

A green, curved line representing a hill. On the hill, there are five blue silhouettes of people in various walking or standing poses, moving from left to right.

## Indiana Department of Education

**Glenda Ritz, NBCT**  
Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

### **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Chris Atkins, State Budget Director  
Office of Management and Budget

**FROM:** Glenda Ritz, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Indiana Department of Education

**DATE:** February 5, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Agency Overview – Budget Transmittal Letter

#### **Introduction**

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is charged with the critical role of providing support and guidance to Indiana's public schools to ensure that all of Indiana's K-12 students are college and career ready by the time they leave high school.

IDOE is committed to not only setting high expectations for our schools, but contributing to their actualization through guidance and expertise to local school corporations. This local support will lead to greater transparency and confidence in the department.

The department will empower local school districts by helping to identify areas of need in terms of school cultural improvement, technology, best instructional practices, and assessment. Furthermore, IDOE will assist with the school improvement evaluation process of school culture. It will introduce practices that will foster reading competency and instill a lifelong love of learning. While the IDOE is charged with educating children from many socioeconomic backgrounds who face a variety of challenges in and out of the classroom, reading is the great equalizer that can open the door of opportunity for all.

#### **Structure and Organization**

IDOE is overseen by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Glenda Ritz. The Superintendent began her term on January 14, 2013. The Chief of Staff, Special Advisor, and Executive Assistant

report directly to the Superintendent. IDOE is currently being organized into five administrative and operational divisions. The division directors report to the Chief of Staff and the Superintendent.

The following members of IDOE's leadership team report directly to the Chief of Staff: the Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Executive Director of Government & Public Affairs, the Director of Legislative Affairs, General Counsel, the Executive Director of Communications, and the Executive Director of Operations.

The Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction leads IDOE's regional outreach support, school support services, and student achievement and improvement. Those who directly report to the Deputy Superintendent are the Assistant Superintendent of Regional Outreach, the Assistant Superintendent of School Support Services, and the Assistant Superintendent of Student Achievement & Improvement.

The Executive Director of Government & Public Affairs is responsible for overseeing the alignment of IDOE practices and policies as they relate to rules, laws and guidelines established by the Indiana State Board of Education, the Education Roundtable, the Indiana General Assembly, the U.S. Department of Education, and federal government. Those who report directly to the Executive Director of Government & Public Affairs are the Committee Oversight Assistant, the Director of Federal Relations, the Executive Director of the State Board of Education, and the Executive Director of the Roundtable.

The General Counsel leads the Legal Affairs Division. This division is responsible for handling complaints, investigations and lawsuits on behalf of IDOE with a highly professional team of attorneys and legal assistants. The division provides counsel on issues, policies and laws related to education.

The Executive Director of Communications is responsible for leading all internal and external agency communications, technology, and policy and research. Those who report directly to the Executive Director of Communications are the Policy & Research Team Coordinator, Press Secretary, the Director of Education and Technology and the Director of Technology Network & Infrastructure.

The Executive Director of Operations is responsible for the Department's financial and business operations. Reporting to the Executive Director of Operations is the Chief Financial Officer who oversees finance, school finance, and business operations.

### **Indiana Department of Education's Priority Focus**

IDOE is focused on ensuring Indiana students receive a world-class education from highly qualified teachers in safe school environments. The department has identified five main priorities.

IDOE will put Indiana's Pre-K-12 school system on track to dedicate more time for teaching and less time on testing. IDOE is focused on allocating more time and resources to instruction so that Indiana will graduate students who possess the necessary critical thinking skills to become effective problem solvers and productive citizens.

IDOE will strengthen and support local control of our schools to ensure that Indiana's parents, students, business and community members are stakeholders. Students will graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in their local communities and globally.

IDOE is committed to improving the safety of schools. This will be achieved by strengthening the school safety specialist program and providing training to school staff on effective methods to stop bullying and other acts of violence.

IDOE will work with the State Board of Education and the educational community to establish high-quality pre-service and licensing standards and provide local schools with effective teacher evaluation tools. Teacher licensing and evaluation standards will be top in the nation. Indiana schools will be staffed with professional, respected educators.

IDOE will work in partnership with numerous stakeholders to clear the barriers to quality career and technical education. In an increasingly competitive world, schools must prepare all students for career and college readiness.

