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Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update

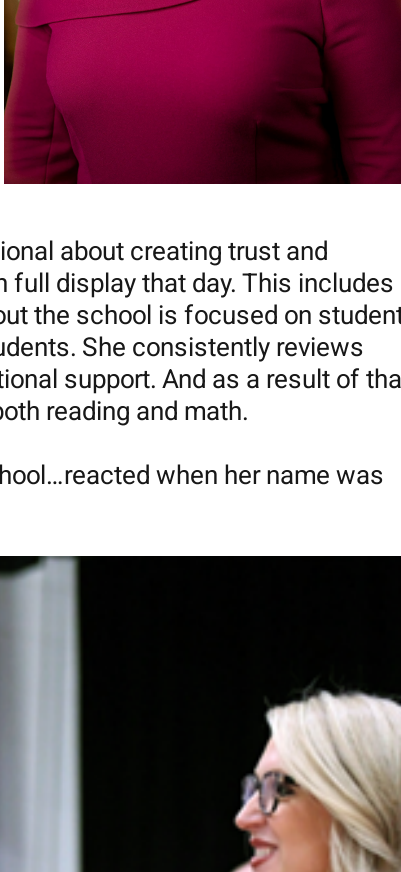
Weekly Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education

January 30, 2026

A Message from Dr. Katie Jenner

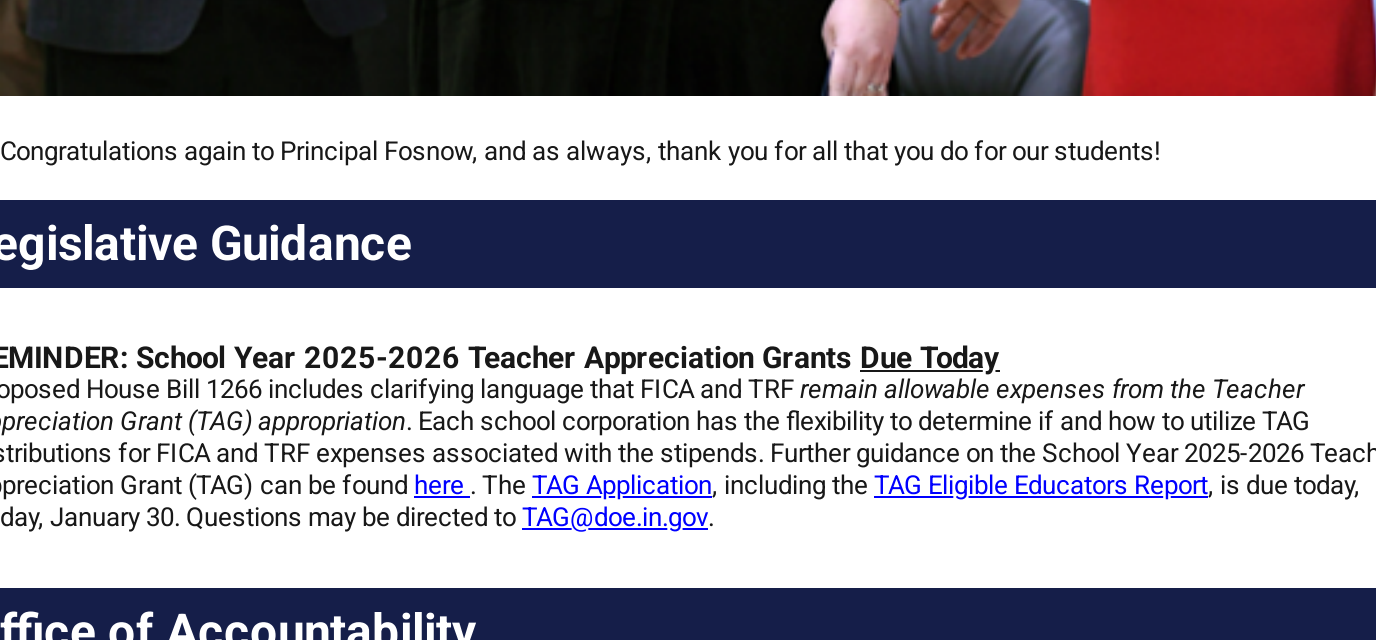
First and foremost, a huge THANK YOU for all you have done this week to navigate the significant weather challenges. While the effects were felt differently across various regions of our state, this winter storm definitely impacted our southern counties more than the northern part of the state, which is not something we typically see. For many of us, this is the most snow we've had in a long time, and the kids in my neighborhood (including my own!) had a great time breaking out their snow gear, sledding (although it didn't last long...too cold!), and baking cookies. Thank you to all of our local school leaders, teachers, maintenance teams, etc. who helped keep our educators, staff, and students safe!

