



County Services Committee Meeting Minutes

Lee County, Illinois

Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 9:00 AM

Old Lee County Courthouse, Third Floor Boardroom, 112 E 2nd St, Dixon, IL 61021

I. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m., by Chair Jack Skrogstad.

II. Committee Member Roll Call: Chair Jack Skrogstad, Vice Chair Ali Huss, Dean Freil, Katie White, Ron Gascoigne, Reed Akre

Jack Skrogstad, Ali Huss, Dean Freil, and Reed Akre were all present in person. Katie White and Ron Gascoigne were absent.

Also present: Keane Hudson and Mike Koppien (Board Members), Dave Anderson (County Engineer/Highway Department), Charley Boonstra (State's Attorney), Jennifer Boyd (Assessor), Sami Elarifi (GIS Coordinator), Jeremy Englund (Administrator), Susan Gillespie (HR Director), Jim Gorman (Veterans Administration), Alice Henkel (Zoning Administrator), Mike O'Brien (Senior Assistant State's Attorney), Nancy Petersen (County Clerk and Recorder), Chris Tennyson (Regional Office of Education Superintendent), Brian Tjurnlund (Assistant County Engineer), and Becky Brenner (Board Secretary) all attended in person.

III. Public Attendees

Melanie Willstead was in attendance.

IV. Reagan Mass Transit Report

Greg Gates was not able to attend the meeting but submitted a detailed report for the committee. This report will be attached to a copy of the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet.

V. Approval of the Minutes from the Previous Meeting - (March 11, 2025)

Minutes from the March 11, 2025, County Services Committee Meeting were approved as presented without modification.

VI. Transportation/Solid Waste

A. *Monthly Report*

Dave Anderson walked the committee through the detailed report that he submitted from the Highway Department and Solid Waste Management. This report will be attached to a copy of the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet.

B. *Highway Department*

1. Awarding of Bids From the April 11, 2025, Bid Letting

Dave Anderson explained that the bid letting on April 11, 2025, was for a hot mix project in Hamilton Township. Initially the costs associated

with the project were earmarked from a combination of local and MFT (Motor Fuel Tax) funds, requiring the committee to award the MFT expenditure. However, the Hamilton Township Road Commission subsequently decided to use only local funds, which would technically negate the need to award the bid. Be this as it may, Dave recommended that the committee move to award the bid to ensure coverage if the funding plan changed back to include MFT money.

Motion to award the bid, as presented to the committee, subject to the Highway Commissioner concurrence, as applicable, and IDOT review.

Moved by Dean Freil. **Second** by Ali Huss. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.

2. PASER Report Overview - Brian Tjernlund - *Information Only*

Brian Tjernlund walked the committee through the comprehensive PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) Report he provided to the committee. The Highway Department does a PASER report every two years. The report submitted included a great deal of details and photos.

The purpose of this report is to rate and evaluate the road pavement conditions of the Lee County Highway System. Bridges were not considered in this study as they must be evaluated separately. Lee County, through its Highway Department, maintains approximately 220 miles of roadway within its jurisdiction. The road system includes both asphalt and sealcoat paved roads. This survey used the PASER System to rate and evaluate the pavement conditions. The findings of the report are intended to be used to:

- Identify what issues are currently affecting various roads throughout the county highway system.
- To help identify what maintenance and repairs are needed throughout the system.
- To estimate what it will cost to maintain and repair the highway system based on the current pavement conditions.
- To help create a future multi-year maintenance and construction plan.

The PASER system is designed to help the Highway Department staff assess the condition of the County's highway system and determine what county resources are needed for each roadway segment. With limited funds available to the department, the PASER ratings help staff determine how to use this funding to provide the maximum benefit to the county residents. Below are findings from the 2025 report:

- The average PASER rating for asphalt roads showed a slight increase to 4.87 from the rating two years prior of 4.71.

- The average PASER rating for seal coat roads declined to a 3.00 from 3.27 from the rating two years prior. Brian explained that the decrease was attributed to the paving of approximately 12 miles of seal coat roads with asphalt since the last report.
- A substantial portion of the road network, specifically 68% of asphalt roads and 87% of seal coat roads, were rated as fair or lower.
- There was a notable 47% increase in the number of asphalt roads rated as poor, directly linked to the aging infrastructure.
- The estimated cost for pavement work on the entire county highway system (excluding township and municipal roads) is approximately \$28.6 million, which is comparable to the 2023 estimate. Despite inflation, this figure has been somewhat offset by the 20 miles of road paved in the last two years.

C. *Solid Waste Management*

Dave Anderson reported that the Highway Department is now accepting electronic recycling Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., except for Holidays.

VII. Assessor's Office - GIS Department

A. *Assessor's Office*

1. Monthly Report

Jennifer Boyd walked the committee through the report that she submitted. The full report will be attached to a copy of the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet.

B. GIS Department (Geographic Information System)

1. Monthly Report

Sami Elarifi walked the committee through the report that he submitted. The full report will be attached to a copy of the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet.

VIII. County Board

Jeremy Englund reported that the County had welcomed two new employees: Susan Gillespie was introduced as the New Human Resources Director and Mike O'Brien was introduced as the new Senior Assistant State's Attorney. In May, Joe Bay will be joining the County as the new Building Official.

IX. County Clerk and Recorder's Office

A. Monthly Report

Nancy Petersen walked the committee through the detailed report that she submitted. The full report will be attached to the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet. In addition to her report, she provided updated results from the recent election. Following are highlights:

- The certified results from the election are finalized and available on the County website.
- Voter turnout was approximately 16.88%, significantly lower than the 74% turnout in the November election.
- The vote-by-mail option was highly utilized. 1,876 ballots were mailed out. 1000 were returned.
- The Election Office was short 38 election judges.
- The new e-campaign, which reached an audience of approximately 15,000, resulted in 2,270 views (a 13.5% view rate) and a 2.4% click-through rate, with most clicks originating from mobile devices (324) compared to desktops (38), indicating the campaign was a worthwhile investment.

X. IT Department (Information Technology)

A. *Monthly Report*

Paul Gorski was not able to attend the meeting but submitted a detailed report for the committee. The full report will be attached to the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet.

XI. ROE (Regional Office of Education #47)

A. *Monthly Report*

Chris Tennyson walked the committee through the detailed report that he submitted from the Regional Office of Education. The full report will be attached to the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet.

XII. Veterans Assistance

A. *Report from March*

Jim Gorman provided a report from Veterans Assistance. The report will be added to a copy of the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet. In addition to his report, Jim explained that the HR Director was in the process of developing a job description for the Veterans Service Officer position.

XIII. Zoning / Planning

A. *Monthly Report*

Alice Henkel walked the committee through the detailed report that she submitted from the Zoning Department. The full report will be attached to the minutes and included in the April County Board agenda packet. Following are highlights that Alice shared in addition to her written report:

- The County's Battery Energy Storage Moratorium expired on March 31, 2025. There will be a resolution coming to the Executive Committee to extend the moratorium.
- Jared Yater, the Zoning Compliance Officer, continues to work through approximately 70 open compliance files. Six files have recently been closed, and the office continues to work with the Lee County Health

Department to develop more effective ways to deal with nuisance properties.

- The LaSalle County Board recently passed a resolution supporting LaSalle County's right to regain control over the approval process for renewable energy facilities (wind and solar). The resolution also requests the repeal of Public Act 102-1123. This act, passed in 2023 by the state of Illinois, established statewide citing standards for wind and solar projects, effectively removing this authority from counties. The resolution acknowledges the impact of this act, forcing counties like LaSalle to comply despite having their own ordinances. Alice has copies of the resolution available and suggests it as a potential route for the current group to consider.
- Alice gave an update on PJM. Delays within PJM have hindered the construction of large wind and solar projects. Recently, PJM has partnered with Google Tapestry to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to transform the interconnection processes. This initiative aims to unify numerous databases into a single network model, creating a single access point for developers and planners. The goal is to significantly reduce study times from weeks to hours. This AI-driven system is expected to be implemented this year, and there is hope that it will accelerate the movement of renewable energy projects through the PJM queue.

