



DEKALB COUNTY
REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Amanda Christensen, Regional Superintendent

Mission of Regional Offices of Education

According to statute, the Regional Superintendent of Schools shall 1) exercise supervision and control over all school districts in the region and 2) act as the official advisor and assistant of the school officers and teachers in the region. The DeKalb ROE is committed to providing high quality services for our communities and stakeholders. We strive to ensure that school personnel have the resources necessary to carry out their mission. We act collaboratively with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to advance safe, efficient, and effective schools. We perform our statutory duties to guarantee the best educational opportunities for Illinois families.

The Regional Superintendent of Schools is the chief administrative officer of a Regional Office of Education and is the only elected education professional in Illinois. Most of the duties and functions performed are at a level between that of the local school district and that of the Illinois State Board of Education. The Regional Superintendent and Assistant Regional Superintendent coordinate and deliver state and local news and act as educational advocates by providing positive leadership and proactive assistance to educators, school districts, and the public. The Regional Office of Education (ROE) spends considerable time assisting the Illinois State Board of Education in processing the great number of applications, reports, claims for reimbursement, and other documents, which are required in today's education world.

Visit www.iarss.org for additional information on Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers.

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Office Hours: Monday—Friday
8:30 am—12:00 pm and 1:00 pm—4:30 pm

www.dekalbcounty.org/ROE (county department)

www.dkroeedteam.com (professional development; family and community engagement)

www.dekalbroe.org (event registration)

www.facebook.com/dekalbroe16

DeKalb County Regional Office of Education #16

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Community Outreach

ROE staff members serve as the educational representative on many of the professional and lay committees established throughout the County and Northern Illinois. The DeKalb ROE seeks ways to build a network of support for DeKalb County’s children and youth. ROE staff strive to be visible advocates in the community and attend outreach events whenever possible.

In 2022-2023, the Regional Office had representation on or held membership in the following organizations:

- Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)
- Area II Regional Offices of Education
- Kishwaukee Education Consortium Governing Board
- Truancy and Alternative Optional Education Program (TAOEP) Directors
- The Kishwaukee College Adult Education Area Planning Council
- Children’s Advocacy Center Advisory Board
- DeKalb County Youth Service Providers
- Illinois Pupil Transportation Advisory Council
- Secretary - Regional Board of School Trustees
- DeKalb County Department Heads
- DeKalb Chamber of Commerce
- Genoa Area Chamber of Commerce
- Sandwich Chamber of Commerce
- Sycamore Chamber of Commerce
- University Village Collaborative
- Friends of DeKalb ROE

Professional Learning Activities

ROE staff are expected to engage in continuous improvement by participating in relevant professional learning.

- State-wide meetings, area meetings, and legislative updates of Regional Superintendents of Schools
- School safety/security communications
- Every Student Succeeds Act Conference
- PreK-K Conference
- KIDS Summit
- Partner Plan Act conference
- Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth conference
- PearsonVUE testing center updating credentials
- Health/Life Safety building inspection requirements
- Compliance and Educator Licensure trainings
- Conferences for professional development providers
- Employment trainings such as cultural competency, fraud awareness, ethical conduct, mandated reporter status
- IL Empower training as a Learning Partner
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- National Family Engagement conference
- OMA and FOIA training

DeKalb County School District Enrollments

Summary of student enrollment figures for DeKalb County schools during the school years of 2013-14 through 2022-2023. Public school figures come from the Fall Housing Report (September). Private school figures are at the request of the ROE and were not collected the last two years. In general, private school numbers reported are 600-700.

