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Dear Colleagues:

I deeply appreciate the passion and advocacy of each of our stakeholders who submitted a funding request this past fall for inclusion in our recommended public education budget for fiscal year 2024. ISBE's budget request asks for more than \$10 billion for Illinois public schools in FY 2024 – an increase of \$515.8 million over our FY 2023 General Funds appropriation. This recommendation is aligned to the Strategic Plan we adopted back in November of 2020.

The request includes a \$350 million increase for Evidence-Based Funding for a total EBF appropriation of \$8.28 billion. Since its implementation in FY 2018, the state has distributed approximately \$1.6

billion through the EBF Tiers – funding that subsequently has become part of each district's Base Funding Minimum. EBF has reduced the number of severely-underfunded districts (at less than 60% of adequacy) from 168 to now only two.

EBF also brought newfound stability and predictability to education funding in the state, allowing districts to develop, budget for, and implement multi-year strategic plans. When we hear from districts that have experienced accelerated academic growth or that actually boosted proficiency rates during the pandemic, they often describe professional learning communities, new high-quality curricular materials, staffing changes, and other initiatives and say, "We actually started this before the pandemic!" As evidenced by our NAEP scores that surpassed national averages, EBF positioned Illinois for a strong recovery.

ISBE also received many requests to increase funding for our youngest learners. We are asking for an additional \$59.8 million for the Early Childhood Block Grant to expand access to high-quality services for low-income families.

Our budget recommendation also asks lawmakers to approve a new \$3 million appropriation to implement a Computer Science Equity Program, so that every Illinois high school student will have the chance to take at least one computer science course, as envisioned by Public Act 101-0654. We are also seeking a \$2.7 million increase to expand Career and Technical Education to reach more underserved students. And we are requesting a \$20 million increase to reimburse special education private facility claims at 100% to further ease the residential placement crisis for this vulnerable student population.

I recognize that many stakeholders requested larger increases for EBF and early childhood, and I share the sense of urgency to reach equity as soon as possible. The final figures in our budget recommendation take into consideration the looming potential for an economic recession, and the importance of sustainability in order to continue to provide the funding stability and predictability that has been so valuable.

Thank you for your partnership and dedication to the mission of preparing each and every one of our students for success. None of these dollars would be worth a nickel without the educators and administrators who put them into action.

Pictured: The Coffee Cart is back at Carl Sandburg Junior High School in Rolling Meadows! Each week, order forms are placed in the staff workroom so that teachers and other school personnel can order tea, coffee, or hot chocolate. Students deliver the beverages to classrooms on Friday.

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>).

Jan. 24 - Mar. 31	SY 2022-23 5Essentials/School Climate Survey administration window
Jan. 26	Deadline to submit applicant concept papers for the U.S. Department of Energy's Renew America's Schools grant program (https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx#Foald06985843-f32c-494e-880a-cb5db6d787a4)
Jan. 30	Webinar: How to TEAACH (Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History) (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeLobCuHrnpFltwR7vWzehYw2DapiGJWCOCaJjaw6LUDidwvw/viewform)
Jan. 30	ESSER Recipient Data Collection Report -- LEA Step-by-Step Webinar (https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7212873672632659801)
Jan. 30	ESSER Recipient Data Collection Report -- Other Entities Step-by-Step Webinar (https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8248445400718629468)
Feb. 13	ISBE offices closed
Feb. 15	ISBE Career Connections: Building Community Before the Illinois Association for Career and Technical Education Annual Conference
Feb. 15	ISBE Career Connections: Building Community Before the Illinois Association for Career and Technical Education Annual Conference (https://www.eventbrite.com/e/isbe-career-connections-registration-420820745177)
Feb. 20	ISBE offices closed
Feb. 28	Deadline to apply for the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy CLASS Prize (https://www.herox.com/energy-class)
Mar. 1	Deadline to report the intent to move from half-day to full-day kindergarten instruction to sff@isbe.net (mailto:sff@isbe.net)

Mar. 6	Educators Rising State Conference (https://web.cvent.com/event/532b97c4-490d-40c3-9640-5ef359452b5c)
Mar. 8	Illinois Education and Career Success Network's 10th Annual Conference: Accelerating Equitable Success (https://ilsuccessnetwork.org/2023-conference/)
Mar. 13-17	Illinois Arts Education Week
Mar. 17	ESSER Recipient Data Collection – Local Education Agency and Other Entities reports due
Apr. 21	Deadline to submit full application for the U.S. Department of Energy's Renew America's Schools grant program (https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx#Foald06985843-f32c-494e-880a-cb5db6d787a4)
Apr. 29	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.