B. Petitions Going To the Zoning Board of Appeals - 5 Petitions

1. Petition No. 25-P-1641 by Clay & Elizabeth Partington, as owners of certain real property identified as PIN 18-08-07-151-002 and commonly known as 601 Rock Island Rd., Dixon, Illinois, in South Dixon Township.
Motion to move Petition No. 25-P-1641 to the Executive Committee for inclusion on the April County Board agenda. **Moved** by Dean Freil.
Second by Reed Akre. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.
2. Petition No. 25-P-1642 by Pivot Energy IL 258, LLC, as lessee of certain real property identified as PINs 15-07-12-377-002 and 15-07-13-100-002, in Nelson Township.
Motion to move Petition No. 25-P-1642 to the Executive Committee for inclusion on the April County Board agenda. **Moved** by Reed Akre.
Second by Dean Freil. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.
3. Petition No. 25-P-1643 by Pivot Energy IL 259, LLC, as lessee of certain real property identified as PINs 15-07-12-377-002 and 15-07-13-100-002, in Nelson Township.
Motion to move Petition No. 25-P-1643 to the Executive Committee for inclusion on the April County Board agenda. **Moved** by Dean Freil.
Second by Reed Akre. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. Petition No. 25-P-1644 by Pivot Energy IL 260, LLC, as lessee of certain real property identified as PINs 15-07-12-377-002 and 15-07-13-100-002, in Nelson Township.

Motion to move Petition No. 25-P-1644 to the Executive Committee for inclusion on the April County Board agenda. **Moved** by Dean Freil.

Second by Reed Akre. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. Petition No. 25-P-1645 by Compton Community Fire Protection District, as owners of certain real property identified as PIN 05-17-11-300-007, and commonly known as 748 IL Route 251, Compton, in Brooklyn Township. See attached for details.

Motion to move Petition No. 25-P-1645 to the Executive Committee for inclusion on the April County Board agenda. **Moved** by Dean Freil.

Second by Reed Akre. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.

C. Petitions Coming From the Zoning Board of Appeals

There were no petitions coming from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

D. Petitions Going To the Planning Commission - 1 Petition

1. Petition No. 25-PC-79 by the Lee County Zoning Administrator, was filed in which Petitioner seeks to amend the text of Title 10: ZONING REGULATIONS of the Lee County Code of Ordinances to replace Zoning Board of Appeals with Zoning Hearing Officer.

Motion to move Petition No. 25-PC-79 to the Executive Committee for inclusion on the April County Board agenda. **Moved** by Dean Freil.

Second by Ali Huss. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.

E. Petitions Coming From the Planning Commission

There were no petitions coming from the Planning Commission.

XIV. Unfinished Business

There were no items under Unfinished Business.

XV. New Business

A. *Resolution Opposing HB2827*

The committee engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding HB2827, drafted by Board Member and homeschooler Ali Huss. Chris Tennyson from ROE also weighed in on the discussion expressing his concerns. Below are highlights from the discussion that bring to the forefront the potential impact on individual families and the County and secondly on the impact for ROE:

- Financial Burden on the County and ROE: The bill is vague regarding funding for the ROE, superintendent, and principals to handle the increased administrative work related to homeschooling registration and oversight and is likely to create unfunded mandates on Lee County.

- **Increased Administrative Work:** The bill would require registering all homeschooling individuals and their documents, adding significantly to the administrative workload.
 - **Discretion of Truancy Officers:** The bill grants broad discretion to truancy officers regarding investigations, raising concerns about potential overreach and inconsistent application.
 - **Vagueness of the Bill's Goal:** The bill fails to convey true necessity aside from documenting the number of homeschoolers (census and enrollment data exist) or ensuring literacy (state stepping into parental rights).
 - **Emotional Manipulation and Misleading Claims:** The bill implies that homeschooling is linked to child abuse, without providing evidence that this bill would prevent such abuse. The accusations against homeschooling families are offensive and infuriating.
 - **Parental Rights:** The bill infringes upon the parents' fundamental right to be the primary caregivers, educators, and providers for their children and urges Lee County to support this message.
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- **Lack of Consultation:** The bill's drafters did not consult with the ROE, yet it designates their offices as a key vehicle for implementation.
 - **Current Truancy System:** The ROE already has a truancy department responsible for ensuring students receive education and addressing potential issues like abuse. The current system carries out the same functions without this additional legislation.
 - **Criminalization of Form Non-Compliance:** A significant concern is that the bill makes failing to fill out a form a criminal act, which is unacceptable to homeschool families.
 - **Increased Staffing and Unfunded Mandate:** Implementing the bill would necessitate hiring at least one or two full-time staff members for check-ins, costing ROE significant funds they don't have. The state (ISBE) doesn't fully fund their current truancy support team, and some regional offices receive no grant money. This would be another unfunded mandate.
 - **Lack of Authority to Demand Curriculum:** Currently, the ROE has no legal authority to force homeschooling parents to provide their curriculum. The proposed bill implies such oversight without granting the necessary legal power.
 - **Limited Truancy Enforcement:** Judges in the counties are not consistently issuing penalties for truancy, which some families are aware of.
 - **Alternative Models Ignored:** The ROE suggested looking at Louisiana's system, where parents simply register their homeschooling choice on a state website, but ISBE's legal department was unwilling to pursue this.

- Unanswered Questions and Logistical Challenges: Many questions remain unanswered about the process of reviewing homeschool portfolios (qualifications of reviewers, grading parameters, record storage) and the implications of allowing anyone to report a suspected homeschooler, highlighting the lack of clarity and potential burden on their office.
- Existing Child Protection Mechanisms: Mechanisms are currently in place to address reports of abuse or neglect, making the new legislation seem unnecessary for this purpose.

Motion to move the Resolution Opposing HB2827 the Executive Committee for inclusion on the April County Board agenda. **Moved** by Ali Huss. **Second** by Dean Freil. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.

XVI. **Executive Session**

There was no request for an Executive Session.

XVII. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 9:44 a.m. **Moved** by Ali Huss. **Second** by Dean Freil. **Motion** passed unanimously by voice vote.

The next County Services Committee Meeting is scheduled for
9:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 13, 2025

Respectfully submitted by:
Becky Brenner - Board Secretary

Lee County Highway Department
Report to the County Services Committee – APRIL 2025

The following represents a report of notable Highway Department activities and explanations of requested board actions:

Status of Current Projects

- Bid Letting on 4/11/2025, bid tabulations are attached. Full and detailed bid tabulations were placed on the Lee County website on 4/11/2025.

Other:

- Normal springtime maintenance activities are ongoing (ditch cleanup, shoulder disking, culvert replacements, repairing equipment from winter use, preparing equipment for summer maintenance, planning maintenance projects, etc.).
- Preparing bid proposals and contracts for summer construction. Layout for summer construction. Planning for 2025-2030 projects.
- PASER report overview – Brian Tjernlund

Board Action Items:

- Award Bid listed on attached Bid Tabulation

Solid Waste

Electronics collection is open for the season and will run until November 1.



