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Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update

Weekly Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education

September 25, 2026

A Message from Dr. Katie Jenner

This week marked the official start of fall, and the cooler temperatures arrived right on cue! I love this time of year—from cozy bonfires and football games to changing leaves and all things pumpkin. It's the perfect time to get outside and enjoy our beautiful state with the people we love most.

Speaking of football, if you've ever been to an Indianapolis Colts game or even watched one from home, you know how massive Lucas Oil Stadium is. On a sold-out game day, nearly 67,000 fans pack into the stands. Indiana is home to more than 65,000 teachers...enough to fill nearly every one of those blue seats.

Out of a full Lucas Oil Stadium, Indiana is able to select just one teacher each year to represent us nationally. This year, we are thrilled to name **Mr. Jason Witzgreuter**, Associate Director of Bands at Homestead High School in Fort Wayne, as our **2027 Indiana Teacher of the Year!**

To keep the celebration going, today's message is all about Mr. Witzgreuter...or as his students call him: Mr. Witz.

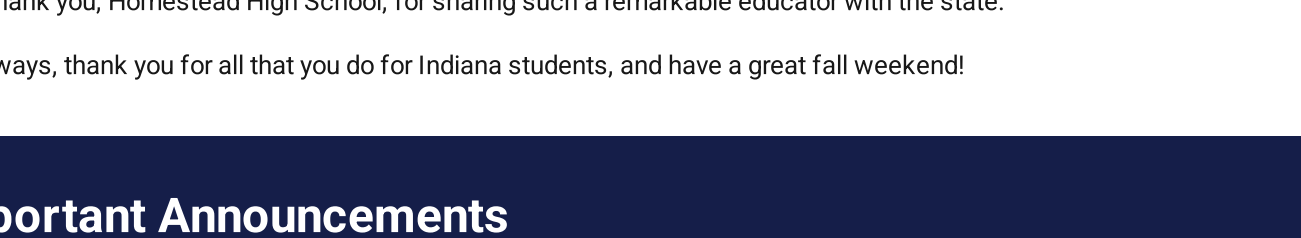
One of the things that stood out most during the selection process is that Mr. Witz was actually a principal not that long ago. And while he was no doubt an effective principal, his heart was always in the classroom. He ultimately chose to return to his teaching roots. There, he helps to develop young musicians and helps students build the skills and confidence they need to become strong future leaders.

As one of his former teachers described, Mr. Witz embodies the highest calling of a teacher...not only does he impart knowledge, but helps build better human beings.

Last Wednesday, thousands of students and educators packed the Homestead High School gym for what they thought was a typical Homecoming pep rally. Principal Adam Swinford kicked things off with a performance by the school band, and from there, the announcement began to take shape. The drum line shifted into a surprise performance, and we joined Mr. Witz at the center of the gym, including Governor Mike Braun, Superintendent Dr. St. John, Mr. Witz's family and friends, and several past Indiana Teachers of the Year.

You would never know that it was 8:30 a.m. with the energy Homestead High School brought that day! Featuring musical performances, a cheer routine, and a banner unveiling, it was a celebration that Mr. Witz and everyone else in attendance will remember for a long time.

Check out a video from the surprise announcement below and see more of Mr. Witz's impact.



Mr. Witz, thank you for being an incredible leader for our students and fellow educators, and congratulations again on being named Indiana Teacher of the Year.

And thank you, Homestead High School, for sharing such a remarkable educator with the state.

As always, thank you for all that you do for Indiana students, and have a great fall weekend!

Important Announcements

REMINDER: We Want to Hear from You! How Is Your School Celebrating School Fitness Month?

September marks School Fitness Month in Indiana, part of Governor Mike Braun's Make Indiana Healthy Again initiative. Earlier this month, we shared the newly developed [Governor's Fitness Test](#). Physical education teachers are encouraged to develop both goals and time expectations that are appropriate for each age group. Schools may choose to develop student-level goals based on each student's unique needs and abilities.

Now we want to hear from you! Tell us how your school is celebrating School Fitness Month so we can highlight the creative ways you're supporting students' overall health, boosting their confidence, and improving their focus. Use this short [Joinform](#) to share your activities!

Office of Assessment

NEW: K-2 Universal Mathematics Screener Guidance: Additional Support Materials

Additional materials are now available to support educators, schools, and corporations implementing the [Universal Mathematics Screener Guidance for Kindergarten through Grade Two](#). [Applying the Data Triangulation Process \(K-2\)](#) is a two-page resource that outlines suggested grade-level numeracy standards and provides a detailed walkthrough of how to apply the data triangulation process after each administration of the Universal Mathematics Screener. The optional [K-2 Mathematics Data Triangulation Workbook](#) is also available to further support the triangulation process, guide development of intervention goals and services, and assist with progress monitoring and parent communication. Contact the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) [Office of Assessment](#) with questions.