JOLIET CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL REFLECTS ON POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS PROGRAM

Joliet Central High School is one of about 30 districts participating in OneGoal's District Partnership Program (<https://www.onegoalgraduation.org/solutions/postsecondary-leadership-series/onegoal-isbe-partnership/>) to enhance postsecondary advising and support for students. OneGoal recently featured a conversation (https://www.onegoalgraduation.org/about/blog/a-conversation-with-joliet-central-high-school/?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=O_O_Joliet&utm_campaign=Newsletter_O_O_Joliet) with Joliet Central counselor Amanda Ringfelt, in which she reflected on their work to ensure all their graduates were prepared and supported to achieve postsecondary success. Read excerpts below:

What led the district to partner with OneGoal?

Ringfelt: "We wanted access to the OneGoal curriculum as quickly as we could because we felt that it would help to close the college access gap. We have a lot of first-generation college students and students of color that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary higher education. We wanted to make sure that we gave everybody the level of attention and support that they needed for them to identify a postsecondary plan that was a good fit for them and that they had the tools to enact that plan. We saw OneGoal as a way to make that happen."

What roadblocks or challenges are unique to first-generation and underrepresented minority students?

Ringfelt: "I think the main challenge is in navigating the financial aid process. Having the information they need to make informed decisions about how to finance a postsecondary education and then making choices that are realistic, while also knowing where to find financial aid to open up opportunities is the biggest piece. That's where OneGoal has already helped, that and the career exploration piece.... We need to

find a way to reach all of our students, regardless of where their postsecondary pathway might lead, give them a framework for exploring what those paths are, and how to create an action plan for their life after high school, especially how to pay for it.”

Read more in OneGoal’s recent blog post (https://www.onegoalgraduation.org/about/blog/a-conversation-with-joliet-central-high-school/?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=O_O_Joliet&utm_campaign=Newsletter_O_O_Joliet) or learn about OneGoal's Postsecondary Leadership Network (<https://www.onegoalgraduation.org/solutions/postsecondary-leadership-series/>) on their website.

REACH COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Recruitment for the spring session of the Resilience Education to Advance Community Healing (REACH) Communities of Practice (CoPs) is underway! A wide variety of CoP offerings are available focusing on schools becoming trauma-responsive and healing-centered. Spring CoPs will run from February through early June 2023.

CoPs provide advanced learning opportunities through the REACH Statewide Initiative and are **free of charge** to adults working in schools and parents. Spring offerings are available for all school community members with priority given to REACH schools. Learn more by exploring this brochure (<https://tinyurl.com/REACH-CoP>). The deadline to apply is **Jan. 30**.

NEW

FINANCE


UNPAID BALANCE DATA COLLECTION

Section 10-20 9a (c) (<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/documents/010500050K10-20.9a.htm#:~:text=The%20teacher%20shall%20maintain%20the%2che%20or%20she%20is%20responsible.>) of the School Code requires that no public high school shall withhold a student’s grades, transcripts, or diploma because of an unpaid balance on the student’s school account. The code also requires that each school district report to the State Board of Education the total amount that remains unpaid by students due to this prohibition.

To avoid an additional reporting mechanism, ISBE will collect this data via the fiscal year 2023, FY 2024, and FY 2025 Annual Financial Report (AFR). School districts are required to catalogue and report unpaid fees from students that result from the high school's inability to withhold student grades, transcripts, and diplomas. The total amount will be reported in the AFR on the Audit Questionnaire tab, Part C - Other Issues #22.

If you have any questions regarding this data collection, please contact mhemberg@isbe.net (mailto:mhemberg@isbe.net) or 217-785-8779.


ESSER RECIPIENT DATA COLLECTION REPORT STEP-BY-STEP WEBINARS FOR LEAS

Entities receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund allocations must complete the ESSER Recipient Data Collection – Local Education Agency (LEA) report. This information is essential to provide transparency regarding how ESSER funds were used by ISBE and LEAs. ESSER funds support students and educators in addressing the impact of COVID-19 and ensuring accountability with respect to these unprecedented levels of federal investment. The webinar at **11 a.m. Jan. 30** 

(<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7212873672632659801>) will guide participants through a step-by step process to complete the report.