MONTHLY ASSESSMENT OFFICE REPORT
April 15, 2025 – County Services Committee

- The Assessment Office rolled the 2024 tax file to the clerk's office this past month. We are officially working in the 2025 tax year.
- Exemptions renewals were mailed out to everyone who received a Senior Assessment Freeze, Disabled Person or Disabled Veteran Exemption last year. The office has been very busy receiving these exemptions since they have been mailed.
- The independent contractual position of Field Property Data Collector was recently listed. We had a good response to the listing. I have several interviews scheduled for Friday, April 11th and hope to have at least one or two good candidates ready to start working on the township task lists in the next couple of weeks.
- As will be noted in the GIS reported, EagleView has recently informed us that they have completed 100% of the new aerial photography for our updated imagery. We are currently contracted with them to update our imagery once every three years. We are excited to get the finished product along with the Change Finder tool that compared the new photography to the 2022 photography and outlines the existing, changed and demolished structures to help us do a more accurate and complete general reassessment of the townships.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Boyd, CIAO
Chief County Assessment Officer/GIS Supervisor



Monthly GIS Department Report

April 10, 2025

- The GIS Department has completed processing all parcel split and combination requests for February 2025. This also includes updates to zoning, land use, and other associated GIS layers to ensure data consistency.
- The NG911 and 911 GIS layers have been updated and successfully uploaded to public safety mapping platforms.
- The Special Event solution has been deployed on the Lee County ArcGIS Online platform and is currently undergoing review and testing.
- A meeting was held with Esri, the City of Dixon IT, and Dixon Fire to discuss licensing and implementation strategies for the solution.
- A separate meeting with the 911 center, Esri, and the IT department was held to review GIS software licensing and discuss upcoming software upgrades.
- Several maps have been scanned for the Maintenance Department.
- Feedback was received from the Assessors, and updates were made to the ArcGIS Pro tutorial accordingly.
- A GIS proposal and scope of work have been prepared for the Bison Meadows Wind Project.
- A rough draft of the "EMA Windshield Damage Assessment Survey" has been created.
- Sami attended a seminar on the RapidSOS UNITE solution, which focuses on intelligent safety platforms and AI-driven emergency response systems.
- EagleView has completed 100% of the flight plans for the new aerial imagery acquisition in Lee County.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sami Elarifi
GIS Coordinator



COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER
REPORT FOR APRIL COMMITTEE MEETING

- Early Voting 920 VBM 1000 (1876 mailed out)
- Voter turnout low – 16.8% from 73%
- Certification day today for Election Results was Friday the 11th afternoon
- Election Judge status – 108 on election day minimum needed 138
- Next election day is March 17th, 2026
- Economic Interest Papers mailed out turn into the Election Department Due Date May 1st
- Tax Extension Process is under way in my 2nd floor office.
- Huge uptick in requests for birth and marriage licenses coming from Real ID requirements-
deadline May 7th

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Petersen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nancy" being more prominent than the last name "Petersen".

Nancy Petersen
Lee County Clerk & Recorder



IT Department
Paul Gorski, IT Director
www.leecountyil.com

April 4, 2025

IT Board Report

1. Current IT projects include:
 - Courts – wrapping up some desktop computer installations
 - Courts – troubleshooting audio problems in two courtrooms, waiting for State assistance
 - LEC – wrapping up some desktop computer installations
 - Highway – starting a new desktop deployment
 - New Courts – moving computer equipment as needed for the carpeting project. Moved Probation into EOC. As of April 4, already started moving Probation back to their offices.
2. Upcoming projects include:
 - SAO – new desktop and laptops due in mid-April, start deploying late April.
 - SAO – Prepping new laptop for new hire
 - County-wide - Moving County email addresses from “countyoflee.org” to “leecountyIL.gov”. Expect more news and announced schedule by April 11.
 - County-wide – I will be sending invitations for new cybersecurity training on April 21.
3. Cybersecurity training. Regarding this training, it is important that we all complete this training, not only is it a state requirement for all employees to complete the training, it helps protect us against malware, ransomware and phishing attacks.

Let me know if you have any other questions.

Thank you.

Paul Gorski
IT Director
Lee County, IL
815-285-8166
pgorski@countyoflee.org

Regional Office of Education Report

April 2025

Educator Shortage Survey Released on March 10th

In Fall 2024, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) partnered to collect complementary statewide educator staffing data for the 2024-2025 school year (SY25). In tandem, ISBE administered the Unfilled Positions data collection, and IARSS conducted the Educator Shortage Survey. Response rates were 92% (1,029 of 1,120) for the Unfilled Positions data and 71% (790 of 1,120) for the Educator Shortage Survey. We wanted to share some of the key findings with you. Results from the two statewide surveys show Illinois' educator shortage is easing. According to the Unfilled Positions data, the total number of filled educator positions, which consists of teaching, school support personnel, administrative, and paraprofessional positions, increased in SY24, rising across all roles by 7,473 FTE. Additionally, total unfilled positions decreased across all four roles in SY25 by 643 FTE. Further, reductions in unfilled positions were seen in every position category except administrative.

Taking a closer look at the Unfilled Positions data, 3,864 teaching positions were unfilled for SY25 at a vacancy rate of 2.8%. An additional 996 school support personnel, 189 administrator, and 2,415 paraprofessional positions were also unfilled. Shortages, of any position across all four categories, occurred in 55% of education entities (615 of 1,120). In contrast, 37% of education entities (414) reported no unfilled positions of any kind. Staffing data from the Educator Shortage Survey supports these findings, with a reported 6,117 teacher positions remedied through alternative measures such as hiring substitutes, hiring retired educators, combining classes, and increasing class sizes, among other short-term solutions.

The Educator Shortage Survey also assessed leaders' perceived causes for staffing challenges. The most frequent cause leaders mentioned was receiving limited applicants for their specific open positions (395 of 694), with reasons ranging from a general lack of applicants to issues related with certification. Issues related to salary or benefits were also frequently raised by leaders as a major cause of shortages (382 of 694).

In addition, education leaders shared current strategies they have implemented to address shortages. Improving recruitment through "Grow Your Own" programs, connecting with colleges, hiring incentives, and hosting student teachers was frequently reported as a current strategy implemented by districts (442 of 688). Providing incentives such as adjusting pay scales, supporting continuing education, providing student loan forgiveness, and recognizing all years of experience was another popular strategy adopted by education leaders (402 of 688).

And finally, the Educator Shortage Survey queried leaders about possible policy solutions that would support their hiring and retention efforts. Support at the state or federal level that would provide alternative certifications for educators as well as additional funding and improvements to the retirement system were reported as the most common desired solutions (375 of 634).

Office of Professional Learning & Educational Services

Current Programs - Office of Professional Learning & Educational Services
Induction & Mentoring
Education Pathway Endorsement
Manufacturing, Health Science, IT & Agriculture Endorsement Programs
Elevating Special Educators
School Improvement & Strategic Planning
School Improvement Cooperative (instructional coaching, training, networking)
Social Emotional Learning/Trauma/Youth Mental Health First Aid/TRS I-A
Early Childhood Professional Learning
Family Education & Engagement
NEXUS Family Support Services
Student Attendance
Computer Science Capacity Building
Afterschool Program
Preschool for ALL Expansion

Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Professional Learning & School Improvement

- ROE 47 Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services is currently **auditing 10 school districts** in Lee, Ogle & Whiteside counties. Regional Offices of Education are required

to audit the professional development activities offered by districts at least once every five years.

- ROE 47 is partnering with the Illinois and National Science Teacher Association and the Illinois State Board of Education to provide **statewide professional learning to support the implementation of the Illinois Science Standards** in FY 25. Sessions (virtual, face to face, synchronous, asynchronous) launched January 27, 2025 with over 40 participants and will continue through June 30, 2025.
- ROE 47 Office of PL & Ed Services has been awarded a NEW grant from the Illinois Department of Public Health to promote **youth mental health and suicide prevention**. The Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) program is a school-based program that teaches students (grades 8-12) how to cope with mental health issues and prevent suicide. The program is delivered by certified facilitators in the classroom in a series of interactive sessions(role play, student discussions) over a few weeks. What the program does:
 - Helps students learn about mental health and suicide prevention
 - Teaches students how to identify and respond to mental health concerns
 - Helps students develop coping skills and emotional resilience
 - Encourages students to seek help for themselves and their friends
 - Helps students recognize the need for support
- Active schools with **TRS-IA or RSSI plans** to support trauma-responsive schools include: Amboy Central Elementary, Amboy Jr High School, Amboy High School, Center for Change, Chana Educ Center, Southside School (Morrison), Polo High School, Rock Falls Middle School, Dillon Elementary (RF), Merrill Elementary (RF), Riverdale (RF), Franklin (Sterling), Jefferson (Sterling), Lincoln Elementary (Sterling), Paw Paw Elementary & Jr High, Prophetstown Elementary, Monroe Center, Sauk Valley Deanery.
- ROE 47 has launched a year-long **social media campaign to raise awareness of trauma**, reduce stigma, and promote resilience. Posts are available each Monday on Facebook.
- ROE 47 partners with Sterling Township's Elevate Youth Program and the Sterling-Rock Falls YMCA to provide an **afterschool program** for Challand Middle School students at the youth center. The program runs Monday - Thursday from 3:00 - 5:30 p.m. We are serving 15 students each night. In the recent weeks students have really enjoyed using tinkercad and printing on the 3d printer. In the last week we have gained 2 new kids because their friends are excited about coming. Looking forward to planning summer activities with the group and working on study and homework skills.
- Our new Preschool for ALL Expansion program will open 2 classrooms at Open Sesame in Dixon on April 1. Our program is partnering with Lee County Special Education, Head Start, early childhood home visiting programs, and community agencies to host a community early childhood screening event on April 25th in Dixon.
- ROE 47 partnered with Illinois Ag, Lee County Ag, and the Lee County Farm Bureau to host the third annual Cultivating Connections in Ag Day in February 2025.
- ROE 47 Pathways team hosted students from Lee, Ogle & Whiteside Counties for the first annual Team Based Challenge Day. The day featured an opportunity for students to

work on an authentic industry problem in collaboration with local industry mentors in health sciences, manufacturing, and education. Students are required to complete 2 team based challenges to earn their pathway endorsement.