NEW: iLEARN Summative Spring 2026 English/Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Social Studies Results Now Available

Final iLEARN Spring 2026 results are now available in [CRS](#), IDOE's [Data Center & Reports webpage](#), and in the [Indiana Family Portal](#). Individual results may be shared immediately with school staff, families, and students. To view results in CRS for students who were enrolled and tested within a particular corporation/school in Spring 2026, users must adjust the reporting time period to reflect an enrollment date near the end of the testing window. Contact the [Indiana Assessment Help Desk](#) with any questions about CRS or Family Portal navigation or functionality or IDOE's [Office of Assessment](#) with general assessment or reporting questions.

REMINDER: ISPROUT Panelist Discussion

Hoosier educators and administrators will serve as panelists for an informational ISPROUT webinar on Tuesday, September 29, from 12 to 1 p.m. ET. Panelists will share practical strategies for aligning instructional planning with Skills, Knowledge, and Behaviors (SKBs), integrating data to support meaningful team discussions, and applying effective observation techniques. Participants will learn how to seamlessly embed ISPROUT into daily curriculum routines, group SKBs to design efficient lessons, make the most of ISPROUT-provided lessons and observation sheets, as well as share ISPROUT data with families effectively. Click [here](#) to register. Contact IDOE's [Office of Assessment](#) with questions.

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

NEW: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Session in the Indiana Learning Lab

AI offers opportunities and challenges for schools and classroom teachers. How can teachers leverage new possibilities while preserving necessary cognitive effort? Join Hunter Hickman, teacher at Rensselaer Central High School on Monday, September 28, at 4:30 p.m. ET in the Indiana Learning Lab to unpack challenges facing K-12 educators and gain actionable strategies for strengthening AI literacy and responsible use. Register to attend [here](#). Contact IDOE's [Digital Learning Team](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Mathematics Language Routines for Everyone

IDOE will welcome expert educator Ella Hereth on Wednesday, September 30, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. ET for a live webinar focused on the role of language in mathematics instruction. This session will highlight strategies for engaging all learners in meaningful mathematical discourse, emphasizing the use of precise academic vocabulary and routines that help students make sense of content and reflect on key terminology. Designed for middle school math teachers and leaders, this webinar will feature instructional routines that are beneficial for students from kindergarten through high school. Register [here](#) through the Indiana Learning Lab. Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: From Classroom to Career Workshop Recording Now Available

Hosted by the Wilson Education Service Center, the "Educator and Business Perspectives on Meaningful Workplace Connections" workshop is now available [here](#) in the Learning Lab. Educators who are looking for ideas to connect classroom instruction with real-world industry can access the full collection of guides, toolkits, and actionable strategies [here](#). Contact IDOE's [Digital Learning Team](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: High Ability Coordinator Workshop

Join IDOE for an engaging, hands-on workshop designed to support high ability coordinators. This in-person session will provide essential guidance, practical tools, and opportunities to collaborate with peers as we strengthen consistent, statewide practices for high ability programming. All workshops will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. local time. Register [here](#) for one of the remaining regional workshops. Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction: High Ability](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: High Ability Differentiation Series Final Session

Join IDOE and high ability experts for the Unlocking Potential: High Ability Differentiation Series in the Learning Lab. High ability educators, coordinators, and administrators are invited to [register now](#) for the final session in the series addressing strategies for supporting multilingual high ability learners. Educators unable to attend the earlier sessions can now access the [full collection](#) of recordings and resources in the Indiana Learning Lab. Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction: High Ability](#) with any questions.

Office of Educational Options and Quality

REMINDER: Choice Regional Meetings in September

September marks the first regional meetings of the school year. In this first meeting, we will discuss data reporting requirements, the payment process, and the new Choice School Performance Framework. Regional meetings will be hosted around the state at participating Choice schools. The last meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 30, at 9 a.m. local time in Evansville. To register for the last regional meeting, click [here](#).

REMINDER: Choice Scholarship Fall Payments

To be eligible to receive a student payment in the second fall payment, every student is required to have Membership and Enrollment data certified by Friday, October 9, and a signed Parent and School Signature form uploaded by Monday, October 19. Any student missed in the first fall payment will be paid in the second fall payment as long as the required data is reported for the student in Data Exchange by Thursday, October 1, (census date) and the Parent and School Signature form is uploaded to the Choice Scholarship Student Application tile by the Monday, October 19 deadline.

Upon approval of the Choice Scholarship application, the Parent and School Signature form can be found on the second page of a student's estimated award letter in the Choice Scholarship Student Application tile. The Parent and School Signature form is available as soon as the student's application is submitted and approved. The link to upload the form is available in the student application and will remain open through Monday, October 19.