Last week we highlighted our 2025 Indiana Teacher of the Year who was recognized at the National Championship game...this week there's another educator I'd like to shoutout. Before the winter break, we had the opportunity to once again partner with the Milken Family Foundation. As usual, very few people knew the real reason why we were all visiting New Palestine Elementary School that day...not even Principal **Kayleigh Fosnow**...who was *completely surprised* to learn that she was receiving the prestigious Milken Educator Award...and \$25,000!



Having started her career in the classroom, Principal Fosnow is very intentional about creating trust and connections with students, families, and teachers...something that was on full display that day. This includes empowering and uplifting teachers, ensuring every team member throughout the school is focused on student learning, and continuously engaging parents to maximize outcomes for students. She consistently reviews data, celebrates wins, and identifies areas where students may need additional support. And as a result of that approach, the data is clear... students are achieving impressive results in both reading and math.

Check out the video below to see how Principal Fosnow...and her entire school...reacted when her name was announced as Indiana's newest Milken Educator Award winner!



Congratulations again to Principal Fosnow, and as always, thank you for all that you do for our students!

Legislative Guidance

REMINDER: School Year 2025-2026 Teacher Appreciation Grants **Due Today**

Proposed House Bill 1266 includes clarifying language that FICA and TRF *remain allowable expenses from the Teacher Appreciation Grant (TAG) appropriation*. Each school corporation has the flexibility to determine if and how to utilize TAG distributions for FICA and TRF expenses associated with the stipends. Further guidance on the School Year 2025-2026 Teacher Appreciation Grant (TAG) can be found [here](#). The [TAG Application](#), including the [TAG Eligible Educators Report](#), is due today, Friday, January 30. Questions may be directed to TAG@doe.in.gov.

Office of Accountability

NEW: Instructional Day Flexibility Waiver Process

Last weekend's severe winter storm significantly impacted travel throughout our state, as well as school operations. If your school corporation cancelled days and/or had asynchronous instruction and you would like to submit a waiver for any days during the week of Monday, January 26, you can do so via the existing waiver process. Requests can be completed using the following [JoForm](#) and should be submitted no later than Friday, February 13. This will allow us to gather additional impact data and better understand each unique situation so that we can best support schools moving forward. Given the widespread impact of this storm, we are anticipating a high volume of requests, and will respond as quickly as possible. Any questions can be directed to schoolaccountability@doe.in.gov.

Office of Assessment

NEW: ILEARN Checkpoint 2 Window Extended

Due to inclement weather, the ILEARN Checkpoint 2 window is **extended** through Friday, February 13. ILEARN Checkpoint 3 will remain on schedule, opening on Monday, February 9. Test Administrators should ensure the correct assessment is chosen before testing begins. As a reminder, opportunity two will remain open for all Checkpoints until Friday, April 10. Contact the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) [Office of Student Assessment](#) with any questions.

