

ISBE'S WEEKLY MESSAGE

July 18, 2023

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Dear Colleagues,

I know administrators across the state are incredibly busy working toward staffing up for next school year. While the teaching profession in Illinois continues to grow each year, last October, school districts still had more than 3,500 unfilled positions, reflecting the persistent nationwide teacher shortage.

We have prepared a series of resource documents, available for download here (<https://app.air.inc/a/bQdlhsTx6>), that offer practical strategies to build a strong teaching workforce in every school district. They compile best practices from educational experts and extensive research into what has

worked nationally and in Illinois.

We prepared this guidance to assist the 170 recipients of the \$45 million Teacher Pipeline Grant, but these strategies can be implemented in any district to improve recruitment and retention.

Strategies include:

- **Teacher Residencies and Apprenticeships:** Similar to medical residencies, these programs allow candidates to fully prepare before employment, attracting diverse candidates, especially in hard-to-staff subjects, and retaining effective educators at higher rates. Look at the South Cook Teacher Residency and Saluki Residency Partnership for examples.
- **Mentorship and Induction Programs:** Establishing robust mentorship and induction programs with trained mentors promotes professional growth, reduces attrition rates, and enhances job satisfaction among new teachers.
- **Grow Your Own/Educator Pathway Programs:** These initiatives recruit community members and high school students through partnerships between school districts and colleges. They provide support services, mentoring, financial assistance, education-related courses, work-based learning experiences, and college credits tailored to aspiring teachers.
- **Creating Career Advancement Opportunities:** Recognizing expert teachers who take on extra responsibilities with stipends and providing pathways for growth fosters professional development and satisfaction. Successful models include Opportunity Culture (<https://www.opportunityculture.org/>), in which a highly effective teacher leads a team of other teachers.
- **Improving Hiring Practices:** Enhancing hiring processes through standardized screening, clear job requirements, rigorous selection, and involving multiple stakeholders leads to improved retention. DC Public Schools and Los Angeles Unified School District have overhauled their hiring practices and seen positive outcomes.

- **Creating a Positive School Culture:** Cultivating a welcoming and inclusive environment improves teacher satisfaction and retention. Consider implementing effective schoolwide policies on student behavior, providing mental health support, offering affordable healthcare options, and utilizing school climate surveys to identify areas of improvement.
- **College Credit Articulation:** "2+2" programs, combining community college and university education, address credit loss and guidance issues hindering students' progress towards a bachelor's degree. Successful partnerships include Parkland College and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Elmhurst College and the College of DuPage.
- **Financial Incentives:** Incentives, such as differentiated pay, performance pay, pay for prior work, relocation bonuses, housing assistance, and sign-on bonuses, help attract teachers. Aligning incentives with district goals, evaluating effectiveness, and investing in professional development for hiring personnel are crucial.
- **Teacher Home Loan Assistance:** Housing incentives, like forgivable loans, reduced interest rates, relocation reimbursement, and down payment assistance, address the challenge of teachers being unable to afford housing in their communities. San Francisco's Teacher Next Door and New Orleans' Teacher Homeownership Program provide successful models.
- **Teacher Planning and Collaboration:** Allocating dedicated time for teacher collaboration mitigates burnout, improves retention, and enhances job satisfaction.

Undergirding each of these strategies is the imperative to invest in a diverse teacher workforce, which positively impacts student performance. Partnering with teacher preparation programs serving students of color, providing financial support to noncertified staff of color interested in becoming teachers, ensuring diverse representation in hiring committees, and avoiding disproportionate additional duties on teachers of color are essential best practices for all districts.

These guidance documents can serve as a roadmap to enhance our teacher recruitment and retention efforts. We encourage all districts, beyond those that received the Teacher Pipeline Grant, to explore each document and analyze the recommendations in the context of your unique needs and resources.

By implementing these best practices, we can cultivate the teaching workforce that our students need to thrive.

Pictured: Students of all ages recently started Session 1 of summer camps in Cicero District 99. Camp offerings include STEAM, art, ukulele, concert band and drumline, and more!

All my best,
Tony

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>).

