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Dear Colleagues:

I hope the holiday break provided you with a chance to reconnect with loved ones, eat some good food, rest, and reset.

In today's Weekly Message, you'll see that Educators Rising is having its annual conference on March 6, and I wanted to take this opportunity to share my excitement about this awesome organization and how students in your district can get involved.

Educators Rising is a career and technical student organization (CTSO). That means that – just like FFA for farming, FCCLA for family and consumer science, and FBLA for business – Educators Rising offers curriculum and clinical experiences to high school students who are interested in pursuing a career in education. This organization has affiliate agreements with 32 states (<https://educatorsrising.org/who-we-are/#affiliates/>), but only Illinois provides free access to the Educators Rising curriculum (<https://educatorsrising.org/curriculum/>) through the 2023-24 school year (just contact Wally Janneh at [wjanneh@pdkintl.org](mailto:wjanneh@pdkintl.org) (<mailto:wjanneh@pdkintl.org>)). If your district wants to offer a club instead of a course, you can have a teacher create an account here (<https://educatorsrising.org/join-1/>). And support doesn't end after high school; Educators Rising also partners with colleges and universities to offer more opportunities to members.

Dr. Lindsey Jensen, our 2018 Illinois State Teacher of the Year, coordinates Illinois Educators Rising work, and says it's a great way to nourish future teachers.

"As districts navigate their own specific challenges due to the teacher shortage, it is now more important than ever before for districts to develop their own early ed pathways," she says. "In fact, research supports that over 60 percent of teachers teach within 20 miles of where they grew up! Educators Rising provides high school students the opportunity to experience intro to education coursework, as well clinical experiences that illuminate the joy of working with kids. These experiences introduce students to all that a career in education can offer, and it turns out there are more young people interested in teaching than you might think!"

One of my own eighth grade teachers, Mrs. Pifke, made such a significant impression on me that I patterned myself after her – her high standards, her rigor, her kindness, and even the high heels she wore that made such a distinct sound when she walked down the hall. Chances are, you have students in your classrooms today who are pondering the possibility of stepping into your shoes, and Educators Rising can give them a jump start into our profession.

At the daylong conference (<https://web.cvent.com/event/532b97c4-490d-40c3-9640-5ef359452b5c/summary>) on March 6, students from the 150 or so Educators Rising chapters in Illinois will convene at Illinois State University. Some students will show off their skills in Children's Literature, Creative Lecture, job interviewing, and other areas. Kimberly Radostits, our 2022 Illinois State Teacher of the Year, will deliver the keynote address, and the conference will feature inspiring breakout sessions and surprise guests.

I'm excited for these future educators as they begin their journey into this most meaningful profession. They remind me – and hopefully you, too – of why we do what we do.

Here's to an incredible 2023!

*Pictured: Let's flash back once more to 2022 during Computer Science Week! STEAM students at West Oak and Diamond Lake Schools participated in Hour of Code, a nationwide initiative to introduce millions of students to one hour of computer science and computer programming. We are wishing all students luck and academic success in 2023!*

Sincerely,

*Carmen*

## DATES AND DEADLINES

Please note this is not a complete list of events, meetings, and deadlines. For more events and details, visit the ISBE Calendar page (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ISBE-Meetings.aspx>).

<b>Jan. 9</b>	Deadline to apply for Evidence-Based Funding Property Tax Relief Grant in IWAS
<b>Jan. 12</b>	Postmark deadline for Illinois Arts Education Week student poster contest entries ( <a href="https://www.isbe.net/artcontest">https://www.isbe.net/artcontest</a> )
<b>Jan. 12</b>	Webinar: Date Collections Q&A ( <a href="https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/2174502371330329612">https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/2174502371330329612</a> )
<b>Jan. 16</b>	ISBE offices closed
<b>Jan, 17</b>	Webinar: School Partnerships Series: Building Curricula and Activities ( <a href="https://metrofamily.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvde-vpzMsHNxp7-u7siA2wFuDvYDWunqx">https://metrofamily.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvde-vpzMsHNxp7-u7siA2wFuDvYDWunqx</a> )
<b>Jan. 18</b>	Deadline to apply for 2023 Illinois Green Ribbon Schools ( <a href="https://illinoisgreenalliance.org/green-ribbon-schools/">https://illinoisgreenalliance.org/green-ribbon-schools/</a> )
<b>Jan. 20</b>	Webinar: My Data Dashboard: Demonstration of Report Card Metric Deep-Dives ( <a href="https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/8978279227537215759">https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/8978279227537215759</a> )
<b>Jan. 20</b>	Deadline to apply for FY 2023 National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grants ( <a href="https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Equipment-Grants.aspx">https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Equipment-Grants.aspx</a> )
<b>Jan. 23 - Mar. 31</b>	SY 2022-23 School Climate Survey administration window
<b>Jan. 26</b>	Deadline to submit applicant concept papers for the U.S. Department of Energy's Renew America's Schools grant program ( <a href="https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx#Foald06985843-f32c-494e-880a-cb5db6d787a4">https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx#Foald06985843-f32c-494e-880a-cb5db6d787a4</a> )