NEW: Released Items Repository (RIR) Refresh

Newly released items for ILEARN are now available in the RIR. Educators, students, and families may access the [RIR](#) via the [Indiana Assessment Portal](#) to practice sample test items and use available accommodations. Refer to the [RIR Directory](#). [Landing Page](#) to view the list of released items, standard alignments, and answer keys/rubrics. Refer to the [RIR Quick Guide](#) for additional information. Contact IDOE's [Office of Student Assessment](#) with any questions.

NEW: ILEARN Biology End-of-Course Assessment (ECA) Winter 2026 Testing Window Opens Monday, February 2

The ILEARN Biology ECA Winter 2026 online testing window is open Monday, February 2, through Friday, February 20. The paper-and-pencil testing window for the ILEARN Biology Winter 2026 ECA is Monday, February 2, through Friday, February 13. Students must participate in the assessment upon completion of the high school biology course. Find information regarding participation [here](#). IDOE will also conduct [on-site monitoring visits](#) to ensure fidelity of test administration and security. Refer to the [ILEARN 2025-2026 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 Strategy and Communications

NEW: Accessing Past Newsletter Links

Salesforce Marketing Cloud – the state's newsletter platform – has notified us that due to their recent security updates, some links in older newsletters are no longer accessible. This is impacting the state of Indiana, as well as other Salesforce clients. Past editions of Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update can be found [here](#), and we are in the process of refreshing all links in newsletters distributed in 2026. We will also rerun important updates in the coming weeks. If you are having trouble accessing a link, please reach out to the contact included in the corresponding blurb or email communications@doe.in.gov.

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

NEW: Special Education Educators Needed for Indiana's K-12 Social Studies Content Connectors Review Committees

IDOE is recruiting interested special educators to comprise committees that will review the K-12 Social Studies Content Connectors. The content connectors are Indiana's alternate standards, aligned with the Indiana Academic Standards, designed to measure the knowledge and skills of students with significant cognitive disabilities. Educators are needed for committees representing kindergarten through grade eight and four high school courses (Economics, U.S. Government, U.S. History, and Geography and History of the World). Interested individuals should submit [this form](#) to be considered for this opportunity. 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.

NEW: Indiana PRIME Informational Webinar Recording

On Thursday, January 22, IDOE and the Southern Regional Education Board hosted a live webinar for teachers planning to or interested in offering the Postsecondary Ready Investigative Mathematics Experience (PRIME) Math course for seniors. The webinar recording can be found [here](#). Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with questions.

NEW: Data Science Beyond the Classroom - A Panel Discussion

IDOE, in partnership with Data Science 4 Everyone, hosted a Data Science Summit in December to discuss specific skills we can focus on as educators to prepare students for a data-driven world. A panel discussion, featuring partners from industry and higher education, is now available on-demand and can be accessed [here](#). Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with questions.

NEW: Professional Learning Series for Early Learning Administration

A new self-paced course, [Professional Learning Series for Early Learning Administration](#), is now available in the [Indiana Learning Lab](#). This course is designed to support elementary principals working with students in pre-K through grade one, and offers opportunities to enhance knowledge of early learning pedagogy and best practices while promoting leadership skills. Participants are encouraged to collaborate with school-based team members to support learning and apply concepts throughout the asynchronous course, while district-level leaders are encouraged to use the accompanying PLC Handbook to facilitate local PLC meetings with participating staff. Participants also have the opportunity to design a concept for an implementation project based on principles learned in the course and PLCs. Contact IDOE's [Office of Student Assessment](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Advancing K-12 Mathematics for Indiana Students Overview

IDOE's Office of Curriculum and Instruction and Office of Student Assessment continue to collaborate with educators, administrators, higher education partners, and other stakeholders to advance evidence-based mathematics instruction and improve student learning at all grade levels. To keep schools and corporations informed, this [two-page overview](#) highlights current and upcoming mathematics initiatives, legislative updates, and available supports designed to ensure every student develops strong mathematical proficiency and achieves success. Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