Jul. 20	Webinar: Revisiting the Data Review and Verification Tool (https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3998283206886354523)
Jul. 20	EmpowerCon Mini-Conference for Multilingual Educators (https://irc.thecenterweb.org/events/empowercon-2023)
Jul. 21	Annual Sexual Health Education Survey Due in IWAS
Jul. 25-26	School Nutrition Programs Back to School Conference (https://www.isbe.net/snpb2s)

Jul. 25	Grants 101: New ISBE-IASA Workshop on grant applications and management (https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_z8glw-cWRESqkAv2IDbC8g#/registration)
Jul. 25	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (Collinsville) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Jul. 25	PaCE Framework Overview (Administrators Academy) (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScoOkm0Cdi6W7KwCG_ODgctwNsMUM1kO8gCtDYi6S0qSsUIDg/viewform)
Jul. 26	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (Marion) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Jul. 27	Illinois Literacy Plan Listening Tour (Mt. Vernon) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-Literacy-Plan.aspx)
Jul. 27	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (Champaign) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Jul. 31	Deadline to submit Student Discipline Data in SIS
Jul. 31	Illinois Literacy Plan Listening Tour (virtual) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-Literacy-Plan.aspx)
Jul. 31	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (virtual) - REGISTRATION CLOSED (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 1	Illinois Career Pathways Overview Administrators Academy (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeSCWy3L5J_14x0c2grMOFvw1RzBA07q9WPF_gFtFXpSQUGVA/viewform)
Aug. 2	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (Chicago) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 3	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session for Students/Youth (virtual) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 4	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session (virtual – NEW SESSION ADDED) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 8	Mental and Behavioral Health Screening Listening Session for Parents/Caregivers/Community Members (virtual) (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx)
Aug. 17	FY 2023 Site-Based Expenditure Report due in IWAS
Aug. 22	Deadline to apply for U.S. EPA grant to replace existing school buses with clean and Zero Emissions school buses (https://www.epa.gov/grants/2023-clean-school-bus-csb-grant-program)
Sep. 4	ISBE offices closed for Labor Day
Sep. 5	Deadline to apply for Driving a Cleaner Illinois grant to replace old, diesel school buses with new all-electric school buses (https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/air-quality/driving-a-cleaner-illinois.html)
Sept. 15	Deadline to submit letter of intent and application for approved alternate climate survey to 5essentials@isbe.net (mailto:5essentials@isbe.net)

Sept. 18-20	Illinois Association of Title I Directors Fall Conference (https://www.iatd.net/domain/42)
Sep. 29	Deadline to submit U.S. Presidential Scholars nominations (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/US-Presidential-Scholars.aspx)

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.

HIGH IMPACT TUTORING FOSTERS RELATIONSHIPS AND ACCELERATES LEARNING AT VILLA GROVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Villa Grove Elementary School in eastern Illinois was one of 132 schools that participated in the Illinois Tutoring Initiative (<https://illinoistutoringinitiative.org/>) during the 2022-23 school year. Principal Bobby Beck noted how students experienced setbacks in their social-emotional skills during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“[During the pandemic,] students didn’t have a chance to interact with each other and have that small group time to figure out how to play together, work together, and solve problems together,” Beck shared.

To address this, the Illinois Tutoring Initiative uses a model of high-impact tutoring that is focused on building relationships. Participating students are matched with a consistent tutor for small-group or one-on-one instruction. Tutors are coached in establishing a good rapport with students to help build a solid foundation for academic learning – and it’s working.

“We definitely see the students making progress,” said Beck. “We see the students that are doing the after-school tutoring – their scores are increasing at a higher rate.”

Villa Grove Elementary School uses existing staff to serve as tutors, and Beck has seen a positive response from staff.

“The first summer we had nine tutors and now we are up to 18 for this summer. We have more and more staff interested – especially our paraprofessionals. They feel like they are a huge part of the curriculum and staff by being an instructional leader of the student groups,” he said. One of the paraprofessionals is currently working on her teacher licensure. Beck sees the potential in others and is encouraging them to consider making the transition.

Research shows that high-impact tutoring is an effective intervention for accelerating student learning, and the strategy is included in Illinois’ Learning Renewal Resource Guide 📄 (<https://isbe.net/Documents/p-20-learning-renewal-resource-guide.pdf>). Check out the National Student Accelerator’s High-Impact Tutoring: District Playbook 📖 (https://studentsupportaccelerator.com/sites/default/files/High_Impact_Tutoring_District_Playbook.pdf) to learn how to implement an effective program in your district.

NEW

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

POSTPONED: PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT B-5 RENEWAL APPLICATION LISTENING SESSIONS

The Preschool Development Grant Birth–5 Listening Sessions originally scheduled to begin July 20 have been postponed. The PDG B-5 Notice of Funding Opportunity will not be released until spring 2024, so the listening sessions will be rescheduled for the spring. Stay tuned for more information.

NEW

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

CAREER CONNECTED ILLINOIS – ADMINISTRATOR ACADEMIES

Northern Illinois University's Illinois CTE Project team will lead multiple administrator academies in the upcoming weeks – all **free** and sponsored by ISBE. It's not too late to register!

PaCE Framework | 9 a.m. - noon, July 25 via Zoom | Register

(https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScoOkm0Cdi6W7KwCG_ODgctwNsMUM1kO8gCtDYi6S0qSsUIDg/viewform)

This administrator academy will help you implement a coordinated and cohesive college and career readiness framework aligned with the Illinois Postsecondary and Career Expectations (PaCE) Framework, as well as provide the context for this work within the Illinois Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act suite of initiatives. Tools and data resources will be shared to help you measure current college career readiness, plan for individual district needs, and foster greater engagement with the community.

Illinois Career Pathways | 9 a.m. - noon, Aug. 1 via Zoom | Register

(https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeSCWy3L5J_14x0c2grMOFvw1RzBA07q9WPF_gFtFXpSQUGVA/viewform)

This administrator academy will provide an overview of the College and Career Pathway Endorsement (CCPE) framework per the PWR Act. Participants will learn about CCPE requirements, including the individualized learning plan, career-focused instruction, career exploration activities, 60 hours of internships or similar experiences, and early college credit. Participants will have the opportunity to share and learn from each other. This presentation will also share best practices and resources for educators to use in their development of CCPEs.

2023-24 Work-Based Learning Asynchronous Online Course

This course is an alternative for educators to complete the required learning experience to lead work-based learning programs in their schools and districts as defined on the state's work-based learning continuum and the Perkins V State Plan. Please review the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 - WBL Online Course Information on Enrollment (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KmeY5Bd0Vs3TISeqQuP_ZKcGsdqSyedi/view) document for detailed information about the course and instructions on how to sign up for the fall or spring cohort.

NEW

SAFE & HEALTHY CLIMATE

SY 2023-24 LETTER OF INTENT AND APPLICATION FOR APPROVED ALTERNATE CLIMATE SURVEY

All Illinois public schools, including alternative schools that fall under the district's domain, are required to participate in a school learning conditions survey every year. To fulfill this requirement, ISBE provides the 5Essentials Survey (</Pages/5Essentials-Survey.aspx>) free of charge, as a tool to inform all stakeholders about the school's learning environment and to guide improvement.

However, a school district may elect to use an alternate survey of learning conditions. The approved alternate surveys for school year 2023-24 are Cognia and the Comprehensive School Climate Survey. Any district that wishes to administer an approved alternate survey must complete a letter of intent and application and email it to 5essentials@isbe.net (mailto:5essentials@isbe.net) by **Sept. 15**. Failure to submit the signed letter of intent

and application to ISBE will result in the district being required to use the 5Essentials Survey.

Please contact 217-782-5270 or 5Essentials@isbe.net (mailto:5essentials@isbe.net) if you have questions regarding the survey.

MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SCREENING LISTENING SESSIONS – NEW VIRTUAL SESSION ADDED FOR AUG. 4

ISBE has added a new virtual session from **9-10:30 a.m. Aug. 4** as part of the statewide landscape scan examining mental and behavioral health screening of students. Registration for the July 31 virtual session has reached capacity and is now closed.

Visit the ISBE website (/Pages/mentalhealthscreening.aspx) for more details and to register to attend a listening session hosted by ISBE, the seven SEL Hubs, and the Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Initiative to gather feedback from districts, community members, students, and families across the state.

ISBE is also collecting feedback through a short online survey, available through early September to all districts and Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers in the IWAS system listing under "Surveys."

Please email mentalhealth@isbe.net (mailto:mentalhealth@isbe.net) with any questions.

APPLY FOR ELECTRIC SCHOOL BUS FUNDING

This summer only there are unique offerings for electric school bus funding from both state (Illinois Environmental Protection Agency [IEPA] Volkswagen settlement) and federal (U.S. EPA Clean School Bus Program [CSBP]) sources. This is likely the only time both will be offered and there will never be more funds available than this.

- IEPA has opened up its remaining \$27 million for electric school buses (prioritizing Chicago and Metro East area counties with historic air pollution and seven additional counties).
- U.S. EPA has a grant program offering \$52 million for Region 5, which includes Illinois.

There are numerous resources to help with understanding these opportunities and applying. To see the differences in the programs and which option(s) best suit your district, see this fact sheet (https://environmentallaw-my.sharepoint.com/:x/g/personal/gkwan_elpc_org/EV4XnnGXL5FDnZlxeeeLRzoBUeCgSGOwwX1ljVAf8B1gLQ?time=BNbVocCH20g) comparing last year's CSBP rebate round (as there will be a similar one this fall), the current CSBP grants, and IEPA VW funds.

Check out the World Resources Institute's How to Apply for the U.S. EPA Clean School Bus Program Funding (https://electricschoolbusinitiative.org/how-apply-clean-school-bus-program-funding?utm_medium=email+&utm_source=article&utm_campaign=csbp_round2) to get answers to your questions and learn about in-depth resources.

REQUIRED ANNUAL SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION SURVEY CLOSING SOON

Public Act 102-0522 requires ISBE to survey all public school districts on comprehensive personal health and safety and comprehensive sexual health instruction annually for five years. The survey for school year 2022-23 has been released to all districts in IWAS under "System Listing." The "Surveys" category will remain open until **July 21**. The survey is titled "PA102-0522 Sexual Health Education Survey." All districts must complete this short survey, even if they are opting not to provide sexual health instruction. Please ensure the survey is completed by the person in your district who oversees sexual health education instruction. Additional information about sexual health education is available on ISBE's Sexual Health webpage (/sexualhealth). Please contact sexualhealtheducation@isbe.net (mailto:sexualhealtheducation@isbe.net) with any questions.

2022-23 REVISITING THE DATA REVIEW AND VERIFICATION TOOL

Please join us from **1-2:30 p.m. July 20** for an overview of the Data Review and Verification Tool (DRVT). DRVT is a real-time tool used to share Report Card calculations with school districts to ensure accuracy of the data that is used for the Report Card. Several changes have been made this year in response to feedback from the field. Register for the webinar here [✦](https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3998283206886354523) (<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3998283206886354523>).

IN BRIEF

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Ed Leaders Network

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

- **3 p.m. Sept. 12:** (https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZCsoRrcCR5WnEHkM1zUAbg?_x_zm_rtaid=9Y1iXi9hQ_aNAJaBvJYwqA.1687552751261.b00438c3e5df6be3608d0083e1a17826&_x_zm_rhtaid=447#/registration) **Conflict Resolution: A Crucial Professional Competency in Education Today** (https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_YSJ4gjZ0QiiVR6drTpDR6w?_x_zm_rtaid=tzs5tx6nSPmq1hH_7dLPTg.1689092394158.148dbcf9fa38e1a850deb9a79669e577&_x_zm_rhtaid=89#/registration) – The techniques presented here are time-tested, simple, and familiar. They are based on the work of mediation experts, experts in negotiation, and experts in conflict resolution. Takeaways will include a teacher-friendly handout (easily printable for quick reference) in a table format. This table lists each clinically tested technique used by experts in the mediation field to de-escalate conflicts. In addition, alongside each technique are language samples to use as models when struggling to find the right words to use when emotions are running high combined with “do’s” vs. “don’ts” that can help or hurt the outcomes.

FEATURED ISBE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- School District Reorganization Specialist (Principal Consultant #676) (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=846>)
- Special Education Programmatic Support Monitor (Principal Consultant #1283) (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=847>)
- Administrative Support (Program Specialist II #1563) (</Lists/ISBECareers/CareerDisplayForm.aspx?ID=848>)

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