacher job matching app. Both the job board and the matching service are completely free for Indiana teachers and districts. Teachers can sign up by following [this link](#). Indiana districts not yet participating can [click here](#) to learn more about this free recruitment and hiring resource brought to you by IDOE and Nimble.

Additional Updates, Resources, and Opportunities

Joy Zabala Fellowship Applications Open Wednesday, January 28

The Joy Zabala Fellowship in Assistive Technology (AT) and Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) will be accepting applications for the 2026-2027 cohort of Zabala Fellows. This will be the fifth class of Zabala Fellows.

Mentees (identified as emerging practitioners) will be paired with experienced practitioners for a mentoring relationship lasting one academic year. There is a two-phase application process. In phase one, prospective mentees and mentors complete an initial application process. Through a blind screening process, prospective partnerships are formed and are invited to submit a collaboratively developed workplan in phase two, focusing on goals for the year. Mentors will receive a \$1,000 stipend in recognition of their commitment to their mentee. Mentees will have access to up to \$1,500 to complete activities in their workplan. The application window for 2026 extends through Friday, April 10. Notifications to those invited to move to phase two are anticipated for early May, and accepted mentoring partners will be notified in June. The program year will be from August 2026 through June 2027.

- [Mentee application](#) for 2026-2027
- [Mentor application](#) for 2026-2027

For more information, visit <https://joyzabala.com>, or email joyzabalafellowshipforms@gmail.com.

Special Education Parent Advisory Councils (SEPACs) Updated Guidelines

The Center for Parent Information and Resources has updated guidelines for SEPACs - [Advocacy in Action: A Guide to Local Special Education Parent Advisory Councils](#). This guide draws on experience and practice from states in which local SEPACs have been in operation for decades to offer a road map to help bring stakeholders together, suggest strategies to help them engage in dialogue, and discuss best practices to help them work together to benefit the local community.

National Center on Accessible Digital Educational Materials and Instruction (NCADEMI) Learning Opportunities

Digital accessibility of educational materials for students with disabilities is a shared priority, and with the first conformance deadline for the updated [ADA Title II requirements](#) coming up this April, digital accessibility is no longer optional.

The National Center on Accessible Digital Educational Materials & Instruction (NCADEMI, pronounced "N-cademy") is funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Programs to help state and local teams improve the digital accessibility of educational materials provided in schools.

NCADEMI has built a practical, evidence-based pathway to build capacity for digital accessibility. Through their free, interactive, virtual series, [Powering Digital Accessibility through Systemic Action](#), teams learn how to implement the Quality Indicators for the Provision and Use of Accessible Materials in PreK-12 Systems. A readiness protocol helps teams understand their starting point, and self-assessment tools guide goal-setting and continuous improvement over time.

While the series is universally available for independent use, NCADEMI is launching a free virtual Professional Learning Group (PLG) for state and local education teams seeking targeted technical assistance. The PLG provides structure, expert guidance, and shared accountability to help teams make sustained progress. Learn more about the PLG [here](#).

NCADEMI is also continually releasing new resources and learning opportunities for improving digital accessibility in PreK-12 education. [Subscribe to the NCADEMI Newsletter](#) to stay updated.

Indiana Council for Exceptional Children (INCEC) Spring Conference and Awards

Registration is now open for the INCEC Spring Conference: Beyond Barriers—Educating Exceptional Children, on Tuesday, February 17, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Monroe Convention Center in Bloomington. This full day of learning and connection features expert speakers and strands focused on instruction and curriculum access, collaboration and engagement, life skills, and more. Registration is available at [indiana.exceptionalchildren.org](#). This conference will also honor outstanding leaders, advocates, and students making a difference in special education. Click [here](#) to learn more about the 2026 INCEC Awards categories and to nominate someone today. Nominations are due by Friday, January 30. Questions about the conference can be directed to in.cec.edu@gmail.com. Questions about the awards can be directed to Meghan Highfield at meghan.highfield@wayne.k12.in.us.

Blumberg Center Update

The Blumberg Center at Indiana State University offers resources, professional learning, and technical assistance on a fee-for-service basis. Join us for the following trainings offered at the White Oak Professional Development Center in Avon, Indiana:

- Wednesday, January 28 – Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans
- Wednesday, February 25 – Writing Skill-Based Goals and Progress Monitoring
- Thursday, February 26 – Explicit Instruction: Clarity, Structure & Success

For more information and to register for the sessions above, view the [Training Booklet](#).

In addition to face-to-face training opportunities, the Blumberg Center is offering a virtual series via Zoom. The topics and kick-off dates are listed below:

- Tuesday, February 10 – Explicit Instruction Series
- Thursday, February 19 – Essentials for New Teachers Series

For details on each session and to register, view the series flyers – [Explicit Instruction](#) and [Essentials for New Teachers](#).

To discuss additional opportunities for technical assistance to best support the specific needs of your school or district, complete a [Service Request form](#), and a TA Specialist will contact you directly.

Hands in Autism Trainings

Hands in Autism® provides comprehensive, evidence-based training and resources designed for all staff to better support individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and related developmental disabilities. Trainings blend instruction, hands-on practice, coaching, and feedback grounded in research and best practices. Topics include practical strategies for assessment, behavior support, functional programming, classroom and community implementation, and individualized skill-building. These all-hands sessions help build shared understanding, inclusive practices, and enhanced confidence across teams working with diverse learners in educational, clinical, and community settings. Learn more about upcoming opportunities [here](#). For more information, contact hands@iu.edu.

Sharing: Sign up for this OSE Newsletter

This is the IDOE Office of Special Education (OSE) monthly newsletter intended for school, district, co-op, and interlocal staff whose role necessitates receiving detailed information about special education monitoring, finance, data, etc. The OSE Newsletter is distributed on the fourth Monday of each month except for July. If you know someone who is interested in newly subscribing to the OSE Newsletter mailing list, please direct them to fill out [this form](#). Those already receiving this OSE Newsletter do not need to fill out the form.

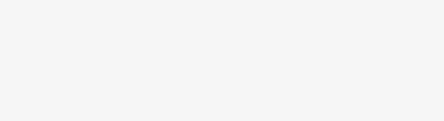
[Office of Special Education](#)
[Office of Special Education Moodle Community](#)



Department News

1/21/2026 Gov. Braun Announces \$15 Million to Support Career Coaching for Students Across the State
1/14/2026 Indiana Department of Education and Notre Dame Awarded Nearly \$10 Million Federal Grant to Strengthen Literacy
1/5/2026 Indiana 2025 Graduation Rate Highest On Record

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