The report must be submitted by **March 17**.

ESSER RECIPIENT DATA COLLECTION REPORT STEP-BY-STEP WEBINARS FOR OTHER ENTITIES

Entities receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund allocations must complete the ESSER Recipient Data Collection – Other Entities report. This information is essential to provide transparency regarding how ESSER funds were used by ISBE and education entities. ESSER funds support students and educators in addressing the impact of COVID-19 and ensuring accountability with respect to these unprecedented levels of federal investment. The webinar at **1 p.m. Jan. 30**  (<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8248445400718629468>) will guide participants through a step-by-step process to complete the report. The report must be submitted by **March 17**.

HALF-DAY TO FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN CONVERSION SY 2023-24

The Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) formula creates an Adequacy Target for each district based on total average student enrollment, English learner enrollment, and the low-income student count. Kindergarten students are assigned a value of 0.5 in the data if they attend a half day and a value of 1.0 if they attend a full day. Per the EBF statute, a school district may inform the State Board of Education of its intent to convert from half-day to full-day kindergarten. Doing so will prompt conversion of all half-day students to appear as full-day students in the FY 2024 EBF calculation data for both average student enrollment and English learner enrollment. The statutory deadline to report the intent to move to full-day kindergarten instruction is **March 1**.

Any school district that wishes to make this change for the 2023-24 school year must provide ISBE with a board resolution expressing the intent to make the change for the next school year, as well as the minutes from the meeting when the resolution was approved. School district staff are asked to submit these documents to sff@isbe.net (<mailto:sff@isbe.net>).

If you have questions, please contact sff@isbe.net (<mailto:sff@isbe.net>) or 217-782-0249.

CENSUS ESTIMATES AFFECT FY 2024 TITLE I FOR 2021 INCOME YEAR

The U.S. Department of Education has released the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for income year 2021. These estimates will be used to calculate FY 2024 Title I allocations. A file of 2021 Poverty Data by Local Education Agency (LEA) (</Pages/Census-Est-Affect-FY2024-Title-I-2021-Income-Year.aspx>) is provided, including Poverty Count, 5-17 Population, and Poverty Percentage in the FY 2024 Preliminary Eligibility.

Note that this preliminary data does not include other non-census information, such as foster, neglected, or delinquent counts, that will be included to calculate actual Title I allocations.

This data allows LEAs to determine their potential eligibility for the various funding streams of Title I -- Basic, Concentration, Targeted, and Education Finance Incentive Grants.

Superintendents, business managers, and Title I directors should carefully examine the data for their LEA, as this will be the first indication as to whether your LEA may be gaining or losing in eligibility for Title I funds in FY 2024. ISBE neither controls nor generates the data.

There is a challenge period for LEAs to review the 2021 poverty and population data for certain non-statistical errors, which include errors the U.S. Census Bureau may have made in 1) processing input data or in running the estimation models/programs, or 2) preparing or processing information to define geographic boundaries (i.e., school district boundaries). This challenge period ends on **March 16**.

Please contact the SAIPE program at 301-763-3193 or sehsd.saipe@census.gov (<mailto:sehsd.saipe@census.gov>) to obtain information on the process to challenge the data. More information and guidance concerning the U.S. Census Bureau's challenge procedure (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/about/contact/challenges.html>), as well as information about the data sources and the

methodology (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/about.html>) used to prepare this data, are available.

If you have questions, please contact Kurt Piskin at kpiskin@isbe.net (<mailto:kpiskin@isbe.net>) or 217-782-5256.

NEW



SAFE & HEALTHY CLIMATE

5ESSENTIALS SURVEY OPEN JAN. 24-MARCH 31

Today marks the opening of the two-month window to complete the 5Essentials Survey. The survey identifies five indicators that lead to improved outcomes for all students, including improved attendance and academic gains. The five indicators that positively affect school success are:

- Effective Leaders
- Collaborative Teachers
- Involved Families
- Supportive Environments
- Ambitious Instruction

Research derived from the Five Essentials for School Success has proven that schools strong on at least three of the 5Essentials are 10 times more likely to improve student outcomes.

