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GREETINGS

This newsletter is designed to provide specialized information to Regional Offices of Education (ROEs) and Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs) throughout the State of Illinois. We hope to develop a better-informed working relationship, foster a greater sense of community, and build morale between the Illinois State Board of Education and ROEs and ISCs.

Teacher Assignability Webinar

The Educator Effectiveness Department hosted a live deep-dive webinar on Teacher Assignability in conjunction with the agency's 2019-20 "Back to School" series. The webinar aired on Aug. 21, 2019. During this webinar, our team reviewed topics such as short-term approvals versus short-term emergency approvals, substitute teacher requirements, self-contained general education, departmentalized subjects, bilingual education, English as a second language versus English as a new language, special education, and more.

The new Qualifications for Teacher Positions Tool was also unveiled! This tool, available [here](#), is designed to assist districts and school administrators, ROEs and ISCs, as well as educators to determine what credentials an individual must hold for a particular assignment.



From left to right: Cyndee Berger, Lauren Anders, Kim Kuhl, and Morgan Lovelace anxiously await to begin presenting the live webinar.



Did you miss the live webinar?

No worries! You can view the recorded webinar and related documents [here](#).

For additional webinars in the Back to School series, visit the [ISBE Back to School webpage](#).

Let's Talk Phones

The Educator Effectiveness Department is pleased to announce an update to the phone system's main menu to help handle incoming calls more efficiently. The update went into effect Aug. 30, 2019.

When callers previously dialed the (217) 557-6763 number, they were waiting 1 minute and 30 seconds before hearing a menu of options. That time has been **decreased to only 26 seconds** with our new menu system. Callers can expect shorter wait times to speak with a licensure specialist. They will hear messages containing information with answers to

frequently asked questions, as well as easy-to-use menu options. Callers will no longer speak to an agent in the Information Center first when dialing (217) 557-6763; they will now speak to an agent in the Educator Effectiveness Department Division directly. The Information Center will continue to assist with technical difficulties, such as login issues and forgotten passwords.

Stayed tuned for next month's issue to meet our wonderful call center agents!

Monthly Myth Buster

What happens when an educator answers affirmatively to a background question?

First, an educator's application is routed to the queues of our misconduct evaluators. Next, our misconduct evaluators send the educator a deficiency letter that informs them as to what their next steps are and what documentation needs to be submitted. This second step is new as of Sept. 1, 2019. Prior to this date, our evaluators would send an email to the email address on the educator's ELIS account. Once the required documentation is on file, the misconduct evaluators assess the documentation, research when needed, and either release the misconduct deficiency and issue the license or contact the educator for additional information. The new process of sending communication through ELIS will streamline the process and allow for better record keeping of communication sent to educators.

Upcoming with ELIS!

You will see a lot of changes in ELIS through the end of October! The Educator Effectiveness Division's ELIS Team will introduce a newer updated look, along with quicker load times. The team is in the process of creating new application statuses and a clearer process between when an educator applies and when a license or endorsement is issued.

The Educator Effectiveness Division will have training opportunities and materials in the coming months for educators and ROEs/ISCs.

The new statuses will provide more transparency during the evaluation process. Along with the new statuses, we plan to implement automated deficiency letters for select applications. This will minimize wait times for educators to receive notification of what documents they must provide before being evaluated. We are looking forward to streamlining processes and having the ability to better support our educators.

ISBE Staff Spotlight



Emily with her favorite cat, Cinnamon, perched on her shoulder.

Meet Emily Fox! Emily is the director of the Educator Effectiveness Department. She leads the department with great knowledge, poise, and a bright smile! Read more about Emily below!

What does a typical work day consist of for you?

"Each day is different, and that is what I love about my job! I am usually in meetings with agency colleagues, stakeholders, or with subsets of our licensure team regarding division work and projects. I also try to set aside time each day to work on my own projects and respond to emails."

How long have you been with ISBE and how has your career advanced through the years?

"I've been with ISBE seven years. I spent two years as an evaluator, then moved to a preparation team member before becoming supervisor over Educator Preparation and eventually director of the division. It has been great to work with different licensure and preparation initiatives over the years."