Office of Educator Talent and Literacy Center

NEW: The Literacy Leadership Series Workshop, "Leading Literacy: Building a Coherent 4-12 Plan"

Join IDOE for the next Literacy Leadership Series workshop, "Leading Literacy: Building a Coherent 4-12 Plan," from 2 to 3 p.m. ET on Tuesday, February 3, with Dr. Marisa Ramirez-Stuke, Chief Academic Officer of The Reading League. Continuing through April, the IDOE Literacy Leadership Series is a high-impact series specially designed for district and school leaders, school board members, instructional coaches, and literacy specialists. The live, on-demand virtual series in the Indiana Learning Lab will feature national reading science and systems design experts and showcase critical research, guidance, and resources to support practice toward evidence-based literacy instruction and building comprehensive literacy support systems for improving student outcomes. Access the [series flyer](#) for more information regarding topics and dates. Contact the [Literacy Center](#) 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. Registration is available [here](#) for those who are eligible, but space is limited. Contact the [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Early Literacy Professional Development Approval and Praxis Voucher Request

Educators who need to submit a request to verify completion of an approved 80 hours of professional development can continue to follow the process outlined [here](#). Educators requesting a one-time Praxis voucher will use the same form, based on availability. Educators must schedule their exam within six months of receiving their voucher. Once the professional development has been approved, IDOE will issue a confirmation letter that will be used by the educator to complete the early literacy endorsement application in LVIS. An FAQ with additional information regarding the early literacy endorsement can be found [here](#), and we will continue to include additional questions and answers as they arise. Contact the [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Monthly Data Interpretation Office Hours Acadience Reading Preferred Universal Screener

Acadience Learning, Inc. will provide monthly office hours this school year to support school leaders and educators as they interpret the data from the state's preferred screener. Office hours will begin at 10:30 a.m. ET on Wednesday, February 4. Click [here](#) to join. Learn more information by visiting the Indiana Acadience webpage [here](#). Contact the [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

Office of School and Community Nutrition

NEW: Indiana Food Day 2026 Kick-off Webinar

Trying to figure out how to celebrate Indiana Food Day? The Farm to School team will have a kick-off webinar on Tuesday, February 3, at 2 p.m. ET, to help you begin your planning. The webinar will highlight the various ways sites have celebrated in the past. Click [here](#) to join, and email F2S@doe.in.gov to have your school's Food Day events highlighted in the webinar.

NEW: Indiana Crown for Schools Map Update

The time has come to update the [Indiana Farm to School and Early Childhood Education \(ECE\) Map](#)! This year, the Northeast Indiana Local Food Network and the Northwest Indiana Food Council are sponsoring a giveaway of four \$50 gift cards to those who participate. Our schools actively participating in at least one Farm to School activity will be entered into the giveaway drawing. Winners will be selected at random. To be entered into the drawing, schools and childcare facilities must complete one of the following by Wednesday, February 18:

- Add a new [Farm to School/ECE Program](#) to the map;
- Update existing information by [submitting a new survey](#); or
- Contact the Farm to School team to confirm that your program information does not need to be updated on the [current map](#). Submit the confirmation to F2S@doe.in.gov.

Thank you for your help in ensuring the map is up-to-date and informative!

Office of School Finance

REMINDER: Form 9 Data Due Saturday, January 31

The deadline to submit Form 9 financial data for the period of July to December 2025 is tomorrow, Saturday, January 31. The Form 9 application can be accessed via the [LINK Portal](#). Once in the portal, the financial administrator will navigate to the "Form 9" tile. Financial transparency information can also be submitted through the portal. Additional guidance regarding the submission of steps 5 through 7 can be found [here](#). Please contact form9@doe.in.gov with any questions.

REMINDER: Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Indirect Cost Rates Application Information

The window to apply for Indirect Cost Rates is open until Tuesday, March 31. Restricted and unrestricted indirect costs rates are calculated and certified only to entities that provide Form 9 financial information. New Form 9-reporting schools are eligible to apply, but will be subject to the median rate. Please see [this memo](#) for more information. Questions can be sent to icr@doe.in.gov.

