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Dr. Jenner's Weekly Update

Weekly Newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education

May 15, 2026

A Message from Dr. Katie Jenner

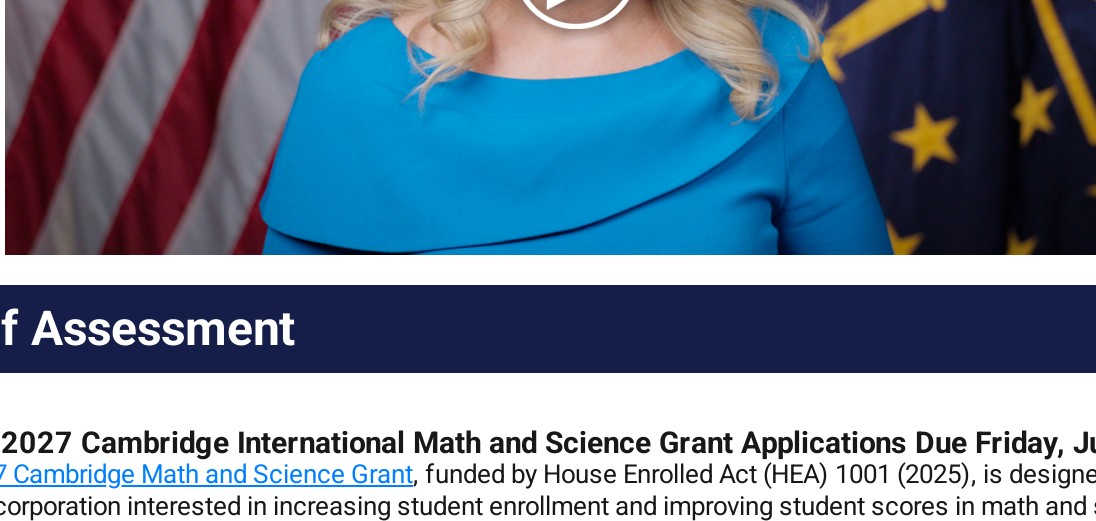
The final weeks of the school year are often packed with activities and celebrations. One of these celebrations is the selection of our local Teachers of the Year! These honorees represent the very best of our profession, and their local recognition launches our statewide Teacher of the Year process. To help increase awareness of this prestigious honor, 2024 Indiana Teacher of the Year **Mr. Eric Jenkins** has created multiple videos featuring other past honorees and highlighting the importance of celebrating our educator profession through the Teacher of the Year process. You can check out these videos here for [teachers](#) and [superintendents](#), and find the 2027 Indiana Teacher of the Year application below!

This time of year is also known for another important celebration...one that holds incredible meaning for our students, their parents/families, and all of us as educators, as another distinguished class of students prepares for **graduation!**

After 13 years of hard work, growth, and perseverance, our seniors are ready to pursue their unique purpose and make their mark on the world. Each graduate carries their own passions, goals, and dreams, and being part of their journey is both rewarding and inspiring. This season reminds us why we do this work: to empower every student to find their purpose and to reach their greatest potential.

Many of you have asked for a video that can be shared at high school ceremonies across the state, so please feel welcome to use the video message below to honor the class of 2026.

Congratulations to our Indiana graduates! And, educators, thank you for all you have done to support our graduates throughout their K-12 journey!



Office of Assessment

NEW: 2026-2027 Cambridge International Math and Science Grant Applications Due Friday, July 17

The [2026-2027 Cambridge Math and Science Grant](#), funded by House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1001 (2025), is designed to support any school or corporation interested in increasing student enrollment and improving student scores in math and science. The application is now open, and applicants can request up to \$25,000 per school. The grant implementation cycle begins Wednesday, July 1, and ends June 30, 2027. Applicable expenses made prior to completing the grant application can be reimbursed. Completed [grant applications](#) are due Friday, July 17. Contact the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) [Office of Student Assessment](#) with questions.

