

Outlook may not display this message well. To view this email as a web page, click [here](#).



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION

Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update

Weekly Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education

April 17, 2026

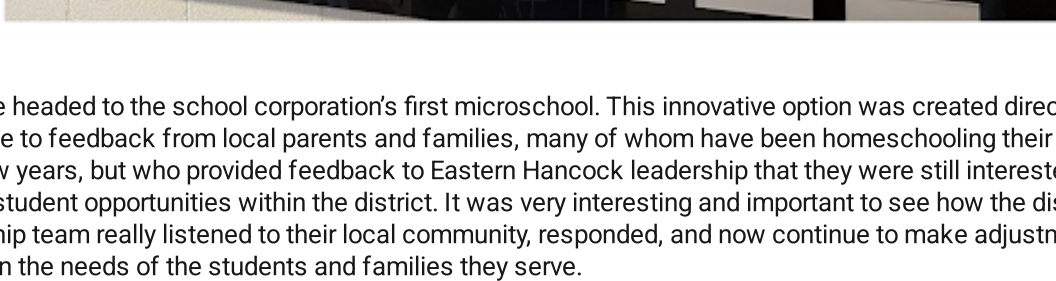
A Message from Dr. Katie Jenner

Depending on your local school calendar, some Indiana schools had spring break as early as mid-March, while others just returned this week. Now that we are all back, I hope each of you had the chance to recharge and are ready to finish the final stretch of the 2025-2026 school year!

Last week, we had the opportunity to visit two schools on their very first day back from spring break (what a day to host a guest!). I really appreciated spending time with quite a few students and educators from Eastern Hancock Community Schools...including Superintendent **George Philhower**, Eastern Hancock High School Principal **Adam Barton**, and Lead Educator at Nature's Gift Microschool at Nameless Creek **Erin Wolski**. Thank you to this team for being such gracious hosts on what is always an unpredictable first day back!

Our first stop was Eastern Hancock High School, where one of the first things the students and staff highlighted was a large sign proudly displaying the district's growing list of local employer partners. When Work-Based Learning Coordinator **Diana Arellano** started building these partnerships, she spent just one class period a day on this work. That quickly expanded to a half day...and now, it's her full-time role! One-third of their juniors and seniors participate in work-based learning, and they are actively expanding this number through earlier career exploration in elementary school and increasing job-shadowing opportunities for freshmen and sophomores. Students leading the tour shared how valuable it is to experience careers firsthand, including one student pursuing speech-language pathology who said it helped her confidently choose her path forward.

We also had the chance to catch up with Silas, one of our emcees from the 2025 Educational Excellence Awards Gala. He showed us the greenhouse where they grow flowers and other plants in conjunction with the local FFA, they even work with students from the elementary school to grow flowers for Mother's Day. Silas also showed us the barn (located on school property) where he and other students spend a lot of time learning to care for cattle, goats, and other animals. Many students told us their favorite part of school is studying agriculture starting as early as sixth grade. Across the state, we're seeing more middle schools offering CTE, which allows students to study and engage with their unique interests earlier, thus helping to maximize their four years in high school.



Next, we headed to the school corporation's first microschool. This innovative option was created directly in response to feedback from local parents and families, many of whom have been homeschooling their children for a few years, but who provided feedback to Eastern Hancock leadership that they were still interested in certain student opportunities within the district. It was very interesting and important to see how the district's leadership team really listened to their local community, responded, and now continue to make adjustments based on the needs of the students and families they serve.

As Eastern Hancock continues to learn, grow, and refine their model, other school districts in Indiana – and even other states (including one state that was visiting while we were there!) – have also expressed interest in understanding more about how it works so that they can provide additional opportunities for their local students and families.

Thank you again to the Eastern Hancock team for opening your doors, showcasing your work, and allowing us to amplify your story. And as always, thank you to each of you for everything you do for Indiana students.

Office of Assessment

REMINDER: Universal Mathematics Screener for Grades K-2 Frequently Asked Questions Updated Version
Corporations and non-public schools can refer to the [2026-2027 Universal Mathematics Screener for Grades K-2 Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) for commonly asked questions about Indiana State Board of Education-approved mathematics screeners. Vendor resources and videos are included in the FAQ. The FAQ will continue to be updated as new information becomes available. 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: Update Corporation iCAP Contact

The Indiana Course Access Portal (iCAP) provides students across the state with access to hundreds of online courses from approved providers. Review the [iCAP School Handout](#) for an overview of Indiana's Course Access Portal. Each school corporation must verify its designated iCAP contact. One confirmed contact per corporation is mandatory. Review your current listing on the [iCAP Contact webpage](#). District leaders must submit any updates using [this form](#) by next Friday, April 24. Contact iCAP@doe.in.gov with any questions.