Office of State and Transformation

REMINDER: Annual 1003 Flexibility Waivers

IDOE's Office of School Support and Transformation is [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. Read more about this opportunity in this [memo](#) and [Flexibility Guide for Indiana's K-12 Schools](#). Applications are now open and will be accepted on a rolling basis through Friday, April 24. Submitted applications will be reviewed by the State Board of Education during the following months: March, May, and July 2026. Contact [Georgia Watson](#) with any questions.

Office of Special Education, English Learning, and Migrant Education

NEW: Special Education Director Outreach Opportunities

IDOE's Office of Special Education is offering multiple support opportunities for Indiana special education directors and administrators throughout the 2025-2026 school year. Join the February sessions to learn more about statewide assessment accommodations for students in special education, statewide assessments and accountability, as well as alternative assessment participation guidelines.

- The [Directors Symposium](#) is held monthly to provide relevant policy and resource updates that support directors in strengthening compliance in their corporations' reporting.
- [Lead and Listen](#) sessions enable IDOE to address [submitted follow-up questions](#) regarding the Directors' Symposium.
- [New Director Community Chats](#) are also held monthly for special education directors and administrators, and 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.

NEW: Monthly New English Learner Director Professional Learning Community (PLC) on Tuesday, February 3

New directors of English learner programs are invited to join IDOE in an ongoing PLC during the 2025-2026 school year. This is a place to network with other stakeholders, access timely program information, and bring questions. The next session will be held on Tuesday, February 3, at 3 p.m. ET. The meeting link and information can be found on the [EL PD Opportunities Calendar](#). Please contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Migrant Education](#) with questions.

REMINDER: Disproportionate 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 today, Friday, January 30. The monitoring reports can be found in the [Office of Special Education Community Moodle](#). Submit the completed workbook and signed PDF via email to IDOE's [Office of Special Education Part B grants team](#), and contact your fiscal specialist with additional questions

REMINDER: 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 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. View a recording of the [grant application informational meeting](#) to learn more, and apply for the Educational Benefit Review Pilot Grant [here](#). Contact EBRPilotgrant@doe.in.gov with questions.

Indiana Commission for Higher Education

NEW: Career and Technical Education Awards for Excellence

Indiana's Career and Technical Education (CTE) team annually spotlights excellence in both secondary and postsecondary CTE through the Awards for Excellence (AFE). Nomination forms for the 2026 AFE ceremony are now open and will close on Monday, March 2. Information on secondary nominations can be found [here](#), and information on postsecondary nominations can be found [here](#). This year's ceremony will take place on Thursday, May 7, in Indianapolis.

Nominations are being accepted in four categories, including students, programs of study, partnerships, and career advising. The Commission for Higher Education's CTE team invites postsecondary institutions (each individual campus/branch can apply), high schools, and career centers to submit nominations. Additional information and each category's nomination form are included in the above links.

News from Our Partners

NEW FROM NAVY TALENT ACQUISITION GROUP: National Engineers Week - February 22-28

In support of National Engineers Week and in recognition of the exceptional Navy engineers and engineering technicians, the Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Heartland is inviting secondary and postsecondary institutions to request a school visit with a Navy engineer. The visit will take place during National Engineers Week from Sunday, February 22, through Saturday, February 28. Contact Education Services Specialist Theresa Clayton at Theresa.C.Clayton.civ@us.navy.mil or your nearest Navy recruiting station to request a visit.