Parent participation will be part of the data elements on the Equity Journey Continuum, a new Report Card element introduced in 2022. We've compiled some tips  (</Documents/5E-Tips-Parent-Participation-January-2022.pdf>), documents from successful programs, as well as a sample parent letter  (/_layouts/Download.aspx?SourceUrl=https://www.isbe.net/Documents/5E-Parent-Letter-Template.docx) to help you boost parent participation.

For questions regarding the survey, please contact 217-782-5270 or 5Essentials@isbe.net (<mailto:5Essentials@isbe.net>).

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY SUBMISSION

As per 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, each school district; charter school; and nonpublic, nonsectarian elementary or secondary school shall create, maintain, and implement a policy on bullying, which must be filed with ISBE. Furthermore, entities must conduct a review and reevaluation of the policy every two years. If an entity fails to file a policy on bullying within 14 days of receipt of a written request to file such a policy, ISBE shall publish notice of the noncompliance on the agency website. The list of noncompliant entities can be found on the Bullying Prevention webpage (</Pages/Bullying-Prevention.aspx>). The list, which is updated weekly, includes any entity that is currently not in compliance with this mandate. If you have questions about this mandate or you are in need of technical assistance, please contact bullyingpolicy@isbe.net (<mailto:bullyingpolicy@isbe.net>).

STUDENT DISCIPLINE DATA REPORTING

Starting this year, there will be a section on the Illinois Report Card regarding student discipline. Additionally, as required by law, ISBE publishes a list of the top 20% for exclusionary discipline (suspensions, expulsions, and racial disproportionality) on **Oct. 31** of each year. Districts identified in the top 20% are required to submit a discipline improvement plan each year they are identified. To ensure that the top 20% list is equitable and accurate, it is imperative that all districts submit their discipline data each year. Please do not forget to submit your district

discipline data to the Student Information System by **July 31**. Please see the calendar of all ISBE data collection key dates online (</Pages/Data-Collections-Key-Dates.aspx>). If you have questions or require technical assistance, please contact schooldiscipline@isbe.net (<mailto:schooldiscipline@isbe.net>).

PUBLIC SCHOOL CARBON-FREE ASSESSMENT OFF TO A GREAT START!

The ComEd PSCFA launched in September 2022, offering free carbon assessments to public schools in Illinois. To date, four districts, including Byron CSD 226, Chicago Public Schools, Harvey School District 152, and Thornton Township High School District 205, have already completed assessments for some or all of their schools.

Below is a glimpse of what the program has achieved and uncovered since its launch:

- 60 schools onboarded
- 47 site visits completed
- Average annual energy savings of 15% identified
- Average of \$17.1 million in available grants and funding identified per district
- Over \$2.2 million of energy efficiency incentive dollars identified
- Over \$1.5 million of annual savings identified

To sign your school district up for this free assessment, visit [ComEd.com/PSCFA](http://www.comed.com/PSCFA) (<http://www.comed.com/PSCFA>), call 855-433-2700, or email BusinessEE@ComEd.com (<mailto:BusinessEE@ComEd.com>).

What is the PSCFA?

The Public Schools Carbon-Free Assessment (PSCFA) is a free program from ComEd, designed to help public schools by assisting in energy cost savings and carbon reduction strategies as a result of Section 8-402.2 of the Illinois Climate and Equitable Jobs Act. The program is offered at NO cost to public schools.

PSCFA Benefits:

- Free assessment of the facility on a date/time that works best for the school
- Energy efficiency cost-savings opportunities
- Information on the infrastructure required for electrification (like electric buses)
- Solar energy potential of the building
- Guidance on achieving WELL certification
- Identification of energy efficiency project incentives and third-party funding sources


Completing the PSCFA can also help with grant qualification. For instance, to qualify for a grant under Section 5-40 of the School Construction Law, a public school district must submit a copy of a PSCFA report (if a PSCFA has been performed) or request the PSCFA and submit a copy as soon as it becomes available. ComEd will file the PSCFA report on your behalf.


This program applies to ComEd customers only, but additional information will be available about Ameren Illinois (<https://www.ameren.com/illinois>) PSCFA for Illinois customers in 2023. Stay tuned for more details soon.