<b>Feb. 13</b>	ISBE offices closed
<b>Feb. 15</b>	ISBE Career Connections: Building Community Before the Illinois Association for Career and Technical Education Annual Conference
<b>Feb. 15</b>	ISBE Career Connections: Building Community Before the Illinois Association for Career and Technical Education Annual Conference ( <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/isbe-career-connections-registration-420820745177">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/isbe-career-connections-registration-420820745177</a> )
<b>Feb. 20</b>	ISBE offices closed
<b>Feb. 28</b>	Deadline to apply for the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy CLASS Prize ( <a href="https://www.herox.com/energy-class">https://www.herox.com/energy-class</a> )
<b>Mar. 6</b>	Educators Rising State Conference ( <a href="https://web.cvent.com/event/532b97c4-490d-40c3-9640-5ef359452b5c">https://web.cvent.com/event/532b97c4-490d-40c3-9640-5ef359452b5c</a> )
<b>Mar. 8</b>	Illinois Education and Career Success Network's 10th Annual Conference: Accelerating Equitable Success ( <a href="https://ilsuccessnetwork.org/2023-conference/">https://ilsuccessnetwork.org/2023-conference/</a> )
<b>Mar. 13-17</b>	Illinois Arts Education Week
<b>Apr. 21</b>	Deadline to submit full application for the U.S. Department of Energy's Renew America's Schools grant program ( <a href="https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx#Foald06985843-f32c-494e-880a-cb5db6d787a4">https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx#Foald06985843-f32c-494e-880a-cb5db6d787a4</a> )
<b>Apr. 29</b>	2023 Those Who Excel & Teacher of the Year Awards Banquet

NEW

## LEARNING RENEWAL

Each week this section will focus on the learning renewal that is taking place in Illinois schools. We invite you to share (<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=hv5kA8ZJ9Eq1LDNameV30Ufi4KgH87ICv6FRRQI8cviUNTdHWktDS1NJWjJZVDFaQ09RVINCUVdMRi4u>) how you are investing federal relief funds to help students recover.

id=hv5kA8ZJ9Eq1LDNameV30Ufi4KgH87ICv6FRRQI8cviUNTdHWktDS1NJWjJZVDFaQ09RVINCUVdMRi4u) how you are investing federal relief funds to help students recover.

### BUILDING CURRICULA AND ACTIVITIES DURING OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

ACT Now is hosting a School Partnership Webinar Series to help districts meet Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III funding requirements and maximize out-of-school time learning. The next webinar, Building Curricula and Activities (<https://metrofamily.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvde-vpzMsHNxp7-u7siA2wFuDvYDWunqx>), will help attendees explore an example framework of curriculum development that can be used and applied to various disciplines. The webinar will focus on curriculum and activities which bridge the gap between the school day and out-of-school time spaces as a strategy to mitigate learning loss. Join ACT Now at **10 a.m. Jan. 17** (<https://metrofamily.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvde-vpzMsHNxp7-u7siA2wFuDvYDWunqx>) to learn more.

## ESSER SPENDING DASHBOARD PROVIDES PUBLIC WITH A CLEAR VIEW OF PANDEMIC RELIEF FUNDS

ISBE launched a new ESSER Spending Dashboard (</Pages/ESSER-Funding.aspx>) to provide transparency in how both the state and Illinois school districts are investing federal relief funds to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Illinois received nearly \$8 billion through three rounds of ESSER funding. The dashboard represents the most up-to-date financial picture pertaining to the use of ESSER funds, including insight into each school district's total allocation, the amount spent to date, and the funds remaining. The dashboard allows users to filter funds by each of the three rounds of ESSER and the district or entity receiving the funds to get detailed information on expenditures. Find the dashboard and a video tutorial demonstrating how to navigate it [here](/Pages/ESSER-Funding.aspx) (</Pages/ESSER-Funding.aspx>).

## MATTOON CUSD 2 EXPANDS ASSESSMENT TOOLBOX TO SUPPORT LEARNING RECOVERY

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services Dr. Christy Hild and members of Mattoon CUSD 2's leadership team attended a professional development session at the start of this school year and learned about the Learning Renewal Interim Assessments (</Pages/Learning-Renewal-Interim-Assessments.aspx>). The group collectively agreed that it was the missing piece to complement the existing district assessment system. The benefit of the new assessments to the district was that they were short and easy to administer while also being aligned directly to grade-level standards. This enables teachers to make immediate instructional adjustments. The leadership team was cautious about adding something new and didn't want to burden teachers. After the first testing window, however, the feedback from classroom teachers has been positive.

