



# ROCKET READ UP

Issue #4, April 2026:

**Sensational Seasons:  
Exploring Spring & Summer**



## **Rocket Fuel** - a note from Superintendent James Michaels

As a superintendent who is blind, the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is not just a framework I advocate for professionally—it is one I have lived. Two ECC areas that resonate deeply with me are Sensory Efficiency and Recreation and Leisure. As a former Beep Baseball player, spring and summer have always been one of my favorite times of year, because they meant it was time to compete, connect with teammates, and fully experience the world through my remaining senses. Sensory efficiency is about learning to intentionally gather and interpret information through sound, touch, and smell, and those skills come alive during these seasons. The smell of freshly mowed grass, the warmth of the sun, and the distinct fragrance of spring flowers are not small details—they are meaningful sources of information and joy. Recreation and leisure provide students who are blind or visually impaired opportunities to build confidence, social skills, and lifelong interests, while sensory efficiency allows them to engage with these experiences more fully. Together, these ECC areas support independence, well-being, and a rich quality of life far beyond the classroom.

### **Countdown**

- April 16:** Kayla Hamilton/Dance Club performance
- April 17:** ISBVI SEE Camp (6/7-12) applications due
- April 22-24:** L.E.A.D.S. (p. 3)
- April 24-26:** Swimming/Forensics Conference
- May 7:** Prom
- May 14:** Sports Banquet
- May 16:** Family Picnic & Fun Day (p. 4)
- May 21:** Senior Banquet
- May 22:** Graduation



*ISBVI student artwork--tactile collage by CJ*

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## Recreation and Leisure Activities for the Blind and Low Vision

Individuals who are blind or have low vision have access to a wide variety of recreational and leisure activities that promote physical fitness, social connection, and personal enjoyment. Contrary to common misconceptions, blindness does not prevent active participation in sports and recreation. Adapted sports programs specifically designed for people with visual impairments have made it possible for individuals to engage in competitive athletics while building strength, endurance, and confidence. These activities range from traditional sports modified with auditory or tactile cues to entirely specialized sports developed specifically for blind and low vision athletes. By participating in these recreational opportunities, individuals can achieve and maintain excellent fitness levels comparable to their sighted peers.

Beep baseball, blind hockey, and goalball are three prominent adapted sports that demonstrate the athletic potential of blind and low vision individuals. Beep baseball features a modified baseball with an internal beeping device, allowing players to locate and hit the ball by sound; players navigate the field using auditory feedback from base coaches. Blind hockey uses a puck with an internal bell and specialized sticks, enabling teams to play with the same competitive spirit as traditional hockey. Goalball, an internationally recognized Paralympic sport, involves two teams throwing a ball embedded with bells across a court, with players using their entire bodies to defend their goal. Each sport requires significant cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, agility, and hand-eye coordination adapted through sound localization and spatial awareness.

Research demonstrates that blind and low vision athletes who participate regularly in adapted sports maintain fitness levels comparable to or exceeding those of sighted individuals. These recreational programs improve cardiovascular health, muscle tone, balance, and coordination while reducing the risk of obesity and related health conditions. Beyond physical benefits, participation in organized sports and leisure activities fosters social inclusion, builds self-esteem, and provides opportunities for meaningful friendships and community engagement. Organizations dedicated to sports for the blind continue to expand access to these activities, ensuring that individuals with visual impairments can lead active, healthy, and fulfilling lives.





**Outreach Programming Spotlight: L.E.A.D.S.**  
(Learners Excelling, Achieving, Dreaming, Succeeding)

Each year ISBVI Outreach offers Indiana students ECC-intensive short courses during the school year: **Leap into L.E.A.D.S.** (grades K-5) and **L.E.A.D.S.** (grades 6-12). L.E.A.D.S. teacher Haley Yost describes the ways she incorporated Recreation & Leisure and Sensory Efficiency into the curriculum for the most recent elementary-level session:

“We visited Fort Harrison State Park, where students went fishing and participated in a sensory hike. Before the trip, we prepared by learning about native birds and their calls using the Audubon website. While we were at the park, students listened for bird calls and practiced identifying the ones they had learned about. Our State Park guide also helped students explore different trees by collecting leaves, nuts, and twigs and teaching them how to identify trees by noticing differences in how the items looked and felt. Fishing was another great sensory experience. Students listened carefully to where their casts landed in the water, practiced baiting hooks, and enjoyed the excitement of hopefully catching a fish. Activities like hiking provide so many opportunities for meaningful sensory experiences.”

Fun and friendship are built into every L.E.A.D.S. session, alongside meaningful training in ECC skills. Bridging activities provided to students, parents, and BLVs help support continuous growth between sessions and beyond. We hope you will keep L.E.A.D.S. in mind as a valuable opportunity for your students—and watch for details about our 2026–27 courses!



**Summer opportunities for students/Information for families:**

[HKNC Summer Youth Vocational Program: Empowering Youth through STEAM, Surfing, and Self-Discovery](#)

[ISBVI SEE Camp](#)

[Indiana Blind Bowling Leagues](#)

[Turnstone Sports & Rec, Fort Wayne](#)

[RHI Adaptive Sports](#)

[Indy Thunder and Indy Edge Beep Baseball](#)

[Suggestions for Recreation and Leisure Activities for Blind and Visually Impaired Children – Paths to Literacy](#)

**Professional Development Opportunities--Conferences:**

Perkins **2026 CVI Conference**, 6/19-6/21, Boston

**AER International Conference**, 7/29-8/2, Louisville



*Leap into L.E.A.D.S. students fishing at Ft. Harrison State Park during March's session*



**Save the Date: ISBVI Family Picnic & Fun Day!**

Join us on campus on May 16 from 10:00 AM–12:00 PM. All Indiana families of students who are blind or have low vision, along with the professionals who support them, are invited to enjoy food, lawn games, fun activities, and opportunities to connect with other families and staff. Together, we will celebrate the end of the school year and the successful first year of our Parent and Community Engagement Program. All campus and outreach families/professionals are welcome. We hope to see you there!

Saturday, May 16

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

ISBVI – 2701 N. Devon Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46219

Event registration: <https://form.jotform.com/252315148113144>

**Access Pass:** Does anyone in your home receive Hoosier Healthwise Insurance, SNAP, or TANF? If so, you qualify for the Access Pass! With this pass you are able to get reduced admission to various locations across the state! Access pass information can be found [here](#).

**Summer fun in your area!** Want more suggestions? [Email Cassie](#).

**Northern Indiana:**

[Potawatomi Zoo](#) - South Bend

[Washington Park Zoo](#) - Michigan City

[Indiana Dunes National Park](#) - Northwest Indiana

[Adaptive Kayaking](#) - Northwest Indiana

**Central Indiana:**

[Children's Museum](#) - Museum My Way

[Indiana State Museum](#) - Sensory Friendly Afternoons

[Indianapolis Zoo](#) - Indianapolis

[Conner Prairie](#) - Fishers

[Murphy Aquatic Park](#) - Avon

**Southern Indiana:**

[Holiday World and Splashin' Safari](#) - Santa Claus

[Patoka Lake Nature Programs](#) - Birdseye

[Spring Mill State Park](#) - Mitchell