What is the most exciting thing you are working on at the moment?

"We have a lot of enhancements planned for ELIS in the upcoming year! I'm really excited for the future of this system. We have a great team with a lot of creativity leading this work. Coming this fall, we will have a licensure status redesign that will provide greater transparency to the field. We have a lot of other big enhancements in the works that will increase efficiency and system usability for our team and the field."

What has been one of your proudest moments working at ISBE?

"I am really proud of our entire Educator Effectiveness team and how much each one of them has grown during their time in the division. I most enjoy watching team members grow into leaders and accomplish feats such as presentations, trainings, and projects."

What inspires you at work?

"It's all about the kids! Everything we do in Educator Effectiveness comes down to ensuring our state's students are taught by high-quality teachers. Kids and teachers drive my work every day."

What three pieces of advice you can provide to others in the educator licensure field?

"1. Let the voices of stakeholders — those closest to the work — drive your policy and practice. 2. Innovate — always think of ways to grow and be better. 3. Collaborate often — rely on strengths of colleagues and stakeholders to move good work forward."

Tell us about your fur babies!

"I have two big dogs (a black, fluffy German shepherd named Omar and a yellow lab named Macy) and five cats — Cinnamon, Lavender, Sage, Jax, and Little Guy (who is actually the biggest cat of them all now!). Cinnamon is my favorite cat. He gets me."

What has been your favorite concert you have been to?

"That is a hard one! I have to say Taylor Swift. I've seen her three times and each show is a big production. My favorite was at U of I in 2006 when she was still "unknown" and opened for Brad Paisley. I have loved her music ever since!"



Emily recently visited New York City, where she posed for a picture with a wax figure of Taylor Swift.

ROE/ISC Touch Point Meeting @ ISBE — Sept. 18

The Educator Effectiveness Division is excited to co-host the Fall 2019 Touch Point meeting with the Illinois Association of Regional School Superintendents on Sept. 18, 2019! We invite licensure staff from each ROE and ISC to attend the meeting. It will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the State House Inn in Springfield.

We will present information and trainings on popular topics during this meeting, such as teacher assignability, evaluating an educator's previous qualifications, and the evaluation process of varying licenses. We also encourage you to bring ideas on future training topics. We will spend a portion of the meeting answering your questions as well, so be on the lookout for an email asking you to share your questions for us to address!

Please register for the training [here](#). Submit a separate registration for each individual from your office who will be in attendance.

All individuals who have registered for the meeting will receive an email with additional meeting information and an agenda in the coming weeks.

Public Act 101-0220 – Test of Basic Skills Requirement Removed

SENATE BILL 1952 WAS SIGNED ON AUG. 7, 2019, BY GOVERNOR JB PRITZKER. IT WAS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

Public Act 101-0220 eliminates the requirement that licensure candidates pass a test of basic skills to receive a Professional Educator License (PEL). Here's what you need to know about how this change affects educator licensing.

DOES THIS LAW ELIMINATE THE TEST OF BASIC SKILLS AS A LICENSURE OPTION FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL CANDIDATES WHO DO NOT HOLD AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE OR HIGHER OR A MINIMUM OF 60 SEMESTER HOURS OF CREDIT?

Yes. However, ISBE is working with the sponsors of the legislations to introduce a trailer bill this fall to reinstate the option for paraprofessional candidates to earn the endorsement through a competency test. Paraprofessional candidates may proceed with taking the ETS-para-

professional exam or ACT WorkKeys with the understanding that ISBE cannot consider a passing score as a means to obtain the endorsement until subsequent legislation is enacted.

ROE/ISC Feature – Regional Office of Education #11



We would like to highlight the great work of Regional Office of Education #11! ROE #11 Professional Development Coordinator Katie O'Dell proposed the idea of bringing content areas together across smaller, rural district lines.