Payment letters will be published to the Choice school's Google folder with an Excel file breakdown of their payment installments. Any discrepancies must be reported to IDOE's Office of Educational Options and Quality at choiceschool@doe.in.gov within two weeks from the date of the letter. Appeals will be reviewed by the Choice team for October payment only. No appeals will be accepted for the September payment and those accounts will be reconciled in the October payment. Further details on the appeal process will be provided closer to the October payment disbursement date.

Office of Educator Licensing

NEW: Apply for I-STEM - Licensing Assistance Program for STEM Teachers

I-STEM Round #2 is accepting applications for first-time participants! The Central Indiana Educational Service Center (CIESC) and IDOE are partnering for a second round of the I-STEM initiative, focused on strengthening Indiana's STEM educator pipeline. The program is open to current educators and those interested in a Transition to Teaching program. Learn more and register [here](#). Contact [Susie Coleman](#) with questions.

Office of Educator Talent and Literacy

REMINDER: Universal Reading Screener Upcoming September Office Hours

Join Acadience and IDOE's Literacy Center for Acadience Office Hours, where platform managers, coaches, teachers, school leaders, and others involved in screening can connect to ask questions and receive support. All sessions will be recorded, and links will be made available for future viewing. Join for "[ALQ Navigation Overview](#)," on Wednesday, September 30, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET. Additionally, the first two webinars for the new [Acadience Kindergarten-Grade Six Reading: Data-Driven Literacy Instruction](#) collection are available in the Learning Lab. These sessions are part of a five-part series that offer deeper guidance on using Acadience data to drive instruction. Contact IDOE's [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

Office of School Finance

REMINDER: Common School Loans

IDOE's Office of School Finance will accept applications for construction and technology common school loans from corporations, charter schools, and school corporation career and technical education schools through Friday, October 16. Petitions must be submitted to IDOE by this date to be considered. The application and other details can be found in the [Public School Finance Community in Moodle](#) under Common School Funds, then under Fall. Contact IDOE's [Office of School Finance](#) with any questions.

Office of Special Education, English Learning, and Migrant Education

NEW: Additional RoboKind Office Hours Wednesday, October 7

Invoices for the 2026-2027 RoboKind program will be processed through EUNA, the state's grant management system. Special education directors and fiscal staff who submit invoices are encouraged to attend this 60-minute session for guidance on the invoicing process and an opportunity to ask questions. This [RoboKind Office Hours](#) session is scheduled from 10 to 11 a.m. ET on Wednesday, October 7.

NEW: 2025-2027 Title III Annual Performance Report (APR) Due Wednesday, September 30

The [Title III APR](#) is due for all local education agencies (LEAs) receiving 2025-2027 Title III funding (including consortium members) by Wednesday, September 30. The purpose of this brief APR is to provide an update on English learner (EL) staffing and programmatic activities during the previous school year (2025-2026). Responses will be compiled for Indiana's submission of the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR) to the U.S. Department of Education. Please reach out to englishlearners@doe.in.gov with any questions.

REMINDERS: 2026-2028 Title III grant application Link, instructions to apply, and additional Euna Grants support resources

LEAs received the 2026-2028 Title III grant [application link](#), instructions to apply, and additional Euna Grants support resources on Monday, August 18. The [Title III Grants Euna Guidance](#) resource is available to walk users through the application process. Submissions are due Wednesday, September 30. Contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Multilingual Education](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Multilingual Learner Report and English Learner (EL) Counts Captured on Thursday, 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 EL 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. To review students not currently certified, navigate to the Validate tab in Data Exchange and click on the "Multilingual Learners" hyperlink. This report details each error or exclusion by STN and can be exported for further organization. If there is any discrepancy between the information shown in the Data Exchange Validation portal and your Student Information System (SIS), please contact your SIS vendor directly or submit a help ticket [here](#).

REMINDER: 2026-2027 Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency Participation Registration Now Open

The Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency (CoMP), Indiana's Seal of Bilinguality, is awarded to high school seniors who demonstrate high levels of proficiency in English and another language. It is a great way to celebrate students' achievement in world languages. School corporations or nonpublic schools intending to participate in Indiana's CoMP must renew their registration annually. Those wanting to participate for the 2026-2027 school year must sign up using [this form](#) by March 31, 2027. For more information, see the [Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency webpage](#). This [data template](#) can be used to track student progress and assist with data reporting at the end of the year. Contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Multilingual Education](#) with any questions.

Office of Title Grants and Support

NEW: October 1 Counts

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/Pupil Enrollment count are essential to ensuring 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, please review any potential errors or discrepancies in DEX. If any discrepancies are found, please work with your LEA's DEX Data Manager on corrections prior to the October 1 count. For questions specific to DEX, contact dataexchange@doe.in.gov.