- 140 students and adults attended the 2nd annual Student Leadership Summit at the McCormick Event Center in Rock Falls on March 20th. Keynote speaker was Mr. Tom Toney who challenged students to “Be BOLD!” On Friday, Tom worked with over 70 ROE educators to demonstrate and discuss “pulling together” to promote resilience and social emotional health in our school communities.
- Nominations for our annual **Jen Banks Memorial Marigold Award** are open! Jen Banks was a beloved teacher and school improvement coach who passed away as the result of a tragic automobile accident in December 2015. Her love for learning and the students that she worked with was an inspiration to many. Jen’s positive, supportive, and energetic attitude nurtured those around her and helped them to grow. In celebration of Jen’s life and dedication to learning, ROE 47 has created an award in her honor. As Jen worked with many elementary and middle schools in the Sauk Valley area, this award is open to PK-8 Whiteside County teachers, para-educators & administrators. Marigolds exist in our schools - encouraging, supporting and nurturing teachers. They are leaders in their community, classrooms, and families. They have a love of learning and sharing that learning with others. **Help us to honor Jen and these exemplary leaders in your school communities. Each nominee will be recognized on social media and will receive a certificate, a marigold, and a special book. Our overall winner will also receive a \$100 Amazon gift card to continue to build their classroom library.**

THE MARIGOLD EFFECT

MANY EXPERIENCED GARDENERS FOLLOW A CONCEPT CALLED COMPANION PLANTING: PLACING CERTAIN VEGETABLES AND PLANTS NEAR EACH OTHER TO IMPROVE GROWTH FOR ONE OR BOTH PLANTS. FOR EXAMPLE, ROSE GROWERS PLANT GARLIC NEAR THEIR ROSES BECAUSE IT REPELS BUGS AND PREVENTS FUNGAL DISEASES. AMONG COMPANION PLANTS, THE MARIGOLD IS ONE OF THE BEST: IT PROTECTS A WIDE VARIETY OF PLANTS FROM PESTS AND HARMFUL WEEDS. IF YOU PLANT A MARIGOLD BESIDE MOST ANY GARDEN VEGETABLE, THAT VEGETABLE WILL GROW BIG AND STRONG AND HEALTHY, PROTECTED AND ENCOURAGED BY ITS MARIGOLD. MARIGOLDS EXIST IN OUR SCHOOLS AS WELL – ENCOURAGING, SUPPORTING AND NURTURING GROWING TEACHERS ON THEIR WAY TO MATURITY. IF YOU CAN FIND AT LEAST ONE MARIGOLD IN YOUR SCHOOL AND STAY CLOSE TO THEM, YOU WILL GROW. FIND MORE THAN ONE AND YOU WILL POSITIVELY THRIVE.

2025 Jen Banks Marigold Award



Jen Banks was a beloved teacher and school improvement coach who passed away as the result of a tragic automobile accident in December 2015. Her love for learning and the students that she worked with was an inspiration to many. Jen's positive, supportive, and energetic attitude nurtured those around her and helped them to grow. In celebration of Jen's life and dedication to learning, ROE 47 has created an award in her honor. As Jen worked with many elementary and middle schools in the Sauk Valley area, this award is open to K-8 Whiteside County teachers.

Marigolds exist in our schools - encouraging, supporting and nurturing teachers. They are leaders in their community, classrooms, and families. They have a love of learning and sharing that learning with others. Help us to honor Jen and these exemplary leaders in your school communities.

Please nominate your marigold today using web link or QR code below.

*Please submit your nomination by
Wednesday, April 9, 2025*



<https://tinyurl.com/Marigold2025>



Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Parent Engagement & Community Outreach

- Parent & Family Engagement Events
 - March 4, 2025: Parent University - Let's Talk About Mental Health ft. NAMI (7 families)
 - March 5, 2025: Polo PreK Blockfest (35 families)
 - March 20, 2025: Prophetstown PreK Parent Night (10 families)
- To date, ROE 47 has 144 partners on its IRIS referral platform. There have been 3,328 referrals and 1821 families served. IRIS is an Integrated Referral and Intake System that works to connect local agencies with one another to streamline online client referrals. IRIS supports warm hand-offs for families, closes the communication loop for referring organizations, tracks outcomes, and provides a clear data-driven picture of partner capacity to improve the process over time.

Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Social Media

The department's social media presence continues to grow. Like our page on Facebook (Regional Office of Education #47) and download our ROE47 App for weekly teacher talks, instructional tips, news, giveaways, updates & more! Follow us on Twitter @RegionalOffice47. Want to hear from educators & students in the classroom? Check out our Teacher Talks on YouTube! We have an extensive library of 153 videos (and growing) in our collection!

Upcoming Events

For Educators

NGSS CAPACITY BUILDERS SERIES

Welcome to this Zoom-based learning series for administrators, coaches, ROE staff, higher ed, curriculum directors, and science leaders. We'll explore key aspects of science education, including program analysis, effective instruction, integrating key skills, and enhancing science through technology and CTE. Join us to gain valuable insights and collaborate.

THE CURRENT REALITY OF SCIENCE

JANUARY 27
9:00 - 10:00 A.M.

This session will explore the role of science education in preparing students for success in the 21st century. We will demonstrate how science provides a crucial framework for understanding the world, fosters critical thinking, inspires students, and connects to all areas of learning. We'll discuss ways to grow your school or district's science program (and ourselves!) starting small, and moving to big. This session will inspire administrators to become champions for science in their schools and provide strategies for enhancing science instruction.

INTEGRATING MATH & LITERACY IN SCIENCE

APRIL 28
9:00 - 10:00 A.M.

This session will explore strategies for seamlessly integrating math and literacy skills (including oracy) into science instruction. Participants will examine real-world examples of how to make time for these essential connections within the science curriculum.

EVALUATING THE SCIENCE CLASSROOM

FEBRUARY 24
9:00 - 10:00 A.M.

This workshop will explore how to effectively assess and improve implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). We will delve into defining effective science instruction, including phenomena-driven, 3-dimensional learning, and culturally responsive teaching. We will then discuss strategies for bridging the gap between current instructional practices and the realities of what the NGSS demands, supporting teachers and administrators in this transition. By the end of the session, participants will be able to identify key characteristics of an effective science classroom and develop strategies for improving teacher feedback to accurately reflect the quality of science instruction.

SCIENCE SUMMIT

JUNE 23
8:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

This online summit will feature keynote presentations from leading experts, interactive breakout sessions, and valuable networking opportunities. Attendees will explore key topics such as leveraging technology in the classroom, effective budgeting strategies, best practices in Career and Technical Education (CTE), and identifying and utilizing high-quality educational resources. Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and insights from industry leaders, connect with other educators, and discover innovative strategies to improve teaching and learning.



To register visit: www.roe47.org



ASSESSMENT WEB SEMINAR SERIES:

DESIGNING EQUITABLE, 3D, CURRICULUM-ANCHORED ASSESSMENTS

Join us for a series of four workshops on Wednesdays, April 9, April 16, April 23, and April 30, 2025 from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, to redesign a three-dimensional classroom assessment connected to your instructional materials.

