



## Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update

Weekly Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education

January 31, 2025

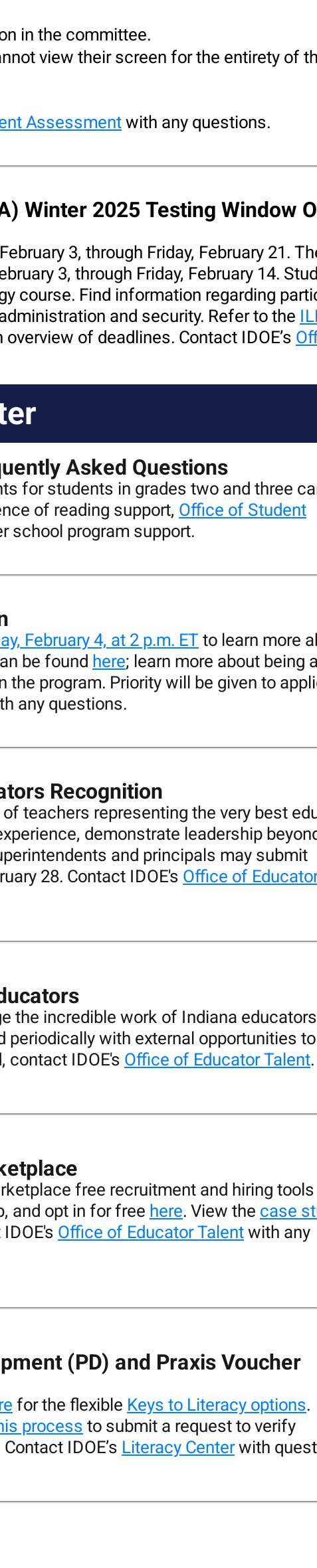
### A Message from Dr. Katie Jenner

"A farmer never plowed a field by turning it over in their mind."

This is Irish proverb that hung on my bedroom wall back in high school.

At that time in my life, one of my biggest focuses was making the high school varsity girls soccer team. Since it was the 1990s, the team was fairly new to our school, and I had never played before. I also wasn't the fastest. If I wanted to make the team, I was going to have to find my unique way to contribute...and I thought, if I couldn't be the fastest, maybe I could be the most conditioned, the most disciplined, and the most accurate. As the sign on my wall said, I wasn't going to "plow the field" just by thinking about it...I had to do something about it. So, I got to work! I spent hours and hours practicing direct and indirect kicks, corner kicks, and everything in between, hoping that some day, all of the hard work would pay off.

Even though there were tough moments getting there, the hard work did pay off. I made the team and was one of our team's captains my senior year. To this day, when I'm facing a challenge, that Irish proverb often pops in my mind. And like it did back in high school, fast forward to 2021 when Indiana was in the midst of a literacy crisis, that proverb (in addition to some Bible verses), certainly resonated again. Too many students were leaving third grade without foundational reading skills, and the long-term impacts of this were undeniable. So...here comes our Hoosier story...as we all joined together to figure out how to overcome this literacy crisis for Indiana students.



In so many ways, we have been plowing this field together for three years now, doing everything we can to help more students learn to read. This includes everything from our schools raising their hands to join the Indiana Literacy Cadre...to our teachers coming into classrooms for reading-focused training...to our parents reading with their child at home...to more families accessing high-quality tutoring opportunities through Indiana Learns...and so much more. We started to see our seeds sprout when the 2024 READ results came out in August and we saw the state's largest-ever single-year increase. This week, we got some more huge news...Indiana jumped to sixth in the nation for reading! This is the highest ranking we've ever achieved in fourth grade...and without a doubt, the work YOU are doing to help kids learn to read is making a difference.

Not only did our highest performing students grow (which we typically have been seeing), our lowest performing students also grew significantly in fourth grade! Reading for me what we typically have been seeing, our lowest performing students saw their reading scores go down, but not Indiana. And none of this is a coincidence...it is the result of hours and hours of hard work (years, really), and everyone joining together to find their unique way to contribute. Moments like this are the shot in the arm that we need to keep on going.