NEW: Participants Needed for Indiana's K-12 Mathematics Standards and Content Connector Review Committees

IDOE's Office of Curriculum and Instruction is recruiting educators and other stakeholders to join committees that will review the Indiana Academic Standards and Content Connectors for K-12 mathematics. Complete and submit [this form](#) by 11:45 p.m. ET on Friday, May 1, for consideration. IDOE will review all submissions and select participants based on many criteria (e.g., teaching experience, current role, student populations served) to help maximize representativeness of each committee. Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: 2026-2027 K-12 Robotics Competition Grant Application

The [2026-2027 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 submit an application [here](#) by 11:45 p.m. ET on Friday, May 15. View [slides](#) from last week's virtual information session for more information about the grant and application process. Contact TLgrants@doe.in.gov with any questions.

REMINDER: Indiana's Tiered System of Supports for K-8 Mathematics Q&A Slides, Recording, and Parking Lot

Educators and administrators unable to attend the Indiana Tiered System of Supports for K-8 Mathematics Q&A Webinar on Friday, December 5, 2025, may access the [presentation recording](#), and [parking lot questions and answers](#). The three grade-band (K-2, 3-5, 6-8) [Indiana Tiered System of Supports Toolkit for Mathematics Courses](#) may be accessed through the [Indiana Learning Lab](#). Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

Office of Educator Talent and Literacy Center

NEW: Science of Reading Experts Explain Series, "Syntax"

Join IDOE and The Reading League Indiana from 12 to 1 p.m. ET on Tuesday, April 21, for the next live Experts Explain series with Dr. Margie Gillis, and her presentation, "Syntax." In this session, participants will learn the importance of a function-based approach for teaching students the role that each grammatical building block plays in constructing a variety of sentences. This information will build on prior sessions by explaining the integral role that sentences play in students' writing fluency. All sessions will be recorded and shared in the Indiana Learning Lab. See registration details [here](#). Contact IDOE's [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Recommendations Open for Distinguished Educator Recognition

IDOE is seeking confidential recommendations of educators representing the very best in Indiana. These emerging leaders must demonstrate leadership beyond the classroom and positively impact school culture and student achievement. Superintendents and principals may submit recommendations [here](#). Recommendations must be submitted by next Friday, April 24. Contact IDOE's [Office of Educator Talent](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Nominations Open for the 2026-2027 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 national [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-K through high school. The deadline to submit nominations is Friday, June 12, at 5 p.m. ET. Nominations can be submitted via [Joinform](#). Contact IDOE's [Office of Educator Talent](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Keys to Literacy No Cost Professional Development for Early Literacy Endorsement

IDOE's Early Literacy Endorsement Professional Development is available to current eligible Indiana educators who hold a valid professional educator license and teach in a content area that involves literacy instruction for PK-5 students. Eligible licensed Indiana educators may participate, at no cost, in Keys to Literacy. Those who are eligible, may register [here](#) by Friday, May 1, but space is limited. Participants must complete all asynchronous course(s) by 11:59 p.m. ET on Monday, June 1. 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. Those who do not finish by this date will not be eligible to re-register for this free course option in the future. Contact the [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: 2026-2027 Annual K-8 School Reading Plan

Indiana Code (IC) 20-32-8.5 and 511 Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) 6.2-3.1 require all public, charter, and non-public schools, including Choice scholarship eligible schools, with students enrolled in kindergarten through grade eight to submit an annual reading plan to IDOE by Tuesday, June 30. Additional information about completing the 2026-2027 Annual K-8 School Reading Plan can be found [here](#). Contact the [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

Office of School Finance

REMINDER: 2026 Summer School Information

Please review [this memo](#) for important details regarding summer school funding for summer 2026, including courses eligible for reimbursement, the final cost report, key dates, and financial provisions. Contact IDOE's [Office of School Finance](#) with any questions.

Office of Special Education, English Learning, and Migrant Education

NEW: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Proportionate Share Office Hours

IDOE's Office of Special Education Part B fiscal team is hosting office hours to assist LEAs that have proportionate share balances or are planning to complete a Proportionate Share Release. The Fiscal Year IDEA Part B Section 611 and 619 grants will close on Wednesday, September 30. This forum will answer questions and provide support for LEAs to expend funds for students with disabilities who are parentally placed in a non-public or homeschool setting. IDOE's Equitable Services Ombudsman will also share best practices for meeting initial and ongoing consultation requirements. Please send any proportionate share questions that you'd like to be addressed to partbgrants@doe.in.gov. Questions must be submitted by Monday, April 27, 2026. Click the links below to join:

- [Thursday, May 21, 10 to 11 a.m. ET](#)
- [Wednesday, May 27, 1 to 2 p.m. ET](#)

NEW: 2026-2027 School Year RoboKind Grant Opportunity

Through House Enrolled Act 1001 (2025), IDOE offers the RoboKind Grant opportunity for select corporations and schools to purchase robotic technology and provide professional development endorsed by the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) to improve the social and behavioral skills for students with autism. RoboKind's programs are delivered by engaging virtual avatars. While the robots no longer require a physical robot, districts currently implementing the robot-led program may continue using their programs if they apply for a renewal. Existing partner districts will also receive access to the virtual avatar-led programs, in addition to their current robotted implementations. RoboKind supports research-based supplemental across social skills and phonics. Information, applications, and the budget template can be found [here](#). Email the signed application and budget template to robokind@doe.in.gov to submit your application. Contact robokind@doe.in.gov with additional questions.

NEW: FY2027 IDEA Part B Grant Data Verification

The data verification process for the FY2027 Part B Grant has now been initiated and notifications have been sent to all Special Education Directors. This is an important opportunity for each LEA to carefully review the counts that will determine both the Part B allocations and the proportionate share multipliers ahead of the grant's official opening on July 1.

Please take some time to thoroughly examine the data verification materials and submit any updates or corrections through the [Grant Management System](#) by Friday, May 1. This deadline is crucial, as it represents the final chance to make any changes impacting FY2027 IDEA Part B allocations.

REMINDER: English Learner (EL) Exit Criteria Training

The IDOE EL team will host a training on the process to exit eligible students from EL status through an additional evidence review on Thursday, April 23, from 3 to 4 p.m. ET. This training will now be hosted via Microsoft Teams, and [registration](#) is required to receive the meeting link. This session will occur alongside the release of updated guidance. Additional information can be found on the [Indiana EL Professional Development Opportunities Calendar](#). Contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Migrant Education](#) with questions.

REMINDER: Update to Home Language Survey (HLS) Amendment Process

To streamline processes and improve efficiency, all HLS amendment requests must be submitted via [Joinform](#) effective Monday, March 30. Previously, amendments were submitted to IDOE via fax. Any amendments submitted via fax after this date may experience delays, as the fax inbox will no longer be monitored. Submission requirements, including the [HLS Amendment Form](#) and the original HLS, remain unchanged. Please contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Migrant Education](#) with questions.

Office of Title Grants and Support

NEW: FY2026 Small Rural School Achievement (SRSA) Grant Application

The FY2026 SRSA grant application has been emailed to [eligible LEAs](#) by the U.S. Department of Education (USED). SRSA applications are due on May 18. To support LEAs, USED will be hosting a webinar for program administrators on Tuesday, April 21, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET.

Join using this [Microsoft Teams Webinar link](#) or by phone at 1-202-991-0393 with access code 34294847#.

REMINDER: Federal Programs Quarterly Meeting

The quarterly meeting originally scheduled for Thursday, May 7, has been moved to Thursday, April 30, from 10 a.m. to noon ET. Please join us to learn more information regarding the FY2027 Pre-Application and federal program updates. The session will be recorded and shared in the Indiana Learning Lab. Register [here](#) to access the meeting. Contact Title@doe.in.gov with any questions.

Office of Educational Options and Quality

NEW: Choice Scholarship Program Spring Payment Petitions

House Enrolled Act 1515 allows for a Choice parent, or Choice school, on behalf of a Choice parent, to petition IDOE for a student left off the Membership Report to be placed into the school's report and retroactively paid, if they believe the student should have been included in the Membership Report. Please review this [memo](#) for details about the process and the petition form. Petitions must be submitted using the form and should be emailed to ChoiceSchool@doe.in.gov. Appeals should be received by April 21. Contact ChoiceSchool@doe.in.gov with any questions.

NEW: ESA Priority Access Window Now Closed

The priority window for ESA student applications closed on Wednesday, April 15. Families who submitted during this time will receive an update on their application by Friday, April 24. After priority applications are reviewed, new applications will be reviewed in the order in which they were received. If a student cannot be approved initially because the program has reached capacity, the student will be placed on the wait list and notified via AccessIndiana. Contact esa@doe.in.gov with any questions.

NEW: CSA Priority Access Window Now Closed

The priority window for CSA student applications closed on Wednesday, April 15. Approval of student applications is now underway. Students should receive confirmation of their application status by Friday, April 24. Applications that do not initially receive approval due to program capacity will be placed on a waitlist in the order in which they were received. To be fully enrolled in the program, CSA program providers must verify enrollment by Monday, June 1. Students who are not fully enrolled by this deadline may be ineligible for funding and/or subject to removal from the program. Contact csa@doe.in.gov with any questions.

Indiana Commission for Higher Education

NEW: New Prairie High School Named a 2025 School of Excellence by ACT's American College Application Campaign

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education (Commission) announced New Prairie High School as Indiana's American College Application Campaign (ACAC) School of Excellence Award for winner. Indiana joins 25 other states in celebrating exemplary schools dedicated to increasing postsecondary success, specifically for first-generation college students. Awardees are selected based on their participation in their state's college application campaign. New Prairie High School earned the School of Excellence Award for building an increased awareness of the opportunities and benefits of going to college for all grade levels. In addition to daily trivia contests and a spirit week, the school launched the College Bound Cougars program, offering grade-specific lessons on college exploration, financial aid, admissions, career planning, and test preparation for all students in grades nine through 12. Every student completed multiple career interest inventories, as well as preparation sessions for the PSAT and SAT. During College Application Week, New Prairie's seniors submitted 376 college applications. Read the press release [here](#).

REMINDER: Indiana Diploma Implementation Support – Frequently Asked Questions

To support schools with ongoing implementation of the new high school diploma, IDOE and Commission staff have developed a list of Frequently Asked Questions. The document can be found on the [Indiana Diploma webpage](#) or directly accessed [here](#). The document will be updated as new questions emerge or additional guidance becomes available. Contact StudentPathways@doe.in.gov with any questions. For CTE-related questions, including WBL and credentials of value, please email CTE@che.in.gov.

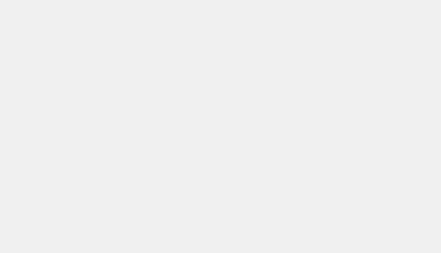
News From Our Partners

NEW FROM PURDUE UNIVERSITY COMPUTER SCIENCE OUTREACH: 2026 Summer and Fall Computer Science Professional Development Opportunities

Purdue Computer Science Outreach is offering a series of hands-on professional development sessions for educators at all experience levels. Opportunities include beginner sessions for those new to computer science, as well as middle and high school sessions focused on Indiana's Next Level Programs of Study course, 4565 Computing Foundations for a Digital Age, artificial intelligence, and robotics. All sessions are designed to be practical, classroom-ready, and include take-home resources for teachers. View full details and register [here](#). Contact jdhomps@purdue.edu with questions.

NEW FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE: Legislative Guidance – House Enrolled Act 1210

House Enrolled Act 1210-2026 (Section 80, Ind. Code 6-1.1-20.6-14) allows schools to spread the financial impact of the new supplemental homestead credit provided under Ind. Code 6-1.1-20.6-7 across all non-exempt funds that levy property taxes, rather than only the operations fund. To utilize this flexibility, a school superintendent must submit written notification to their Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) Field Representative by May 15. Once this written notification is received, DLGF will acknowledge and provide an Excel workbook that shows the impact of the supplemental homestead credit without the application of protected taxes. There is no formal document to complete; however, superintendents must email their DLGF Field Representative directly to request this flexibility by May 15.



Want a colleague to get a copy of this email? Forward it to them by clicking here.

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.

This email was sent by: Indiana Department of Education
100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN, 46204 US

[Privacy Notice](#)

[Manage Preferences](#) [Unsubscribe](#)