Using the NGSS Task Design Workbook and examples from a curated list, you'll learn key elements of high-quality 3D assessment design, including sensemaking, problematizing phenomena, and accessibility features.

The goal is to adapt an existing assessment for science classrooms while addressing questions about engaging students in 3D sensemaking and ensuring tasks are meaningful and accessible for all learners.



**APRIL 9, APRIL 16,
APRIL 23, APRIL 30**
6:00 - 7:30 P.M. CST
VIRTUAL

REGISTER TODAY!

VISIT:

[HTTPS://WWW.ROE47.ORG/PAGE/PL-OPPORTUNITIES-WORKSHOPS](https://www.roe47.org/page/pl-opportunities-workshops)

THIS LEARNING SERIES IS PROVIDED AT NO ADDITIONAL COST THROUGH FUNDS FROM THE ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.



OpenSciEd Curriculum Launch

Middle & High School



OpenSciEd High School Biology Launch

This 4-week series (8 x 3-hour web seminars) introduces high school teachers to the OpenSciEd Biology curriculum. Through video observations, peer learning, and hands-on experiences, participants will gain a deep understanding of the curriculum and its alignment with NGSS and the Framework for K-12 Science Education. They will also develop skills in 3D instruction and assessment, and learn to provide effective feedback to support student learning.



OpenSciEd High School Chemistry Launch

This 4-week series (8 x 3-hour web seminars) introduces high school teachers to the OpenSciEd Chemistry curriculum. Through video observations, peer learning, and hands-on experiences, participants will gain a deep understanding of the curriculum and its alignment with NGSS and the Framework for K-12 Science Education. They will also develop skills in 3D instruction and assessment, and learn to provide effective feedback to support student learning.



OpenSciEd Middle School Launch

This 4-week series (8 x 3-hour web seminars) introduces middle school teachers to the OpenSciEd 7th grade climate science unit. Through video observations, peer learning, and hands-on experiences, participants will gain a deep understanding of the curriculum and its alignment with NGSS and the Framework for K-12 Science Education. They will also develop skills in 3D instruction and assessment, and learn to provide effective feedback to support student learning.



To register for these opportunities visit www.roe47.org



Session Details

Tuesdays & Thursdays
5:00 - 8:00 p.m. CT

April 1, 2025
April 3, 2025
April 8, 2025
April 10, 2025
April 15, 2025
April 17, 2025
April 29, 2025
May 1, 2025

All sessions on zoom.
PDHs provided.

Facilitator Training

Individuals interested in becoming a certified facilitator **MUST** complete ALL launch sessions dates above AND participate in an additional facilitator training to be held virtually on the following dates and times:

4/5/25 & 5/3/25
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Registration for this session is available on the ROE 47 website.

Training supported by ISBE and provided at no additional cost to participants.



ROE 47 Computer Science Teacher Leader Program



Session One

The training emphasizes building a strong foundation in computer science education, covering topics like computational thinking, algorithms, programming, and integrating CS into different content areas. Participants will explore resources for teaching CS concepts and collaborative practices like pair programming and debugging.



Session Two

The training delves deeper into integrating computer science (CS) across the curriculum. Participants will explore connections between CS and various content areas for both K-5 and 6-12 grade levels. Practical application will be emphasized through hands-on experience with microbits for grades 6-12. The K-5 session will feature participants designing cross-curricular lessons incorporating unplugged, plugged, and robotic activities for K-5 students.



Session Three

The training deepens CS integration, focusing on physical computing, project-based learning, and AI connections for middle and high schoolers. Elementary teachers will explore microbit basics and designed cross-curricular lessons.



Session Four

This final year 1 session will focus on reflecting on the learning journey and developing actionable plans for integrating computer science into classrooms. Participants will share their experiences, challenges, and successes. We will collaboratively develop strategies for overcoming obstacles and sustaining CS initiatives. Participants will leave equipped with a personalized action plan to implement in their classrooms.



Session Dates

Session One:
MS/HS: September 26
K-5: September 27

Session Two:
MS/HS: January 30
K-5: January 31

Session Three:
MS/HS: March 13
K-5: March 14

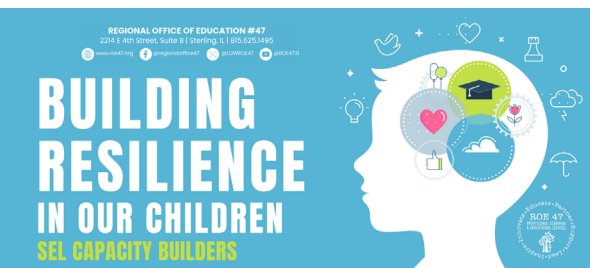
Session Four:
MS/HS: June 16
K-5: June 17

Benefits of Participation

- ISTE membership access
- Comprehensive LTC training aligned with new IL CS standards
- Comprehensive 2-year program
- Scholarships for technology conferences
- Access to ROE 47 technology lending library
- Ready-to-use classroom resources and lesson plans
- Networking opportunities with fellow educators
- Professional learning hours
- Support for building an IT pathway endorsement program
- Access to student engagement events (e.g., hackathons)
- And more!

To register, visit www.roe47.org
Space is limited in K-5 and 6-12 programs.

Please contact Anji Garza (agarza@roe47.org) with questions or for more information.



SEL Capacity Builders is dedicated to fostering a strong network of **educators, caregivers, and community leaders** committed to enhancing children's emotional well-being. By providing practical tools and expert knowledge on trauma, attachment, behavior, and more, you will walk away with strategies to use in your classroom, your home, and your workplace to promote resilience.



Sep Trauma & Attachment

8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | Sauk Valley Community College
Understand how trauma and attachment affect child development and behavior. Presented by The Knowledge Center at Chaddock.

Nov Youth Mental Health First-Aid

8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | Sauk Valley Community College
Learn to recognize and respond to mental health issues in youth. This session has a pre-work component.

Feb The School of Hope

8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. | Sauk Valley Community College
Learn how the science of hope can improve academic outcomes, decrease anxiety, and change your life. Presented by Cathleen Beachboard.

Mar SEL Summit

8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | Sauk Valley Community College
Dive into a transformative summit, designed to equip you with the tools and strategies to build vibrant, inclusive communities within your schools. Keynote by Tom Toney.

Jun Building a Tool-Kit

8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | Sauk Valley Community College
Build a toolkit of strategies to support children's behavior regulation and resilience and explore the importance of self-care. Presented by Jamie Stuart Taylor, LCSW

Please contact Grace Heimerdinger-Boake at gheimerdingerboake@roe47.org with any questions.

COUNSELOR & SOCIAL WORKER NETWORKING

Connect with colleagues to stay informed about state updates, share best practices, and find support within our professional community.



SESSION DETAILS



September 5



November 7



January 9



April 3



ROE 47
2214 E. 4th Street, Suite B, Sterling



8:30 AM - 10:30 AM



REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION #47


2214 E 4th Street, Suite B | Sterling, IL | 815.625.1495

www.roe47.org

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[@roed47](https://www.instagram.com/roed47)

[@ROE47IL](https://www.linkedin.com/company/roed47)




INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT NETWORKING

Calling all educators in instructional support roles (instructional coaches, interventionists, etc.). These networking sessions are designed to explore data, reflect on current systems and practices, understand evidence-based practices, and consider systems development and refinement through a continuous improvement approach to support all learners, and your loved ones.


Session Dates


- ✓ **August 28**
- ✓ **October 30**
- ✓ **January 29**
- ✓ **April 30**

More Information





ROE 47 

2214 E. 4th St., Suite B, Sterling

8:30 – 11:30 AM 



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NEW TEACHER CADRE

If you are a new teacher, certified or non-certified in a teaching role, or a teacher in a new teaching area, certified or non-certified in a teaching role, we have several options of support designed to help you grow professionally and network with other teachers to share and ideas, support and build a network both in your district and outside with other schools to share strategies--instructional, classroom management, remote learning, special education and SEL.

