

ELEVATE NEWSLETTER

el·e·vate /'eləˌvāt /

to raise or lift up to a higher position or more important, impressive level



OUR PURPOSE:

- Recruiting & Retaining High Quality Special Educators
- Building Sustainable, Professional Learning Opportunities for Educators
- Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities
- Connecting Families & Educators to Create Powerful Partnerships

About Us

The Illinois Elevating Special Educators Network (IESE) project is a statewide system of professional learning funded by IDEA Part D State Personnel Development Grant dollars. In order to meet objectives, the IESE Network has divided the State into five areas that cover Northwest, Northeast, West Central, East Central and Southern Illinois. Program Advisors & Regional Specialists in each area collaborate to design and implement professional learning activities within four key areas of focus, which include: **Mentoring, Coaching, Professional Learning & Parent/Family Education.**



ILLINOIS ELEVATING SPECIAL EDUCATORS NETWORK

CONTACT US: 3358 Big Pine Trail - Champaign, IL 61822 • (217) 893-3219 • www.iesenetwork.org

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Inclusive Education Family Series:

Least Restrictive Environment and Inclusive Practices

The series includes topics that explore key ideas about inclusion in early childhood education for children ages birth through five years of age. Topics range from defining inclusion to understanding the benefits of inclusion. Each session will include a topic guide, guest speakers, and resources for attendees. Visit <https://www.fmptic.org/> for more information.

When:

Thursday, November 18th, 2021
6:30PM - 7:30PM (via online)

Contact:

Amy Bain @ (630) 991-7505 / amy.bain@eclre.org

Register Here:

<http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=rihnojrab8oeidk=a07eifbet6844603da2>

November Featured Staff

Each month, we will feature members of the IESE Network team so you can get to know us and become familiar with our faces! We look forward to working with professionals across the State of Illinois!



- Melinda Miethe, Program Advisor
(Area 4)



- Kelly Marcum, Regional Specialist
(Area 1 / ROE #47)



- Jennifer Houch, Program Advisor
(Area 3)

Monthly Sessions:

OCTOBER 12TH Beginning of the Year: Organization & Setting Up Roles	NOVEMBER 9TH Co-teaching 101: What They Teach You, and What They Don't	DECEMBER 14TH Holidays Aren't Happy for All	JANUARY 11TH Writing the IEP: A Look at Each Section of the IEP
FEBRUARY 8TH Partnering with Parents	MARCH 8TH Assessment, Response to Intervention (RTI) & Progress Monitoring	APRIL 12TH Mediation: How to Mediate School Conflicts & Keep Students Learning	MAY 10TH IEPs & the Law

All remote sessions will meet @ 3:30PM on the 2nd Tuesday of each month

2021 Monthly Remote Mentoring Sessions

November 9th, 2021

"Co-Teaching 101: What They Teach You & What They Don't"

Establishing a team benefits all students. This session will give you materials and suggestions for dividing the workload and responsibilities so that all receive the benefit of a co-taught environment.

Visit our website at www.iesenetwork.org for more information and to [register](#).



Coordinator's Corner

As of November 1, 2021, the IESE Network has been up and running for four months. I am so proud of the progress we have made on building this network. Our teams across the state of Illinois have already made connections with districts, regional offices, and special education cooperatives and have built plans for providing support and services to special educators. These plans include professional development, mentoring, coaching, and parent education. Each IESE Service Area has unique needs related to improving outcomes for students with disabilities, but one common issue being discussed across the state is the difficulty in finding time, substitutes, and staff to participate fully in professional learning opportunities. This has posed a challenge to the IESE Network; however, our team is up to the task of thinking outside the typical parameters of Professional Learning for Educators in order to provide access.

As our team has worked through this challenge, I came across an article from Frontline Education to share with our stakeholders. Although providing professional learning opportunities is challenging this school year, this article points out the positive results of having to look at other ways for educators to grow in their profession by focusing on 7 elements of effective professional development: **1)** content focused, **2)** incorporates active learning, **3)** supports collaboration, **4)** uses models of effective practice, **5)** provides coaching and expert support, **6)** offers feedback and reflection, and **7)** sustained durations (Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). Effective teacher professional development. Learning Policy Institute.).

While these elements have long been in place, the COVID-19 closures of schools may have heightened educators' engagement in learning new skills. The feedback most often received and used for adjusting lessons came from the students themselves. Much of the professional learning took place out of need and from teacher to teacher. Please take some time to read this article.

Article:

[How Professional Learning for Teachers Has Changed During the Pandemic](#)

The following quote provided me with encouragement and hope for our work with educators:

"Perhaps the simplest (though not necessarily the easiest) step to take would be to work with your staff to incorporate these seven elements into professional development activities to maintain the teacher learning momentum of COVID-19, while also promoting greater student learning outcomes."

(Ellen Agnello, MA in Literacy Education, Ph.D. student in C8I)

Our Network is dedicated to maintaining the teacher learning momentum that was created out of necessity. We are focused on providing whatever support is needed for teachers to feel encouraged and excited about their profession again. This has been a tough couple of school years, with many educators considering leaving the profession. The IESE Network aims to combat that by focusing on the amazing educators in our state and sharing the knowledge that has been acquired over the past two years. Our team continues to connect with stakeholders, build plans for support, and continuously improve professional learning and outcomes for students with disabilities. We got this!

- Liza Thomas



Professional Learning

Mentoring

Coaching

Parent & Family Education