### **Challenges and How We Will Meet Them**

As technology becomes increasingly a central educational tool, our schools are not on equal footing in terms of access and quality. Challenges to the IDOE include the collection and maintenance of up-to-date data on schools' technological capacity and offerings, as well as serving as a resource to locals for finding solutions to their technology needs. This challenge can be addressed through more collaboration with critical stakeholders including, for example, local elected officials, nonprofit organizations, labor, and the business community. The challenges will require coordination among IDOE's professional education technology staff, the Regional Outreach Coordinators, nine (9) Education Service Centers, and communities. Additionally, IDOE is committed to working with municipalities to identify relevant grants.

IDOE also faces its own technological deficiencies within the department that must be immediately addressed. At present, some grant applications and required reports are hand-calculated which is inefficient and unnecessary. IDOE's technology experts will update the internal infrastructure so data can be quickly retrieved, analyzed and disseminated.

While it is reported that Indiana's graduation rates are on the increase, IDOE must ensure that waivers are not being misused and that graduation rates are being properly and accurately calculated. IDOE is committed to a thorough review of data collection and accountability processes.

In recent years, actions by the Indiana General Assembly and State Board of Education have demanded greater school accountability and transparency. It is incumbent upon the IDOE to ensure that true growth is being measured in a fair, understandable and transparent way through the use of accurate, reliable assessments and data, and sound calculation methods.

Another challenge faced by the IDOE is implementing an organizational structure conducive to providing an effective support system to local school districts. This can be remedied through the creation of Regional Outreach Teams which will be implemented in conjunction with a change in the department's overall structure.

Professional development for educators has been defunded and neglected in recent years as more resources have been allocated to testing. In order for Indiana to compete on the national and global stages, we must have the best well-prepared educators in our classrooms. This requires providing ongoing support and training in an ever-changing, globally competitive world. This can be achieved through funding quality professional development opportunities directly to school districts and delivered through the Education Service Centers that are already in place.

### **Priority Requests**

DOE is committed to providing local communities with the support and resources necessary to offer their students a world-class education. In order to meet this high expectation, the administration has outlined the following priority focus areas.

Regional Outreach Teams (\$1,098,000 in FY 2014 and \$1,098,000 in FY 2015): All communities will have access to educational experts who can help identify and remedy weaknesses in local school corporations so that state interventions, in time, become unnecessary. Nine regional outreach coordinator teams will be located throughout the state. The teams will build partnerships with the schools and communities they serve. Through the school improvement process, they will assess the schools' culture, achievement, leadership and practices. Local communities will be empowered to improve and direct their schools.

Professional Development (\$2,500,000 in FY 2014 and \$2,500,000 in FY 2015): Under the previous administration, all professional development dollars were eliminated. Best practices, and educator input, reveal that high-quality professional development is vital to affording our children exceptional educational experiences.

Remediation/Intervention (\$10,000,000 in FY 2014 and \$10,000,000 in FY 2015): Identifying struggling students in the lower grades and providing them with the appropriate remediation will pave a path for students to get on track to perform at grade-level and experience early success. Currently, too many students are receiving remediation after they graduate from high school. Remediation at the primary and secondary levels boosts students' likelihood of successfully being college and career ready.

Maintain Education Service Centers at Full Strength (\$2,000,000 in FY 2014 and \$2,000,000 in FY 2015): Indiana's nine regional Education Service Centers provide a cost-effective means for schools to pool resources and offer high-quality professional development opportunities and support. They are staffed by education experts and are essential to providing local support to schools, particularly in terms of professional development and access to technology.

School Safety (\$978,500 in FY 2014 and \$978,500 in FY 2015): IDOE is known nationally for its safety specialist academy. The Superintendent will work with the Governor and other officials to provide more relevant training and additional school safety specialists to ensure our schools are the safest in the country.

Re-establish the Principal Leadership Academy (\$380,000 in FY 2014 and \$380,000 in FY 2015): The Principal Leadership Academy, created in the 1980s, provided leadership training to school leadership across the state and promoted the sharing of best practices. At the disservice of Indiana's students, it was eliminated under the prior administration and should now be restored jointly by the IDOE and the General Assembly.

Thank you for your consideration of IDOE's priority budget requests. Through collaboration, sound policy and stewardship, Indiana can provide its children the nation's most equitable and innovative Pre-K-12 education system.