For questions, please contact Gail Wright at gwright@roe47.org

Tue., September 24	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM
Tue., October 22	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM
Tue., November 19	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM
Tue., December 17	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM
Tue., January 28	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM
Tue., February 18	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM
Tue., March 11	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM
Tue., April 29	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM
Tue., May 13	Virtual	3:30-4:30 PM

SCAN TO REGISTER







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Administrator Academy

Literacies of the Digital World:
Teaching Technology Skills for
Success in the 21st Century

This workshop aims to educate participants on the significance of computer literacy, digital literacy, and digital citizenship for student success in school and life. Attendees will learn to differentiate between these concepts, identify essential skills for each, and understand the appropriate timing for student exposure. Ultimately, participants will create an actionable plan for implementation in their school or district.



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

8:30 - 2:30 P.M.

SAUK VALLEY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

173 IL RTE 2; DIXON

To register, scan code or visit www.roe47.org



For Students



EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM

Join us for an Inspiring Education Symposium designed to ignite a passion for learning in the next generation of scholars. Celebrate the achievements of our outstanding students and discover exciting career paths in the education field. Gain valuable insights from experienced educators and leave with the motivation and excitement to pursue your own fulfilling journey in education. Lunch will be provided. This event is open to all area high school students with an interest in pursuing a career in education. Join the excitement!

APRIL 11TH, 2025
Sauk Valley Community College
9:00-2:00

What The Day Will Include

-  College Fair: Explore higher education options with representatives from various institutions
-  Career Exploration: Breakout Sessions from area educators in a variety of roles
-  Endorsement Recognition: Celebrate students who have earned their education endorsements.
-  Hands-on learning: Start the day with a fun Move and Learn Session



cmcdonnell@roe47.org
sdinges@roe47.org
hwaninger@roe47.org



REGISTRATION COMING SOON

REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION 47 AND SAUK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE



HEALTH SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM




APRIL 4TH, 2025

 **TIME**
9:00- 2:00

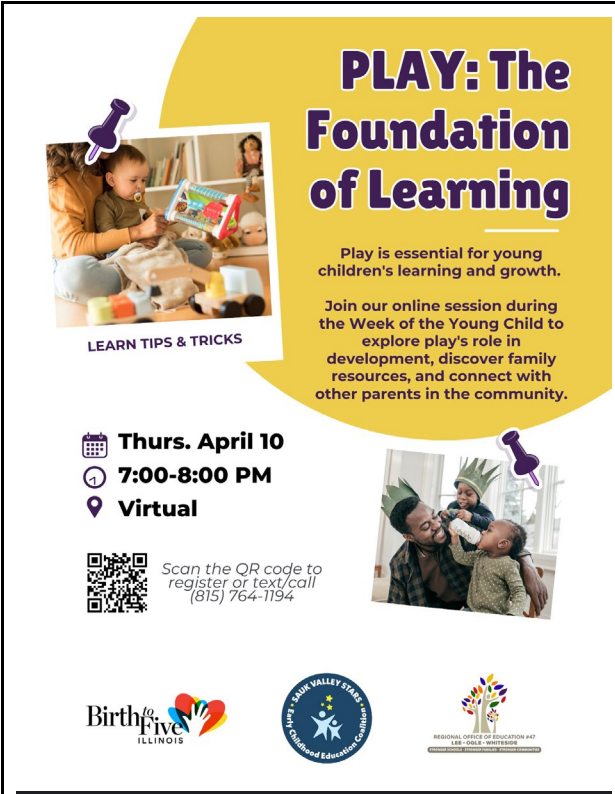
Join our area schools as we celebrate the hard work our health science pathway students have accomplished and use this opportunity to inspire other students to enter the health science field. Our goal is to have the students leave with a passion for health science and an excitement that will help them in their future.



MORE INFO:

 cmcdonnell@roe47.org

For Families



PLAY: The Foundation of Learning

Play is essential for young children's learning and growth.

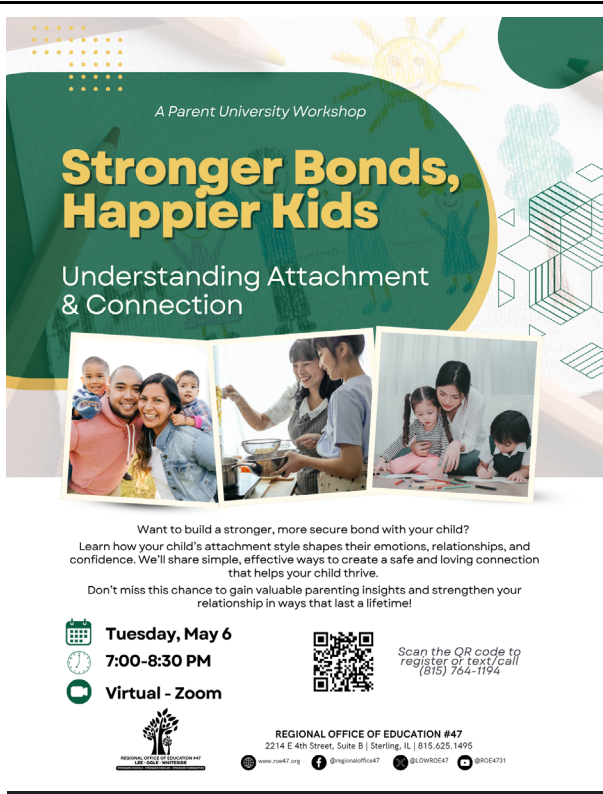
Join our online session during the Week of the Young Child to explore play's role in development, discover family resources, and connect with other parents in the community.

Thurs. April 10
7:00-8:00 PM
Virtual

Scan the QR code to register or text/call (815) 764-1194

LEARN TIPS & TRICKS

Logos: Birth to Five Illinois, Lake Valley State's Childhood Education Coalition, Regional Office of Education #47



A Parent University Workshop

Stronger Bonds, Happier Kids

Understanding Attachment & Connection

Want to build a stronger, more secure bond with your child? Learn how your child's attachment style shapes their emotions, relationships, and confidence. We'll share simple, effective ways to create a safe and loving connection that helps your child thrive.

Don't miss this chance to gain valuable parenting insights and strengthen your relationship in ways that last a lifetime!

Tuesday, May 6
7:00-8:30 PM
Virtual - Zoom

Scan the QR code to register or text/call (815) 764-1194

Logos: Regional Office of Education #47, www.roe47.org, @regoffice47, @LOWRCE47, @ROE4731

Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Professional Learning Events

March 2025 Participants - 460

March 4

LETRS Cohort 1 @ ROE #47

LETRS Cohort 2 @ 3:30 p.m.

March 5

Rock Falls Elementary SIP Day: Trauma Informed Strategies @ Rock Falls Middle School

Cultivating Calm & Focus @ Lincoln Elementary; Sterling

March 7

Transitional ELA Networking @ SVCC

March 10

Amboy SIP Day -Youth Mental Health First Aid @ Amboy Jr. High School

March 11

New Teacher Cadre @ 3:30 p.m.

March 13

Computer Science Teacher Leadership Program (6-12) @ SVCC

March 14

Computer Science Teacher Leadership Program (K-5) @ SVCC

March 18

Math for ALL Cohort @ ROE #47

Librarians Networking Session @ Byron High School

Transitional Math Networking @ SVCC

March 19

Book Study: The Anxious Generation @ 3:30 p.m.