"They love it! Once we began using the assessments, teachers were clamoring for the data that became available. It was actionable to them. In their world, a lot of their core instruction is aligned to the standards, so this data was a lot clearer to them, and could help point them toward what they needed to teach," said Dr. Hild.

Not only do the classroom teachers use the data to guide instruction, but students use it to set actionable goals. Students are learning that the data can be influenced by their actions – helping them take charge of their learning.

The Learning Renewal Interim Assessments are available three times annually in reading and math, and once annually for writing, for students in Grades 3-8. The second testing window is **Jan. 23-Feb. 17**, and districts are invited to use this opportunity to see how the assessment system might support learning recovery in your schools. To learn more, please fill out the interest form (<https://forms.office.com/r/zstFFeQtX4>) or contact Angela Foxall at [afoxall@isbe.net](mailto:afoxall@isbe.net) (<mailto:afoxall@isbe.net>) for personalized support.

NEW

## CTE & INNOVATION

### 2023 ILLINOIS EDUCATORS RISING ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Educators Rising State Conference (<https://web.cvent.com/event/532b97c4-490d-40c3-9640-5ef359452b5c>) is scheduled for **March 6** at Illinois State University! Students can look forward to breakout sessions, networking, competitions (optional), and an incredible keynote from our 2022 Illinois Teacher of the Year, Kimberly Radostits! Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity to support and empower the next generation of our profession. Register today! (<https://web.cvent.com/event/532b97c4-490d-40c3-9640-5ef359452b5c/summary>)

### DATA COLLECTIONS Q&A WEBINAR

ISBE will continue hosting a monthly Data Collection Q&A webinar. The webinars will take place on the second Thursday of each month; The next webinar is scheduled at **10 a.m. Jan. 12** (https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/2174502371330329612). The purpose of these webinars is to give school districts a chance to ask any questions they have about the ISBE data collections listed below. ISBE will have staff on hand who will be able to answer questions on any of these data collections.

- Bilingual Education Program Delivery Report Collection
- Employment Information System – including Unfilled Positions Survey
- Entity Profile System
- Non-Certified Staff Salary Study
- Reduction in Force Survey
- Student Health (Dental, Eye, Immunizations and Physical Fitness)
- Student Information System
- Teacher Salary Study
- Title I Comparability
- U.S. Census School District Review Program
- Year End Collection
- IEP-Student Tracking and Reporting System (I-Star)

Please contact 312-814-9192 or datahelp@isbe.net (mailto:datahelp@isbe.net) for questions.

NEW

## ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

### DOES YOUR HIGH SCHOOL PARTICIPATE IN THE 2023-24 FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION COMPLETION INITIATIVE?

Counselors at participating Illinois high schools can now access their students' 2023-24 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid (Alternative Application) completion data via the ISAC Gift Assistance Programs Access portal. All Illinois public high school students are required to complete either the FAFSA or the Alternative Application as a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission's Financial Aid Application Completion Initiative (https://www.isac.org/home/fafsa/index.html) is a resource that can help high schools monitor their students' compliance with this mandate (https://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=101-0180). The information is used by district counselors (or ISACCorps, with permission from schools) to help reach students who might otherwise not complete an application. For more detailed information on this initiative and other resources for high schools, see the relevant counselor e-message on the ISAC website (https://www.isac.org/e-library/partner-e-messages-and-newsletters/Counselor-e-messages/eLibrary-counselor-2022-1114.htm).

## SAFE & HEALTHY CLIMATE

### 2023 GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED

Prek-12 schools, districts, and early learning centers with active sustainability practices or initiatives are encouraged to apply for 2023 Illinois Green Ribbon Schools (/Pages/Green-Ribbon.aspx) recognition. Submission materials should be sent to greenribbon@isbe.net (mailto:greenribbon@isbe.net) by **5 p.m. Jan. 18**. Finalists at the state level will advance to the national level for potential recognition as a U.S.

## ELEVATING EDUCATORS

### SAVE THE DATE: THOSE WHO EXCEL & TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS BANQUET

Mark your calendars for the 2023 Those Who Excel & Teacher of the Year Awards Banquet on **April 29!** We look forward to honoring the best and brightest educators in Illinois.

## NUTRITION

### FY 2023 NSLP EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANTS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service provides funding to ISBE to provide equipment assistance through competitive grants to School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the federally funded National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Funds allocated for this program assist schools in purchasing equipment to serve healthier meals; support scratch cooking; improve food safety; store fresh food; upgrade equipment; and help support the establishment, maintenance, or expansion of the School Breakfast Program.