REMINDER: Fall 2026 Indiana Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (IKRA) Opt-in

Schools wishing to opt-in to the [IKRA](#) this fall should do so by today, Friday, May 15, to ensure updated materials can be printed and shipped by the start of school. *If schools participated in the IKRA previously, you must still complete an opt-in form for 2026-2027.* Contact IDOE's [Office of Student Assessment](#) with any questions.

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

NEW: 2026 Indiana Academic Standards and Content Connectors for K-12 Social Studies Now Available

The Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) approved updated K-12 Indiana Academic Standards (IAS) and Content Connectors (CCs) for K-12 Social Studies per the regularly scheduled standards revision cycle pursuant to Indiana Code (IC) 20-31-3-2. All updated IAS and CCs are now accessible on IDOE's [Indiana Academic Standards webpage](#). IDOE extends special thanks to the educators who served as committee reviewers throughout this process, as well as all who contributed via public comment. Please contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

NEW: Standards Revision and Implementation Guidance Now Available on IAS Webpage

IDOE facilitates the formal revision of IAS at least once every six years pursuant to IC 20-31-3-2. The previously shared [Standards Revision and Implementation Guidance](#) is now available on IDOE's [Indiana Academic Standards webpage](#). It reflects the standards revision and (instructional and assessment) implementation schedule for specific content areas for the next two to five years, as well as implementation details for IDOE's High Quality Curriculum Materials evaluation process. Please contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

NEW: Advanced Placement (AP) Professional Development Grant Application 2026-2027

The Indiana General Assembly appropriated a portion of the STEM Program Alignment Fund in [HEA 1001 \(2025\)](#) to be used by colleges or universities for the purpose of increasing student enrollment and improving student scores in [AP math and science courses](#). This grant supports professional development and educator programming that delivers these key results. Grant submissions from eligible postsecondary institutions are due Friday, June 7. Please see the [grant guidelines](#) for more information and the [grant application form](#) for submissions. Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Tiered System of Supports Live Series - The Value of Strong Tier I Math Instruction in K-8

IDOE's Office of Curriculum and Instruction will host a live webinar to support local implementation of mathematics tiered instruction. This webinar will focus on planning Mathematics Tier I environment, curriculum, instruction, and data evaluation to create a solid structure supporting students' progress toward grade-level proficiency. There will also be time for participants to ask questions. The webinar will take place at 3:30 p.m. ET on Tuesday, May 19. Use this [link](#) to register. Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: 2026-2027 High Ability Program Grant Presentation Slides and Guidance

The 2026-2027 High Ability Program Grant is designed to support public schools, including charter schools, in identifying and providing services for high ability students in kindergarten through grade 12. High Ability coordinators and administrators unable to attend the pre-launch webinar on Tuesday, May 12, can now access the [presentation](#) and [grant guidance](#). All eligible school corporations have received notification with the application link and their allocation amounts. Applications are due by 11:45 p.m. ET on Friday, August 14. Contact IDOE's [Office of Curriculum and Instruction: High Ability](#) with any questions.

Office of Educator Talent and Literacy Center

NEW: Now Accepting Nominations for the 2027 Indiana Teacher of the Year

The Indiana Teacher of the Year Program works to inspire, rejuvenate, and celebrate the teaching profession by recognizing outstanding teachers from across the state. Schools are encouraged to participate in the state's annual selection process which is now open and concludes in fall 2026. Local schools and Teacher(s) of the Year are encouraged to complete [this application](#) by 5 p.m. ET on Friday, July 3, as the first step in the application process. More information regarding the Indiana Teacher of the Year selection process can be found [here](#). Contact info@doe.in.gov with any questions.

NEW: Science of Reading Experts Explain Series

Join IDOE and The Reading League Indiana from noon to 1 p.m. ET on Tuesday, May 19, for the final live Experts Explain session with Alexandria Chalonec and Ailish McDermott from The Writing Revolution presenting, "The Writing Revolution: Explicit Writing Instruction in Service of Learning in K-12." In this culminating session for the series, participants will equip themselves with a wealth of knowledge to wrap up this school year and to be well-prepared for the next! All sessions are recorded and available in the Indiana Learning Lab. See registration details [here](#). Contact IDOE's [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: IDOE Accepting Nominations for the 2026-2027 RISE Classified Staff Award

Schools across the state are encouraged to nominate up to two classified school employees for the [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-kindergarten through high school. All nominations must be submitted via [this JotForm](#) by 5 p.m. ET on Friday, June 12. Contact IDOE's [Office of Educator Talent](#) with any questions.

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

[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. IDOE's Literacy Center released the [2026-2027 annual K-8 reading plan guidance](#). Contact IDOE's [Literacy Center](#) with any questions.

Office of Student, School, and Family Engagement

NEW: Congratulations to Family Engagement Certificate Recipients

IDOE proudly recognizes the schools that were recently honored with a Family Engagement Certificate by the Statewide Family Engagement Center, IN*SOURCE. Congratulations to each honoree on this achievement, and thank you for the important work you lead for Indiana students, families, and communities. To see the complete list of schools honored this year, visit [Family Engagement Certification](#).

Office of Special Education, English Learning, and Migrant Education

NEW: English Learner (EL) Exit Criteria Resources

IDOE's EL team has provided guidance on the process to exit eligible students from EL status through a review of additional evidence alongside WIDA results. The [Exit Criteria for English Learners Guidance](#) has been updated to apply to 2026 WIDA ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS results. Accompanying resources, such as training materials and Decision-Making Tool templates, can be found on IDOE's [English Learning and Migrant Education webpage](#). Per the guidance, students provisionally determined proficient via an additional evidence review must be submitted to IDOE for approval prior to formally exiting. The window to submit these students is currently open through Friday, August 21. Contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Migrant Education](#) with questions.

NEW: English/Language Arts (ELA) Praxis Vouchers Available for EL Teachers

EL-licensed educators can now apply for a voucher to take the ELA: Content Knowledge (5038) Praxis assessment. This voucher covers the full cost of the exam and provides a streamlined pathway for EL teachers to add the ELA 5-12 content area to their existing license without additional coursework. ELA licensure enables EL educators to teach credit-bearing secondary ELA courses, expanding access to high-quality instruction for EL students. Complete [this JotForm](#) to request a voucher and get started. Recipients must take the assessment within six months of receiving the voucher. Contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Migrant Education](#) with any questions.

NEW: Early Intervention Transition Roadshow

IDOE's Office of Special Education is partnering with the Bureau of Child Development Services (First Steps) to travel around the state for joint training related to transition from Part C (First Steps) to Part B services. Events are capped at 100 attendees and guests are encouraged to attend the event in their corresponding cluster. Register for the training [here](#) and email specialeducation@doe.in.gov with any questions.

NEW: Cohort 7 Aspiring Special Education Leadership Institute

The Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education (ICASE), in partnership with IDOE's Office of Special Education, is pleased to announce the participants of the Aspiring Special Education Leadership Institute (ASELI) for the 2026-2027 school year.

ASELI is a one-year leadership development program designed to prepare Indiana educators for future roles in special education leadership. This seventh cohort includes both individual participants and five school-based leadership teams made up of a principal and teacher leader. All participants share a strong commitment to strengthening special education services and improving outcomes for students with disabilities. Congratulations to [Cohort 7!](#)

NEW: Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Special Education Grant Assurances Due Wednesday, July 1

The FY 2027 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Grant Assurance template and instructions for using the Grant Management System are now available here: [Moodle>Fiscal-Part B Grants for Special Education>FY27 Grant Information>Assurances](#). To reserve the earliest reimbursement effective date for the FY 2027 Part B grant period, schools must submit correctly completed Assurances for the FY 2027 Part B grants in the Grant Management System on or before Wednesday, July 1. Please contact partbgrants@doe.in.gov with any questions.

NEW: 2027 General Education Provision Act (GEPA) Forms Due Wednesday, July 1

To comply with Section 427 of GEPA, local educational agencies (LEAs) requesting IDEA Part B funds must have an approved GEPA statement of compliance on file. If an LEA needs to update its GEPA Section 427 form, a new form will need to be completed and uploaded to IDOE's grant management system. The GEPA form can be found in [Moodle>Fiscal-Part B Grants for Special Education>FY27 Grant Information>GEPA Section 427](#). All questions must be answered on the GEPA form. Contact partbgrants@doe.in.gov with additional questions.

UPDATE: 2026 Special Education Director Outreach Opportunities

IDOE's Office of Special Education is offering multiple support opportunities for Indiana special education directors and administrators in 2026. Join the May sessions to learn more about exiting and graduation from Brandon Myers, Assistant Director of Program Performance and Reporting, as well as Indiana's new school accountability model from Vanessa Deveau Bachle, Director of Innovation.

- 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 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, 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.

REMINDER: 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 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. Click the links below to join:

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

REMINDER: EL Leadership Meeting on Wednesday, May 21

IDOE's Office of English Learning and Migrant Education will host the next virtual EL Leadership Meeting on Wednesday, May 21, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. ET. This meeting is intended for Indiana K-12 EL leaders and administrators. The first two hours will include updates and interactive content on timely EL topics. The final hour will be reserved as an open Q&A session for attendees who wish to remain online for additional support. This session has transitioned to a Microsoft Teams webinar format, and registration is now required to receive the meeting link. Participant experience and functionality will remain the same. For more information, view the [Indiana EL Professional Development Opportunities Calendar](#). Contact IDOE's [Office of English Learning and Migrant Education](#) with any questions.

Office of Title Grants and Support

NEW: 2024-2025 Risk Assessment

Risk Assessments for the 2024-2025 school year are now available and published on Moodle for LEAs to review. To view your LEA's Risk Assessment data, you will first need to enroll in the Federal Compliance course. The enrollment key is: [apple](#).

Note: LEAs selected for additional monitoring, desktop or onsite, will be made aware via a formal memo. Additional information related to monitoring will be released soon.

Questions? Join our [Virtual Risk Assessment Office Hours via Microsoft Teams](#) scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, at 10 a.m. ET. Additional concerns can be sent to the Federal Compliance inbox at federalmonitoring@doe.in.gov.

Office of Educational Options and Quality

NEW: Charter School Program's State Facility Incentive Grant (SFIG)

The Cohort 1 application for the State Facility Incentive Grant is now open! This is a federal grant that provides per-pupil facilities aid to charter schools. Please use this [link](#) to learn more and apply today!

NEW: 2026-2027 Renewal Application and Reporting Requirements Open for Approved Alternative Education Programs

The [2026-2027 Alternative Education Renewal Application](#) is now open. Approved Alternative Education Programs are encouraged to submit all required materials before the Tuesday, June 30, deadline. The Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) Report and IDOE-AL Report are also due via [Data Exchange](#) by Tuesday, June 30. For questions or support during the renewal and reporting process, please contact StudentPathways_AltEd@doe.in.gov.

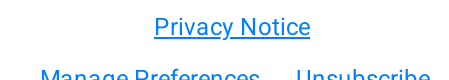
News From Our Partners

NEW FROM 1ST MAKER SPACE: Free Summer Professional Development Opportunities

This summer, 1st Maker Space is offering four free, one-hour virtual professional development sessions designed to inspire hands-on learning and introduce educators to tools like AI, robotics, and digital fabrication. Visit [this website](#) to access session details and to register. Contact [Amber Hudson](#) with any questions.

REMINDER FROM KEEP INDIANA LEARNING (A DEPARTMENT OF CIESC): Summer Conference Registration Open

Keep Indiana Learning (KINL) is excited to host two incredible Hoosier educators and authors, Katie Powell and Matt Miller, as the KINLCon Summer Conference keynote speakers. Known for their passion for PK-12 student learning, engagement, and edtech, they will energize teachers, administrators, and counselors. Don't miss the knowledge they bring to KINLCon on Tuesday, June 9, and Wednesday, June 10, at Plainfield High School. [Register today](#) as the conference is only three and a half weeks away! Contact [Keep Indiana Learning](#) with any questions.



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