LaMoille SIP Day @ LaMoille

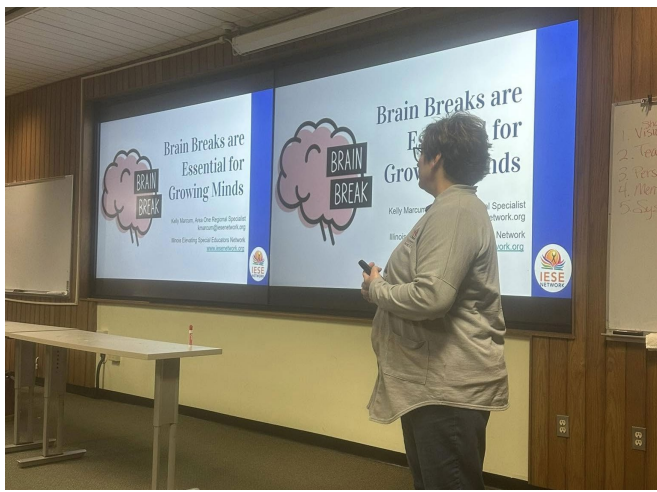
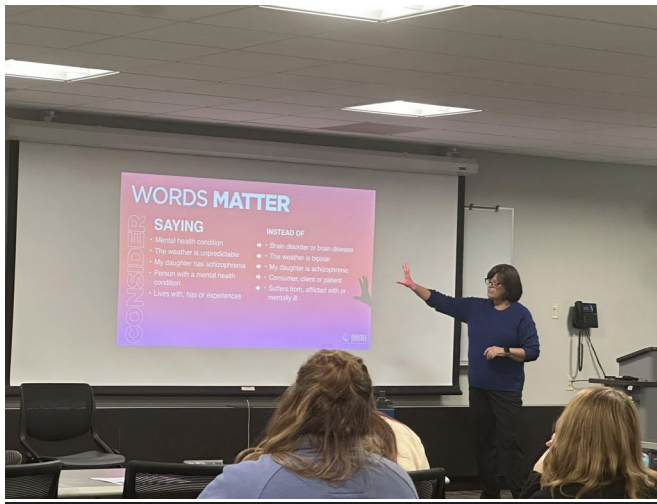
March 21

SEL Summit @ SVCC

March 2025 in Photos:









Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: NEXUS

The Nexus Program has sent out intention letters to each school district for participation in the program for the 2025-2026 school year! We look forward to serving our school districts for another school year!



Office of Professional Learning & Ed Services: Student Attendance Support

The Attendance Support Program will continue to take referral to the program through March 31, 2025. No referrals will be taken after that date. We expect Nexus referrals to increase in the coming months.



Parents as Teachers First Years

In March we finalized our preparations for our monitoring visit which began March 24 and runs through April 4th. This process is an every-other-year event conducted by a team hired by our founder, the Illinois State Board of Education. They look at family files for all the required documentation, conduct surveys with the home visitors, interview the program supervisor, and rate home visit videos for quality of services. It is a stressful time for staff but helps us to identify areas for program improvement.

Also in March we partnered with the Education Outreach Program for an "In Case of Emergency" series. Families learned about:

- Car Seat Safety and proper installation
- Discussed poison prevention and Poison Control information
- Participated in presentations by the YWCA and Tri-County Opportunities Council to learn about resources they have available to support families
- and, learned about safely administering NARCAN in case of an overdose. All participants went home with NARCAN and test strips provided by Sinnissippi Centers

Thank you to Rhiannon and her staff for including our families in this important series!

Education Outreach Program

March is known for bringing new beginnings and this month was nothing short of just that. The Education Outreach Program was able to offer a Leadership Opportunity to our students encouraging empowerment and service to their community. Many of the young adults we service are finding their moment for growth, yet not sure how to start their lives as adults. We used this transitional time to draw attention to community resources such as YWCA, Tri-County Opportunities Council and Sinnissippi Centers highlighting some of their services offered. Students had the chance to participate in poison control activities, car seat installation and Narcan training. This connection naturally led to direct referrals for housing, child care, counseling and transportation assistance.

Also transitioning out of the prep classes are our newest graduates! Congratulations to Cristian, Lucynde, Aiden, and Matthew on earning their Illinois High School Diploma. Cristian will begin his job search by building a resume with our youth job developer with BEST, Inc. Lucynde is registered with Castor Medical Institute to get her CNA, Aiden will be heading to Texas for Wind Turbine Technician training and Matthew left for MEPS on March 23rd to prepare to enlist in the Army!

Just as we say with Spring and the ever changing weather, holds true in our EOP program; "grow through what you go through."

McKinney Vento Homeless Program

March is the State McKinney-Vento Homeless Conference. This year it was held in Bloomington. There is always great value with meeting and sharing conversations with others doing a similar job in a different part of the State. Break out and general sessions always provide new and different ideas to better serve the students that are experiencing homelessness in our community.

The past month has been busy with connecting with community services to support the educational needs of our students. Our hope is to always keep our McKinney-Vento students on track and enhance their education success. This is the underriding goal throughout the entire school year.

Center For Change

April Committee Report

As we move into the final stretch of the school year, the Center for Change remains committed to finishing strong. Our team continues to work diligently to provide students with the support and resources they need to achieve success academically, socially, and emotionally.

A highlight from the past month was the professional development conference attended by all certified staff over the course of two days. This opportunity allowed our educators to deepen their knowledge and expertise, reinforcing our commitment to continuous growth and improvement in the field of student support. We are excited to implement the strategies and insights gained to further enhance our programs and services.

Looking ahead, we hope to provide our students with an enriching field trip next month, offering them a valuable learning experience beyond the classroom. Additionally, graduation is fast approaching, and we are eagerly preparing to celebrate the achievements of our students as they reach this important milestone.

With the arrival of warmer weather, we embrace the opportunities it brings for outdoor activities and instruction. Engaging students in outdoor learning experiences fosters creativity, collaboration, and a fresh perspective, and we look forward to integrating more of these opportunities into our curriculum.

Thank you to all staff, students, and community members for your continued dedication and support. Together, we will ensure a strong and successful conclusion to the school year.

Let's make this final stretch of the year a time of achievement, connection, and growth. Keep pushing forward, and let's finish strong together!

Warm regards, **The Center for Change Team**

Lee County Veterans Assistance Commission

Tally for
March 25

Total number of calls in office: 79
Total number of visitors to the office: 27

Total number of food vouchers issued in March = 0
Total of bills received for food vouchers: \$148.29

Total number of veterans using the van: 5
Total number of trips van made: 3
Total number of volunteer van drivers: 2

Veterans transported by volunteers: 1
Total volunteers driving veterans by car: 1
Total number of trips volunteers made: 1
Total number of veterans driving self: 7
Total trips veterans made driving self: 15

Total number of trips to: Total cost:

Aurora	0	\$0.00
Freeport	3	\$115.50
Hines	0	\$0.00
Iowa City	0	\$0.00
J. Brown	0	\$0.00
LaSalle	0	\$0.00
Madison	2	\$175.00
Milwaukee	0	\$0.00
N. Chicago	0	\$0.00
Rockford	9	\$346.50
Sycamore	2	\$87.36
VA remibursement		\$0.00
Total:		\$724.36

Grand totals:

Transportation	\$724.36
Food Vouchers	\$148.29
Van Lease	\$218.00
Office Supplies	\$200.00
Rent Assistance	\$150.00
Utility Assistance	\$111.71

Total assistance March \$1,552.36

MONTHLY ZONING AND PLANNING REPORT

April 15, 2025 – County Services Committee

ACTIONS COMING FROM THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – None. Petitions No. 25-P-1639 by Mound Hill Road North Solar, LLC and 25-P-1640 by Mound Hill Road South Solar, LLC are still public hearing.