Regional Superintendent Kyle Thompson wrote, "In the spring of 2017, Regional Office of Education #11 started hosting professional learning communities for art, music, and physical education. Popularity of these sessions quickly grew and today we are hosting PLCs for art, music,



physical education, English language arts, math, science, social studies, Spanish, Title I, food service staff, and building/maintenance professionals. Based on feedback we have received from educators, we will be hosting our first region-wide institute day for 'specials' (art, physical education, Spanish, and music) on Oct. 11. Each of the PLCs are educator led and stem from topics each of them choose. It provides a wonderful opportunity for each content area to network and collaborate in a central location. Each PLC has created a Facebook group to share resources/ideas/tips/tricks to use throughout the school year. We are very excited about how it has developed and grown over the past several years."

The Educator Effectiveness Department commends ROE #11 on creating a collaborative professional development environment that brings together these smaller districts, allowing educators to participate in activities pertinent to their content area that may not otherwise be available within their district. Great work! Thank you for sharing with us!

We invite you to share your story with us for inclusion in an upcoming issue! It could be upcoming PD activities, school events, an initiative, etc. Send your information to Lauren Anders at landers@isbe.net. We look forward to hearing from you!



Recent Updates

Short-Term Sub Transition to Teacher or Paraprofessional

Do you have a talented short-term sub in your region who would make an excellent teacher or parapro? Encourage them to expand their employment options by pursuing a teaching or paraprofessional license. [Visit this link to learn more!](#)

Final Renewal Reminders

All educators who still need to renew their license by Aug. 31, 2019, were sent a final email reminder on Aug. 26, 2019, from the Illinois State Board of Education. These reminders were sent to roughly 3,400 educators.

FY 2021 Professional Development Cycle

In the 2015-20 cycle (licenses renewing in FY 2021) and every cycle thereafter, all educators are required to complete 120 professional development hours, regardless of the number of or types of degrees held. The only exception is those educators who are National Board Certified, who will only owe 60 hours. Please share this information with administrators and educators, as educators who are up for renewal July 1, 2020, will need to have completed 120 hours of PD (or 60 if National Board Certified.)

ELIS Build

A new deployment was put in place on Aug. 22, 2019, for ELIS. Below are a few of the fixes and enhancements you will see:

- Added a communication record to everyone who received a renewal reminder throughout March and June. These reminders are no longer being sent through ELIS, but are being sent via an IWAS blast. Educators up for renewal have received at least one email per month. We will add the other records for July and August emails in an upcoming sprint after the August reminders go out next week.

- Any educator who completed Teacher Evaluator Modules 1-5 prior to Jan. 1, 2019, were entered into a workshop session for AA course 3691 and anyone who completed Principal Evaluator Modules 1-5 prior to Jan. 1, 2019, were entered into a workshop session for AA course 3690. This will allow the educators to have proper AA/PD credit for that year and will allow AA course 2001 to be used for the current training only.

- Educators are getting credit-based on the AA course now, so modules were removed from the PD screen. They will still show in the evaluator qualifications table, but not on the PD page.
- Removed the ability for educators to apply for, and institutions to entitle for, Bilingual endorsements that do not currently have licensure tests. These endorsements were only removed from the PEL subsequent endorsement and entitlement wizards and are still available on the ELS-TBE if the educator has completed a program of study in the language sought. If a district is seeking an educator to teach bilingual education in a language that is not available through an endorsement on the PEL, the educator must hold a PEL valid for the grades to be taught and meet any other district-defined requirements to ensure proficiency in the language. Educator Effectiveness is working with Pearson to develop tests for bilingual endorsements in languages that are growing in terms of student need throughout the state.

- Updated the background check page to fit the information necessary for ROEs to share background checks with other ROEs. (*More details coming! We will provide you with a guidance document for using this screen.*)
- The public search for ELIS is functional again.
- Trainings/retrainings will be visible under “Evaluator Qualifications” in the public search.
- Drag-and-drop image function is functional again.

ISBE Office Closings

- Labor Day: September 2, 2019
- Columbus Day: October 14, 2019
- Veterans Day: November 11, 2019

- Thanksgiving: November 28 & 29, 2019
- Christmas Day: December 25, 2019
- New Year's Day: January 1, 2020