ISBE was allocated \$2,297,655 to competitively award NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants. SFAs can apply on behalf of their NSLP schools and can request funds to replace, renovate, or purchase new kitchen equipment that meets the intended purposes of this grant.

All Illinois SFAs with schools in NSLP are eligible to apply, but priority will be given in the following areas: schools where 50 percent or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; schools that have not previously received an NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant within the last five award cycles; schools that also participate in the School Breakfast Program; and schools that prepare meals on site using district-owned equipment or, through this grant, will be able to start preparing meals on site without a school-to-school agreement or vended or food service management contract.

For full details, see the Notice of Funding Opportunity/Request for Proposals and information on how to apply on the NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant webpage (</Pages/Equipment-Grants.aspx>). The deadline to apply is **4 p.m. Jan. 20**. Please contact Emily Durbin at [edurbin@isbe.net](mailto:edurbin@isbe.net) (<mailto:edurbin@isbe.net>) with any questions.

## IN BRIEF

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

#### Ed Leaders Network

Ed Leaders Network is offering the following live webinar. Visit the Ed Leaders course library (<https://edleadersnetwork.org/courses/>) to view the entire selection available.

- **3 p.m. Feb. 28:** Application of Walk-Throughs to Schools Focusing on Explicit Instruction Practices ([https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_8MoxwtVORj2wWP5CTHsv9w](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8MoxwtVORj2wWP5CTHsv9w)) – Educators all have the same goal — to help students make the maximum possible academic gains in a positive and respectful environment that promotes success and nurtures their desire to learn. In this series of six webinars, the participants will gain valuable knowledge from the research and work of Dr. Anita Archer and Dr. Charles Hughes on Explicit Instruction.

## SCHOOL RECOGNITION

### Civic Memorial High School 'Grow Your Own'

Civic Memorial High School in Bethalto Community Unit School District 8 recently held a ribbon-cutting event for its new American Education Program, which started during the fall semester. This program is funded through ISBE's American Pathways Grant. Civic Memorial's "Grow Your Own" program allows students to begin working toward their teacher certification while earning four credits from Lewis and Clark Community College. This innovative program is the first step in addressing the high demand for educators across Illinois and throughout the nation. All students enrolled in this program are guaranteed a job interview upon completing their teacher certification.

### Code.org CS Leaders Prize

Congratulations to Marissa Community Unit School District 40 and Galva Junior/Senior High School in Galva CUSD 224 for being named Code.org Computer Science Leaders Prize winners (<https://codeorg.medium.com/congratulations-to-the-winners-of-the-cs-leaders-prize-14f2ae0072aa>)! The district will receive \$10,000 to help establish computer science programs for their students in the 2023–24 school year.

## STUDENT RECOGNITION

### United States Senate Youth Program

We are proud to announce the selection of two state-level delegates and two alternates for the 2023 United States Senate Youth Program Scholarship, which is sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation.

- First Delegate: **Anusha Nadkarni, Bloomington High School, Bloomington Public Schools District 87**
- Second Delegate: **Maisam Rajaie, Mather High School, City of Chicago School District #299**
- First Alternate: **Megha Khemka, Walter Payton College Preparatory High School, City of Chicago School District #299**
- Second Alternate: **Imani Wade, Mascoutah High School, Mascoutah School District 19**

The two delegates will have the opportunity to represent Illinois and participate in the "Week in Washington" March 4-11. The program will be a comprehensive public service, leadership, and education experience, including speakers from the three branches of government and the national media. They will meet their peers from across the nation, be immersed in a premier leadership experience, and receive a \$10,000 college scholarship in the name of the U.S. Senate. This partnership with other outstanding young people from throughout the country will encourage students to become leaders in government and participate in public service. Congratulations to Illinois' delegates and alternates!

## EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

### Virtual Cybersecurity & Data Privacy Conference

The Learning Technology Center is hosting SecurED Schools on **Jan. 18-19**. SecurED Schools is an annual, virtual conference focusing on cybersecurity and data privacy best practices, strategies, and tools. Over two days, attendees participate in demonstrations, panel discussions, and presentations led by local, state, and national experts. Sessions are designed for technology and education leaders and staff that work with student data or have an impact on the district's cybersecurity posture.

## FEATURED ISBE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

### Featured ISBE Career Opportunities

- Assistant Legal Counsel - Special Education (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=772>)
- Board Services Coordinator (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=773>)
- Early Childhood Block Grant (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=771>)
- KIDS Program (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=770>)

- [School District Transportation Claim Review and Support \(/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=761\)](/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=761)
- [Senior Software Developer \(/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=756\)](/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=756)
- [Special Education Facility Rate Analyst \(/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=769\)](/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=769)
- [Special Education Program Consultant \(/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=766\)](/Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=766)

[View all open positions at ISBE \(/Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx\).](/Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx)