Dear Colleagues:

We have received hundreds of calls and letters, signed by hundreds of superintendents and parents, and we continue to share your concerns and suggestions with Illinois’ public health officials, who set public health policy for the state. I can assure you that all of us here at ISBE share your desire for the release of public health guidance as soon as possible. ISBE does not make public health decisions. We rely on the medical experts at the Illinois Department of Public Health, who in turn, rely on the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We will keep you posted, and the moment we receive the new guidance for fall, we will share it with all of you.

Meanwhile, there are other steps you can take to prepare for the beginning of the school year. You’re now able to submit applications for American Rescue Plan ESSER III funds, and I encourage you to go back to the P-20 Council’s Learning Renewal Resource Guide for inspiration (https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/P20/Documents/P-20-Learning-Renewal-Resource-Guide-March2021-v19.pdf). The guide lists a dozen strategies for helping to create new pathways and supports for learning. We trust every district to allocate your ESSER funds to suit the specific needs of your own communities, and the results we’ve seen with previous rounds of ESSER allocations are inspiring. I’d like to tell you about a few.

LeRoy CUSD 2 used ESSER funds to extend their first grade classes through June 30, with bus service and free food for everyone. East St. Louis District 189 extended their school year through June 29 for all grades (except seniors on track for graduation), also with bus service, breakfast, and lunch. The extension offered new opportunities for creativity and fun.

Champaign Unit District 4 used ESSER to establish 1-to-1 computing capabilities, and also paid for summer school offerings in all school buildings. Each elementary school in Champaign got to design their own schedule. ESSER also allowed Unit 4 to create innovative wraparound services for families with the highest needs. Called LIFT Champaign (https://champaignil.gov/2021/04/22/lift-champaign-program-presented-to-city-council/), this program is a partnership with the City of Champaign and the University of Illinois to provide trauma-informed services for families in crisis.

Close to 100 districts all across the state – from metropolitan cities to small, rural schools – have used ESSER dollars to make significant investments in mental health services for students. These investments could be priceless, with dividends that improve the social-emotional climate of classrooms, schools, and ultimately communities for many years to come.

I close by joining you in hoping that next week’s message will contain the guidance we seek.

Pictured: David Shanks, principal of Lincoln Middle School in East St. Louis District 189, checks out his students’ Juneteenth artwork.

Sincerely,
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).

COVID-19

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Please continue to check the COVID-19 webpage (/Pages/covid19.aspx) for the newest updates and information.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

ISBE ANNOUNCES ‘JUMP START’ FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The Illinois State Board of Education will provide Emergency and Secondary School Emergency Relief III (ESSER III) funds to Tier I and II districts and Comprehensive schools that operate locally funded preschool programs and/or kindergarten and first grade programs so that they can institute Jump Start Kindergarten and First Grade Summer and/or After School Programs during the 2021-22 school year. The goal of these programs is to provide educational supports to children who experienced little or no in-person instruction during the 2020-21 school year and contribute to their educational success in kindergarten and first grade. The funding will cover educator and staff salaries, as well as fringe benefits, to operate the programs.

Eligible School Districts

Tier I and II districts and Comprehensive schools that operate locally funded preschool programs and/or kindergarten and first grade programs in which children received less than 50% of in-person instruction during the fiscal year 2021 school year are eligible to apply.

Final approval of awards will be subject to approval of the budget submitted by the district. This budget will cover the salary of all essential staff necessary to operate a Jump Start program. Districts with multiple fund sources must cost allocate salaries and benefits for all staff.

Note: These funds cannot be used to cover supplies. It is assumed that districts and programs have sufficient classroom supplies and furniture.

This Notice of Intent to Apply is not final and is not a guarantee of funding. Districts identified to receive this funding will be required to submit an ESSER III eGrant application to ISBE in IWAS for approval. Expenditure Reports will be required as expenses are accumulated. Grant Periodic Reports must be submitted by June 30, 2022, which is the project end date.

Directions

- Follow this link (https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=hv5kA8ZJ9Eq1LDNameV30ROvtdRjrZxJnhJ--P-vI3NUM1FCMUpFRU1PTEmxOEIGSUtYRk42V0hOWC4u) to access the Notice of Intent to Apply.
- Fill it out to indicate your program's intent to apply for Jump Start funds.
- Click Submit.

This Notice of Intent to Apply is due no later than 4 p.m. July 8. There is no need to complete the form again if your district has already responded.
PARENT MENTOR PROGRAM RFP APPLICATION NOW AVAILABLE

The Parent Engagement Institute is proud to announce the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for community organizations in Illinois that would like to partner with their local public schools to start up a Parent Mentor Program during the 2021-22 school year. The application deadline is Aug. 2.

A huge “thank you” goes out to our parent mentors who believe in the power of this program and worked hard for a state budget increase so we could open the opportunity to more communities. This RFP would not be possible without their organizing efforts.

We will hold an informational session for prospective applicants at 10 a.m. July 13. Please RSVP at least two hours before the start of the meeting to bmurphy@lsna.net to receive the Zoom link.

The RFP is designed for community organizations to apply in partnership with their local public schools. The anticipated award amount for starting a full-year Parent Mentor Program in two schools with 16 total parent mentors is $75,000.

If you have any questions about the RFP, please email parentmentorproposals@gmail.com.

Parent mentors help challenge persistent equity gaps by joining this yearlong fellowship in their children's school. Parent mentors tutor students in classrooms for two hours/day and participate as a cohort in weekly professional development on instructional practices and leadership. As a result, they support each other to pursue their dreams and unite the school community for long-term change.

For more information, visit the Parent Engagement Institute webpage or follow us on Facebook.

PARENTING EDUCATION PILOT APPLICATION NOW AVAILABLE

ISBE and ParenTeach.com have collaborated on a pilot program in response to Public Act 100-1043. The Parenting Education Pilot (also known as ParentAble) teaches high school educators how to deliver parenting fundamentals to their students, helping them develop a foundational understanding of positive parenting practices. The ParentAble curriculum includes information about the effects of harmful parenting, the consequences of adverse childhood experiences, along with the power of resilience and positive parenting. The 5-10-unit course aims to reduce child abuse and neglect rates, break the cycle of harmful parenting, create a level of comfort with seeking future parenting resources and support, and increase students’ social-emotional learning competencies.

The grant application is now open for high school districts that may be interested in offering this curriculum.

For more information, please contact Katharine Bensinger at (847) 712-2710 or Katharine@parenteach.com.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

FY 2022 IDEA AND ESEA OF 1965 AS AMENDED GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE DATE EXTENDED

The due date for FY 2022 Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) of 1965 as Amended grant applications has been extended to July 15. Applications submitted to ISBE by that date will receive a July 1, 2021, grant period start date.
Applicants experiencing technical issues with SAM.gov and GATA pages during the grant application process should send a message to gata@isbe.net. Include the district name, RCDT code, and grant name, and specify the error messages received that prevented submission.

DATA REPORTING

REMINDER: UPCOMING SITE-BASED EXPENDITURE WEBINAR

ISBE will host a webinar from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. July 22: Site-Based Expenditure Reporting and the Report Card: All things SBER from Collection to Report Card. This webinar will examine the entire process from data calculation to the presentation of Site-Based Expenditure Reporting data on the Illinois Report Card.

REMINDER: SITE-BASED EXPENDITURE REPORTING SUBMISSION WINDOW OPENS JULY 1

The Site-Based Expenditure Reporting submission window will open July 1 and close Aug. 16. The updated FY 2021 Reporting Guidance is now available at isbe.net/site-based. The Reporting Guidance reflects no major changes from last year’s FY 2020 – FY 2021 guidance. The designated Reporting Entities remain the same and will follow similar reporting rules.

The ongoing reporting of school-by-school spending allows for reflection, inquiry, and dialogue on resource allocation, equity, and the relationship between student outcomes and investments. If your district already has a story of using expenditure data to influence decision-making, please send it to us at site-based@isbe.net. We love sharing Illinois highlights with the national advocates and media outlets turning to us as a national leader in this area.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

IDES WARNS PEOPLE TO BE ON HIGH ALERT FOR PHISHING SCAMS

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) is urging Illinoisans to be on high alert for phishing schemes that may be leading to identity theft as international bad actors continue to attempt to exploit unemployment systems across the country. Fraudulent text messages, emails, and social media messages that are allegedly from IDES and other state agencies and constitutional offices, are being sent to individuals in an attempt to phish for personally identifiable information.

The Federal Trade Commission has provided steps individuals should follow to recognize and avoid phishing schemes. Individuals should also take steps to strengthen and protect online account information. IDES claimants should maintain strong, unique passwords to their accounts and never share personal account information with untrustworthy sources.

If you have been the victim of identity theft-related unemployment insurance fraud, visit the IDES fraud webpage for information about how to report the claim. For more information on ways you can be vigilant against these types of threats, view the flyer.

Please share this information with your school communities.

STANDARDS AND INSTRUCTION

UPDATED: EDUCATOR ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATION EXTENDED TO JULY 9
ISBE’s Strategic Plan identifies collaboration as one of the agency’s four foundational lenses. Throughout the pandemic, educator voices have been critical to ensuring ISBE’s guidance reflects the tremendous diversity of our 852 school districts. We ask school administrators to please consider recommending outstanding educators in your district to serve in future working groups and educator recognition efforts so that we can continue to build on the agency’s educator engagement efforts.

To nominate an educator, please complete the Recommendation Form (https://isbe.submittable.com/submit/78f710ce-56c2-47d4-a4aa-5a6690d898ce/illinois-educator-database-recommendation) by July 9. Please consider early career and veteran educators, racial/ethnic and gender diversity, and different instructional areas.

Educators have elevated best practices during the pandemic and helped develop equitable policies and recommendations – from an elementary teacher serving as a thought partner on room arrangements for young students, to bilingual educators identifying the need for clear face masks for English Learners, to a rural teacher identifying creative solutions to limited bandwidth. We look forward to continuing to partner with you to uplift educator voices.

Any questions may be sent to jseiler@isbe.net.

IN BRIEF

EDUCATOR RESOURCES

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources’ resources trunks and packs are once again available for loan from locations throughout the state. These Illinois-specific units are filled with items for hands-on learning. There are trunks for 11 topics and field packs on three additional topics. Topics include wild mammals, trees, prairies, aquatics, invasive species, birds, fossils, pollinators, amphibians and reptiles, state symbols, people and animals from Illinois’ past and nature exploration for early childhood students. Teachers, homeschooling educators, scout and youth group leaders, nature center personnel, librarians, day care center staff, camp coordinators, and families are among the people who can successfully use these resources. A two-week loan period is suggested. There is no charge to borrow the trunks/packs, although a refundable deposit may be requested. Lessons are correlated to the Next Generation Science Standards, Common Core Standards, and Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards, as appropriate. Suggested grade levels are provided but modifications can be made for use at other grade levels. Visit the Resources Trunks and Packs website (https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/education/Pages/ItemsForLoan.aspx) to find contact information to make a reservation, trunk/pack contents lists, and other information.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Free Professional Learning Series for Kindergarten Teachers

ISBE and Erikson Institute have teamed up to provide professional development opportunities for kindergarten teachers. Project Connect (/NSDocuments/Erikson-Project-Connect-Flyer.pdf) will allow teachers will earn professional development hours and get practical resources for their classroom while learning new ways to assess and address the needs of the “whole child.” For more information about this professional development opportunity and to register visit the Project Connect website (https://www.ericson.edu/professional-development/project-connect/).

Ed Leaders Network

Ed Leaders Network (ELN) now has the following upcoming live webinars as well as recorded webinar available to view now.

3-4 p.m. Aug. 10 - From COVID to Calm: How to Cultivate Resilience in the Face of Uncertainty (https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/avn_G0C8x6JgQ5aLjfpw8kivg): The global pandemic has without a doubt impacted every one of our lives, and the rollercoaster of emotional adjustments can be overwhelming. Do you find yourself unsure of how to stay grounded and
empowered while facing the ever-changing landscape of emotional, mental, physical, social, financial, and occupational changes of the COVID-19 pandemic, or stress in general? This seminar is an interactive workshop that helps you identify what stage of resiliency you are in, and how to make an action plan towards a more robust state of resilience and equanimity.

**Mandated Trainings** - Bloodborne Pathogens, Diabetes, Chronic Health Conditions and more..  
[http://ipa-nfe.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT0xMDEwMDg1MCZwPTEmdT0xMTMyMDE1MjMwJmxDc3pGc3s/index.html](http://ipa-nfe.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT0xMDEwMDg1MCZwPTEmdT0xMTMyMDE1MjMwJmxDc3pGc3s/index.html)

The state-mandated trainings for 2021-22 are now available on Ed Leaders Network. These trainings are available as stand-alone courses in the Learning Library. There are Illinois-specific programs available in the Annual, Biannual, and Recommended categories.

**FEATURED CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Learning Renewal Temporary Employment Opportunities**  
  - **Full Time**  
    - Learning Renewal – Lead #1800 (Project Management)  
    - Learning Renewal – High Impact Tutoring Lead #1801 (Teaching & Learning)  
    - Learning Renewal – Communications Lead #1802 (Public Relations)  
    - Learning Renewal – Bridging and Transitions Lead #1803 (Early Childhood)  
    - Learning Renewal – Social Emotional Learning Lead #1804 (Wellness)  
  - **Part Time**  
    - Learning Renewal – Research Lead #1805 (Research)  
    - Learning Renewal – Assessment Lead #1806 (Assessment)  

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