TEACHING & LEARNING

HOW TO TEACH WEBINAR

Did you know that Illinois was the first state to require that the history and contributions of Asian Americans be included in K-12 curriculum? Please join ISBE along with guest educators from around the state to learn more about how to implement Asian American history into your curriculum at **4:30 p.m. Jan. 30**

(<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeLobCuHrnpFltwR7vWzehYw2DapiGJWCOCaJjaw6LUDidwww/viewform>). Every public elementary school and high school in the state is required to include in its curriculum  (/Documents/TEAACH-Act-Fact-Sheet.pdf) a unit of instruction about Asian American history beginning in this school year. This workshop will give educators some tools to ensure they can implement Asian American history in their classrooms.

The Illinois General Assembly passed the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History (TEAACH) Act (<https://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=102-0044&GA=102>) in 2021. A previous webinar  (<http://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/5974313405347657984>) provided an overview of the TEAACH Act.

ILLINOIS AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION SEEKING TEACHER CONSULTANTS TO DEVELOP STORYLINES FOR AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGY

Innovative educators are being sought to join writing teams

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Xaet6nByGYk7kinaBq5UyBynmS2CLbQWrjDj1sVJX0/edit>) for a new Agricultural Biology course. The course will use storylining to help students figure out phenomena and solve problems. Grant funding has been secured to support this project and team members will be compensated. Storylines will align with the Illinois Science Learning Standards/Next Generation Science Standards and the Illinois Science Assessment. Team members will collaboratively conceptualize, write, pilot, and revise storylines for a course titled Agriculture Biology, which was approved by ISBE. Energetic and forward-thinking teachers will engage in a professional learning community to build capacities using storylining to explore biology in the context of agriculture over the three-year experience (2023-25). Use this link to apply (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSehMXQqdGntawziu9GKUfNxx4Eh3EsgvWtXRx6c5rNn6QI1Yg/viewform>) or join a webinar at **3:30 p.m. Jan. 25** (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87985663689?pwd=R2FNakFSK2NJYUVORHhsaVFqYzhkUT09>) to learn more.

COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

HELP YOUR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES WITH ISACORPS

ISACorps partners with schools and community-based organizations to offer free postsecondary planning support and resources to students and their families, including, but not limited to, one-on-one mentoring, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) and the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid completion workshops, and a variety of presentations on financial aid and postsecondary planning. Learn more about the ISACorps and find the member for your school by visiting the ISACorps website (<https://www.isac.org/isacorps>).

ISACorps is hiring for locations across Illinois. If you know any recent college graduates interested in a public service career helping the next generation on their path to higher education, please share this ISAC webpage (<https://www.isac.org/jointheISACorps>) with them so they can learn more.

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. 21:** Cortex in the Classroom: Learn How the Brain Rewires Itself to Learn to Read (https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9XsR5KLtRW-Mh6CmisQb8A) – This webinar will highlight:
 - The brain was never designed for reading (print) only speech.
 - Basic brain science important to the brain laying down reading neuronal pathways.
 - The importance of the phonological and orthographic processors working together along with the angular gyrus and meaning processors.
 - The fluency bridge to accuracy.
 - What can we do to support student's neuronal activity?

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

IMSA Professional Development Day

The Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) is excited to serve as a professional development site for this years DuPage Countywide Institute Day/Kane County Institute Day. This event on **March 3** will be open to all Illinois educators, including classroom teachers, specialists, and administrators. The focus will be on sixth-12th grade math, science, engineering, and technology. Contact Lindsey Herlehy at lherlehy@imsa.edu (<mailto:lherlehy@imsa.edu>) if you have questions.

Computer Science PD Week

The Learning Technology Center (LTC) of Illinois is hosting a Computer Science PD Week **July 17-21** at Bloomington Junior High School. The event is for K-12 educators who are interested in or will be teaching computer science (CS). This event is a new initiative of the LTC in partnership with Bloomington-Normal STEM, CS4IL, and the Discovery Partners Institute. During CS PD Week, new and experienced CS educators will engage with current CS curriculum, build community, and learn strategies for expanding access to high-quality, rigorous, and inclusive computer science learning. You can sign up for notifications about the event; registration will open later this month.

FEATURED ISBE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Mandates Compliance Monitor (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=783>)
- Grant Reviewer (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=782>)
- Mathematics Content Specialist (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=781>)
- Program Monitor (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=780>)
- Program Support (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=777>)
- Program Support (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=778>)
- Program Support (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=779>)

View all open positions at ISBE (</Pages/Careers-at-ISBE.aspx>).