Next week, Governor Mike Braun of the State of the Indiana will Wednesday, the first standing ovation from everyone in the House Chamber came when our Governor gave a huge thank you to all of our educators for the role they played in Indiana's jump to 6th in the nation for reading. That standing ovation was for all of you...everyone who has worked tirelessly to help more students read, and I couldn't be more proud of the work you are leading. Let's keep at it!

### Office of Accountability

#### REMINDER: Synchronous and Asynchronous Instructional Days

As some schools continue to be impacted by winter weather, we wanted to remind you of the state statute regarding synchronous and asynchronous instructional days. Per statute, schools may have up to three asynchronous learning days each school year. Schools are not limited on the number of synchronous days. On a very limited basis, following the use of all three asynchronous days, superintendents may request flexibility [using this form](#) to make up a minimal number of snow days using asynchronous days. Districts are also able to make days up for person using their built in snow days. To the extent a district cannot make up a day via asynchronous instruction (i.e., power outage, etc.), please let us know and note that in the request. Contact IDOE's [Office of School Accountability](#) with any questions.

### Office of Assessment

#### NEW: SAT School Day Preparation Training

College Board's School Test Coordinator (STC) Part Two Webinar for STCs and other SAT School Day test staff will be Wednesday, February 12, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. ET. Participants will learn about SAT School Day preparation, test administration policies and procedures, important deadlines, and available resources. Register for the session [here](#). Contact College Board with any questions.

#### REMINDER: ILEARN Performance Level Descriptor (PLD) Review Committee Application Now Available

IDOE is seeking English/language arts (ELA) and math educators and instructional coaches who serve students in grades 3-8 to participate in the ILEARN PLD Review Committee. The PLD committee will review the current PLDs for all ILEARN ELA and mathematics assessments against research-based criteria and provide recommendations for future improvements, as appropriate.

- The committee will meet via Microsoft Teams from Tuesday, March 18, through Thursday, March 20, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET, and training will be included during the workshop.
- Participants will receive an honorarium of \$480 for their full participation in the committee.
- Participants must be located in a secure environment where others cannot view their screen for the entirety of the committee due to test security purposes.

The application deadline is Friday, February 14. Contact IDOE's [Office of Student Assessment](#) with any questions.

#### REMINDER: ILEARN Biology End-of-Course Assessment (ECA) Winter 2025 Testing Window Opens Monday, February 3

The ILEARN Biology ECA Winter 2025 online testing window is open Monday, February 3, through Friday, February 21. The paper-and-pencil test window for the ILEARN Biology Fall 2024 ECA is Monday, February 3, through Friday, February 14. 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 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: Required Summer School Reading Support-Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to frequently asked questions related to summer school requirements for students in grades two and three can be found [here](#). Contact IDOE's [Literacy Center](#) for K-5 curricular materials or science of reading support. [Office of Student Assessment](#) for assessment support, or [Office of School Accountability](#) for summer school program support.

#### REMINDER: Learn About Hosting Visiting Teacher from Spain

Register now to join IDOE and the Embassy of Spain and Sagamore on [Tuesday, February 4, at 2 p.m. ET](#) to learn more about hosting a visiting teacher from Spain. Details on this 2025-2026 opportunity can be found [here](#). Learn more about being a host school [here](#). Districts can complete [this application](#) to express their interest in the program. Priority will be given to applications completed by Monday, March 31. Contact IDOE's [Office of Educator Talent](#) with any questions.

#### REMINDER: Recommendations Open for Distinguished Educators Recognition

IDOE's Office of Educator Talent is looking for confidential recommendations of teachers representing the very best educators in Indiana. These emerging leaders must have between five and 15 years of experience, 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 Friday, February 28. Contact IDOE's [Office of Educator Talent](#) with any 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](#).

#### REMINDER: Opt-In to Utilize IDOE's Supply and Demand Marketplace

It's not too late to sign up to utilize Indiana's Educator Supply and Demand Marketplace free recruitment and hiring tools through IDOE's [partnership with Nimble](#). Click [here](#) to learn more about the partnership, and opt in for [here](#). View the [case study](#) from one district that tripled their applicant volume using these tools. Contact IDOE's [Office of Educator Talent](#) with any questions.

#### REMINDER: Early Literacy Endorsement Professional Development (PD) and 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 [this process](#) to submit to request to verify completion of the approved 80 hours and request a Praxis voucher, if needed. Contact IDOE's [Literacy Center](#) with questions.