NEW FROM NEXTECH AND THE COMPUTER SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION: CSPD Week Application and Information - June 15-19

Indiana's fifth annual Computer Science Professional Development (CSPD) Week is brought to you by Nextech and the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA), with support from IDOE. During CSPDWeek, 400 Indiana K-12 educators will come together to learn, network, create community, and continue to expand high-quality, rigorous AI and CS education for all K-12 students. This year's event will focus on CS education as a foundation for understanding AI. CSPDWeek will take place Monday, June 15, through Friday, June 19 at Indiana University in Bloomington. Learn more about CSPDWeek [here](#) and apply at [this link](#). Contact in.cspdweek@gmail.com with questions.

NEW FROM AP TIP: Spring Assessment Forum, April 8-10

The Spring Assessment Forum will take place at the Drury Plaza Hotel Indianapolis Carmel on Wednesday, April 8, through Friday, April 10. The new iteration of the Mock Exam Reading includes specific workshops for dual credit teachers, alongside AP teacher training. AP teachers will be provided access to a mock exam, and dual credit teachers will work with representatives from dual credit providers in Indiana to collaborate on topics related to college-level course expectations, assessment design, and the use of assessment data to drive instruction. Teachers of "dual seated" courses may choose either the AP or Dual Credit version of the Spring Assessment Forum. Registration is open through Friday, February 6. Visit the AP TIP [website](#) to learn more about the Spring Assessment Forum, review dates by subject, and register online. Contact [Stephanie Kuscera](#) with any questions.

NEW FROM NEXTECH: Stats Showdown Competition

Nextech is excited to bring back [Stats Showdown](#). This program introduces Hoosier students to the exciting world of data science and data analytics through college basketball and the NCAA® Tournament via two competitions. In the Data Science Bracket Competition (Grades 6–12), students will build an algorithm using past NCAA® Men's and Women's Tournament data to predict game winners of the 2026 NCAA® Basketball tournaments and become the Nextech Stats Showdown Champion. In the Quick Pick Data Challenge (Grades K–8), students will analyze simple team data to predict which four teams will make the Final Four. Contact [Sarah DelLong](#) for more information.

NEW FROM INDIANA SPORTS CORP: Participate in the Indiana K-12 March Madness Bracket Challenge

Calling all Indiana K–12 teachers! Indiana Sports Corp., in partnership with the NCAA®, is launching a statewide [Indiana March Madness Bracket Challenge](#), just for K–12 classrooms ahead of the 2026 Men's Final Four® in Indianapolis. Celebrate Indiana's basketball spirit by bringing this fun, free activity into your classroom and competing against other schools. Teachers are encouraged to integrate the bracket into existing lessons or use it to enhance curriculum-based activities. Schools with the top brackets in each grade group will earn statewide recognition and bragging rights, highlighted through local news and social media. [Register](#) your classroom today! Contact the [Indiana Sports Corp.](#) with any questions.

REMINDER FROM NEXTECH: District Computer Science Planning Workshops

Are you ready to create a computer science (CS) and artificial intelligence (AI) implementation plan for your district? SCRIPT (Strategic CSforALL Resource and Implementation Planning Tool) is a nationally-recognized workshop format offered across the country to help districts prepare a custom strategic plan for K-12 CS and AI education. Nextech is offering a virtual workshop on Tuesday, February 24, when your team can intentionally meet and take dedicated time to approach CS and AI for your students. Learn more about the opportunity [here](#). Contact [Stephanie Zischer](#) with any questions.

REMINDER FROM DATA SCIENCE 4 EVERYONE (DS4E): Data Science + Artificial Intelligence (AI) Professional Development (PD) Week - June 22-26

After partnering with IDOE to host Indiana's Data Science Summit in December 2025, DS4E is inviting Indiana educators to apply for Data Science + AI PD Week in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Hosted at the University of New Mexico from Monday, June 22, through Friday, June 26, educators will be matched with a curriculum provider and receive targeted training in data science and AI instruction. Financial support for educators to attend is available, and preference will be given to teacher groups from the same school. The application is linked [here](#) and is due Friday, January 30. Contact matangi@uchicago.edu with any questions.