REMINDER: School Year (SY) 2025-2026 Self-Assessment

The Self-Assessment for SY 2025-2026 is now open for completion. Participation in the Self-Assessment is required for all LEAs receiving federal funds, and completing it on time helps ensure federal funding continues without interruption. Submissions are due today, Friday, September 25. Additional information on the Self-Assessment can be found on the Federal Monitoring Moodle Course via the Self-Assessment Technical Appendix. An official memorandum including the submission link has been sent to LEA designated contacts. Questions can also be sent to federalmonitoring@doe.in.gov.

Indiana Commission for Higher Education

NEW: Final Day for College Application Week

Today is the final day of College Application Week where Indiana high school seniors can apply to over 30 in-state public, private, and proprietary institutions for free! For a list of participating institutions, please visit Learn More Indiana's [webpage](#). If your school is participating in College GO!, don't forget to submit [your pledge](#) to participate.

Indiana State Library

NEW: Indiana Young Readers Center 10-Year Anniversary

The Indiana State Library invites the public to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of its Indiana Young Readers Center. Modeled after the Young Readers Center in the Library of Congress, the room is dedicated to Indiana authors and illustrators. The celebration is free and open to the public on Saturday, October 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET at the Indiana State Library. The anniversary will include author visits, activities, story times, a writing workshop, community information tables, a special presentation, and surprise guests. Registration is not required.

News from Our Partners

NEW FROM PURDUE UNIVERSITY: Smart Manufacturing Hackathon - Free Student and Teacher Opportunity

Funded by the Caterpillar Foundation and hosted in partnership with Purdue University, this unique [Smart Manufacturing Hackathon](#) introduces students to Industry 4.0 technologies and future STEM careers through immersive Minecraft Education experiences. Students in grades nine through 12 will visit Purdue University's Gateway Complex and participate in hands-on Smart Manufacturing challenges inspired by technologies used by leading manufacturers around the world. Transportation to and from the campus will be provided through Go Express Travel and food will be provided at no cost. There are three opportunities to participate: fall, winter and spring. Exact dates will be determined by teachers selected and the regions they represent. Visit the link above for additional details. Contact [Melissa Gull](#) with any questions.

NEW FROM NEXTECH: CSFORGOOD

Challenge your students to use computer science (CS) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to solve a real problem in their school or community. With a teacher sponsor, teams in elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high school (9-12) will create a technology project such as an app, website, physical computing device, or prototype. Students will explore how CS and AI can be used for good while developing innovative solutions to issues that matter to them. Finalists from each division will be invited to the Indiana Statehouse to showcase their projects for prizes for both the winning team and sponsoring teacher. [Click here](#) to learn more and register your intent to submit projects. Contact [Sarah Wilcox](#) with any questions.

NEW FROM ND PACT (formerly AP-TIP): Annual Fall Conference

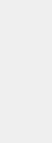
ND PACT's annual fall conference will focus on "*Small Teaching: How Simple Shifts Can Bridge the Gap from Access to Achievement*." James Lang, PhD, will lead the keynote session each morning at 9 a.m. ET, followed by content-specific sessions from 10 a.m. to 3:55 p.m. ET. Participants will have a 30-minute break for lunch each day.

- English: Tuesday, October 27
- Math and Computer Science: Wednesday, October 28
- Science: Thursday, October 29

[Registration](#) is now open and daily conference agendas are coming soon. Contact [Nikki Chase](#) for additional assistance.

REMINDER FROM THE INDIANA CAREER APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAY (INCAP): School Counselor Toolkit
INCAP is a new education and training pathway that combines classroom learning and paid on-the-job training to prepare Hoosiers for in-demand careers. To help schools better understand and implement INCAP, you can find an all-new robust online toolkit, which includes details on offering INCAP to your students, information about 2027-2028 apprenticeship occupations, sample journeys that demonstrate how students move through their program, and example schedules with course codes and diploma seal requirements. Find the school toolkit [here](#). Have questions about INCAP? Reach out to your regional INCAP Connector [here](#).

REMINDER FROM BLUE STAR FAMILIES: Blue Star Welcome Week
Indiana is home to more than 100 Purple Star Schools, recognized for their deep commitment to supporting students and families connected to our nation's military. Each year, roughly 600,000 military families relocate nationwide, and for those with school-aged children, these frequent moves can be especially challenging. Blue Star Welcome Week, held September 26, through October 4, is a nationwide effort to help military families feel connected and supported as they settle into new communities. With many transitions happening over the summer, this week is a special opportunity for Indiana schools to extend a warm welcome to every local military family, whether through local events, thoughtful messages, or small gestures that show military families they're valued and appreciated. This [toolkit](#) from Blue Star Families is designed to help you get started. Learn more about how you can get involved at [bluestarwelcomeweek.org](#).



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