### Office of Information Technology

#### NEW: Curricular Materials Cost Visualization

There is a new data visualization available (Curricular Materials Cost) for school corporation leaders to review prior to public release in several weeks. This visualization shows the reported costs for curricular materials over the past two years and the average per student. Data was reported from schools to IDOE's Office of School Finance for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years and is available through the EdData platform in the [LINK Portal](#) for users at the school corporation level.

#### NEW: E-Rate Match for Fiber Construction Now Available

IDOE is once again participating in the E-Rate Match Program for special fiber construction projects. Available to any Indiana public school for fiscal year (FY) 2025 (July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026), the program increases the discount rate for special construction charges for high-speed broadband that meets the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) long-term connectivity targets up to an additional 10% to match the state funding on a one-to-one dollar basis. Full application details are available [here](#). Contact IDOE's Director of Educational Technology, [Brad Hagg](#), with any questions.

#### REMINDER: Identify New IEP/ILP Support Contacts by Friday, February 7

IDOE is collaborating with PowerSchool Special Programs to implement Indiana's new Individual Education Program (IEP) and Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) software for the upcoming school year. To support this transition, IDOE has added a new IEP/ILP Support role in the LINK Portal and Data Exchange system.

- **What's Needed:** Service system coordinators must identify up to two individuals for this new role by Friday, February 7. These contacts will serve as system experts for the platform, be authorized to reach out to PowerSchool technical support, and receive applicable training on the role.
- **Assigning the Role:** Manually add contacts in the LINK Security Power. Instructions can be found [here](#).

Student information system (SIS) vendors will be notified of this new role, with data integration expected next school year. Please note that PowerSchool Special Programs is separate from the system that experienced a recent data breach. Contact IDOE's [IT Help Desk](#) with additional questions.

### Office of Policy and Government Affairs

#### NEW: Federal Executive Orders and Memos

IDOE is monitoring all federal Executive Orders and memos that may impact education. Specific questions regarding federal Executive Orders or memos can be directed [here](#) by selecting Constituent Services.

### Office of School Building Security & Safety

#### REMINDER: Student Safety Reporting

Pursuant to Indiana Code (IC) 20-3-27-1, corporations must report student bullying, arrests, and gang data for each school to IDOE. The data reporting requirements are now included on the DOE-ES Report (discipline report) via Data Exchange. This data collection is now open and will close Monday, June 30. Contact your school corporation's data administrator with questions about submitting this data. Learn more [here](#) and in IDOE's [Knowledge Hub](#).

#### REMINDER: School Staff Injury Reporting Requirements

IC 20-19-3-27 and IC 20-26-5-42 require public schools to report certain employee injury information to IDOE if the employee is physically injured on the job by a direct action of a student. Additional details can be found in [this memo](#). The annual data collection closes Monday, June 30. Schools will report through certified data submission via Data Exchange. Additional guidance and instructions regarding the data submission for the 2024-2025 school year can be found in IDOE's [Knowledge Hub](#).

### Office of School & Community Nutrition

#### NEW: Preparing for Food Day 2025

For the first time in its 10-year history, Indiana Food Day will spotlight one of the state's most iconic products – corn! As part of the Farm to School initiative, Food Day promotes locally grown products while allowing schools to choose their own celebration date. Additional details, including a toolkit and registration link to receive seeds and resources will be available soon. Contact IDOE's [Office of School and Community Nutrition](#) with questions.

#### REMINDER: Learn About Hosting Visiting Teacher from Spain

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### Office of School & Community Nutrition

#### NEW: America's Healthiest Schools Award

All Indiana schools that meet the requirements for the America's Healthiest Schools Award are eligible to apply for the award. Applications for the award are due April 15. The alliance will have several resources to help you with your application:

- Watch a [quick video tour](#) of the application online.
- Contact IDOE's [Office of School and Community Nutrition](#) with questions.

#### REMINDER: Form 9 Submissions by January 20, 2024

For the first time in its 10-year history, Indiana Food Day will spotlight one of the state's most iconic products – corn! As part of the Farm to School initiative, Food Day promotes locally grown products while allowing schools to choose their own celebration date. Additional details, including a toolkit and registration link to receive seeds and resources