ACTIONS GOING TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS –

1. Petition No. 25-P-1641 by Clay & Elizabeth Partington, as owners of certain real property identified as PIN 18-08-07-151-002 and commonly known as 601 Rock Island Rd., Dixon, Illinois, in South Dixon Township, filed a Petition for Special Use with the Lee County Zoning Office requesting a special use permit for the purpose of constructing and operating a miniwarehouse (storage units). The parcel is currently zoned I-1, Planned Industrial District, and is approximately 2.22 acres in size.
2. Petition No. 25-P-1642 by Pivot Energy IL 258, LLC, as lessee of certain real property identified as PINs 15-07-12-377-002 and 15-07-13-100-002, in Nelson Township, Lee County, Illinois, filed a Petition for Special Use with the Lee County Zoning Office requesting a special use permit for a 3.5 MW_{AC} Commercial Solar Energy Facility (community solar). The parcel is located along the south side of Rock Island Road, approximately 0.32 miles east of Atkinson Road, in Nelson Township, Lee County. The parcels are currently zoned Ag-1, Rural/Agricultural District and total 85.37 acres in size.
3. Petition No. 25-P-1643 by Pivot Energy IL 259, LLC, as lessee of certain real property identified as PINs 15-07-12-377-002 and 15-07-13-100-002, in Nelson Township, Lee County, Illinois, filed a Petition for Special Use with the Lee County Zoning Office requesting a special use permit for a 4.5 MW_{AC} Commercial Solar Energy Facility (community solar). The parcel is located along the south side of Rock Island Road, approximately 0.32 miles east of Atkinson Road, in Nelson Township, Lee County. The parcels are currently zoned Ag-1, Rural/Agricultural District and total 85.37 acres in size.
4. Petition No. 25-P-1644 by Pivot Energy IL 260, LLC, as lessee of certain real property identified as PINs 15-07-12-377-002 and 15-07-13-100-002, in Nelson Township, Lee County, Illinois, filed a Petition for Special Use with the Lee County Zoning Office requesting a special use permit for a 3.75 MW_{AC} Commercial Solar Energy Facility (community solar). The parcel is located along the south side of Rock Island Road, approximately 0.32 miles east of Atkinson Road, in Nelson Township, Lee County. The parcels are currently zoned Ag-1, Rural/Agricultural District and total 85.37 acres in size.
5. Petition No. 25-P-1645 by Compton Community Fire Protection District, as owners of certain real property identified as PIN 05-17-11-300-007, and commonly known as 748 IL Route 251, Compton, in Brooklyn Township, filed a Petition for Variance with the Lee County Zoning



Office seeking a variance from Title 10, Chapter 9, Section 3: Bulk Regulations, of the Lee County Code, more specifically side/rear yard setbacks from the northern property line, due to the lot being irregular in shape, with the intentions of building a new fire department. The parcel is currently zoned Ag-1, Rural/Agricultural District, and is approximately 2.56 acres in size.

ACTIONS COMING FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION – None.

ACTIONS GOING TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION –

1. Petition No. 25-PC-79 by the Lee County Zoning Administrator, was filed in which Petitioner seeks to amend the text of Title 10: ZONING REGULATIONS of the Lee County Code of Ordinances to replace Zoning Board of Appeals with Zoning Hearing Officer.

OTHER ACTIONS FROM THE ZONING OFFICE

During the month of March 2025, the Zoning Office processed thirty (30) building permits. Permit fees in the amount of \$18,112.90 were collected.



Report to County Services Committee of Lee County Board

April 15, 2025 | 9:00 AM

1) RIDERSHIP DATA (January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025)

	January, 2025	February, 2025	March, 2025	FY 25 Trend
RIDES	8,086	7,314	7,642	95,100
SERVICE HOURS	2,498	2,172	2,340	31,076
MILES OF SERVICE	69,706	59,988	65,224	759,388
FUEL COST	\$19,295.08	\$18,452.67	\$18,297.27	\$268,852.32

2) DEVELOPMENTS

a) Budget/Contracts for FY 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)

- (1) Applications for FY 2026 Contracts have been finalized and submitted to IDOT for their review. Funding Allocations for FY 2026 are as follows:
 - (a) 5311 Contract: \$283,450
 - (b) DOAP Contract: \$2,240,400
 - (c) 5311F Contract (I-88 and I-39): \$2,029,606

b) Rural Winnebago County Transit Services

- i) Working with Winnebago County on procuring three (3) vehicles for rural transit services in Winnebago County.
- ii) Transportation services in rural Winnebago County will begin July 1, 2025
- iii) Intergovernmental Agreement with Winnebago County to provide rural transit was finalized during that County Board meeting in February.
- iv) Separate agreement being finalized for the contractual hiring of a person to be the PCOM (oversight) of the rural transit services was also approved at the same February meeting.
- v) The contractual budget proposed by IDOT for this new rural service is as follows:
 - (i) 5311 Contract: \$207,864
 - (ii) DOAP Contract: \$798,728

c) Vehicle Procurement

- (1) RMTD picked up six (6) proposed vehicles from IDOT on March 26, 2025.
- (2) RMTD received two minivans and four light duty buses via IDOT's 2022 CVP Application.
- (3) IDOT is planning a second CVP round of vehicles. Applications will be available this summer.
- (4) RMTD collaboration with IDOT on a federal proposal to the Low/No Emission Grants.
 - (a) RMTD will procure two (2) electric buses via this proposal.

d) Hydrogen Fuel Feasibility Study

- i) RMTD completed the RFP process for a Project Lead Consultant for the Hydrogen Fuel Feasibility Study. The review committee completed a review of the application received from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. A contractual agreement has been shared with UIUC. Working with the university to finalize the agreement for the consultant work.
- ii) IDOT State Planning and Research Program has awarded \$300,000 to assess the feasibility of using hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and hydrogen fuel in rural Illinois.

e) Service Contract Discussions

- i) Initial discussions on potential service contracts have been had with Rochelle Community Hospital as well as OSF Saint Katharine. Both of these are in the very preliminary stages, with good content from the initial meetings.
- ii) A meeting is also being sought with Mercy Health, which opened an emergent clinic in the City of Dixon late in 2024.

- f) Architectural/Engineering Firm / Oregon facility construction**
 - i) Pre-bid Concurrence paperwork has been submitted to IDOT for its review. Once concurred will allow for going out for the hiring of a General Contractor.
 - ii) Larson and Darby, architectural firm out of Rockford, is the architect/engineering firm hired for the Oregon Construction project. This project is part of RMTD application under REBUILD 1
- g) Transit Desert Grant / IDOT State Planning and Research**
 - i) Work is continuing on the Transit Desert Grant study of Lee and Ogle Counties, specifically those areas of the counties more remote in nature.
 - ii) Next steps will be to 1) continue key stakeholder interviews, 2) initiate focus groups, and 3) ready public survey for distribution.
 - iii) The Technical Advisory Committee met in March.
 - iv) NIU/CGS is also starting the review of existing data for transit deserts in the two-county region. A Public Survey is being developed by NIU/CGS with distribution in the near future.
- h) Auditing Services**
 - i) RMTD working with Lee County and Wipfli, LLC to complete County Audit.
 - (1) This audit focuses on the timeframe when RMTD (then LOTS) was a department of Lee County.
- i) Pending Request for Bids / Intercity Bus**
 - i) Request for Proposal is currently open to public with responses due in by 1:00 PM (Central) on April 15, 2025. This opportunity is for operation of Intercity Bus services on I-88 and I-39 with the selected operator beginning on July 1, 2025.
 - (1) Greyhound Bus Lines / FLIX are the current operator on both the I-88 Intercity Bus Route between Chicago and Davenport, Iowa, as well as the I-39 (I-90, and I-74) Route between Chicago and Danville, IL.
- j) Request for Bids / Replacement Vehicles**
 - i) RMTD will be piggy-backing onto another state's Vehicle Procurement Program for up to three (3) Ford Transit type vehicles. RMTD will also look to procure an electric vehicle through another state's procurement program.

3) OPERATIONAL AND CAPITAL RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

- a) Capital Funding / Community Project Funding | Representative Darin LaHood**
 - i) Funding includes construction of additional administrative space at Dixon Transit Center
 - ii) Total amount of funding is \$2.9472 million to provide for planned expansion at the Reagan Transit Center in Dixon.
- b) Capital Funding / REBUILD Round 1**
 - i) Funding provides for construction of new Oregon location
 - ii) Furnishings and equipment for Oregon facility
 - iii) Implementation of video surveillance cameras in 17 of RMTD's buses and minivans (completed)
 - iv) Three (3) new buses (Ford transit type vehicles)
- c) Capital Funding / REBUILD Round 2**
 - (1) RMTD Proposal will allow for the following:
 - (a) Two electric vehicles for use in the RMTD system
 - (b) Three (3) new offices at Reagan Transit Center and secured file room/storage room
 - (c) Develop new Conference Room between Reagan Transit Center and Mechanical Bay
 - (d) Geothermal and Solar technologies will be incorporated into complex
- d) Capital Funding / REBUILD Round 3**
 - i) RMTD will receive \$62,500 for the purchase of 2 service vehicles