DISTRICT	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
Genoa-Kingston 424	1834	1773	1763	1735	1673	1652	1602	1491	1502	1544
Indian Creek 425	763	749	722	681	677	697	733	716	736	711
Hiawatha 426	611	580	550	554	518	494	447	408	420	420
Sycamore 427	3738	3744	3757	3783	3683	3766	3778	3589	3600	3598
DeKalb 428	6264	6351	6465	6595	6623	6685	6760	6618	6852	6840
Hinckley-Big Rock 429	695	692	686	691	647	704	726	681	705	696
Sandwich 430	2264	2151	2096	2087	2065	2019	1964	1843	1856	1895
Somonauk 432	821	796	807	819	801	827	812	742	751	750
Public School Totals	17034	16880	16881	16976	16725	16875	16865	16120	16422	16454

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Services to Educators Regarding Licensure

The Regional Office of Education assists teachers seeking an educator licensure including applications, registrations, endorsements, and renewals. The ROE is the resource for local educators who have licensure questions or who need assistance with the Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS). Annually, the DeKalb ROE checks the credentials of employed teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals. ROE staff not only enforce credential requirements, but also assist districts and individual educators when there are licensure questions.

The ROE operates a digital fingerprinting system that allows a quick return of criminal background information to employers. The ROE provides this service to local bus drivers, healthcare workers, school and community agency employees, and volunteers. In FY23, the fingerprint technicians conducted 1378 background checks.

Bus Drivers / Transportation

The Regional Office offers the initial 8-hour training required for all new school bus drivers prior to getting a bus permit. The ROE also offers the annual 2-hour refresher workshop required in the 12-month period prior to renewal. This is prescribed by the Illinois State Board of Education and enforced by the ROE. The Assistant Superintendent facilitates Transportation Directors' meetings and gives them the opportunity to network and learn from each other as well as provide new information from the State.

Regional Board of School Trustees

The Regional Superintendent acts as ex-officio secretary for the Regional Board of School Trustees. The Board hears district consolidation cases and cases in which individuals wish to detach from one district and annex to another district. There was no such petition filed in 2022-2023. Members of the Board are elected for six-year staggered terms by countywide elections.

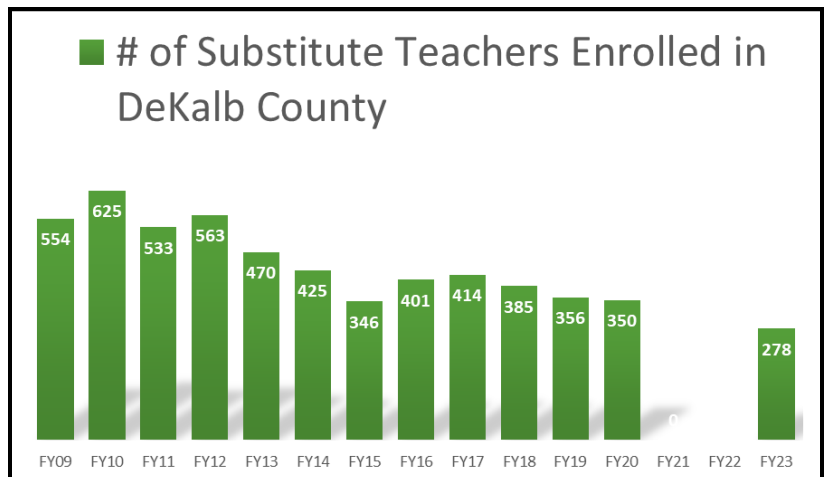
MEMBER	TOWNSHIP	TERM EXPIRES
Jamie Willrett	Malta	2023
Thomas Burski	Afton	2025
Larry Forsberg	South Grove	2023
Laura Frankiewicz	Mayfield	2025
Charles Rose	Sycamore	2025
Mark Charvat	DeKalb	2029
Vacancy		

Recognition of Schools

The DeKalb County ROE issued, in conjunction with the Illinois State Board of Education, the status of Recognition to each of the eight public school districts in DeKalb County. The Regional Office conducted a full state recognition compliance visit in two school districts during the 2022-23 school year: Sycamore CUSD 427 and Sandwich CUSD 430. Compliance items cover a broad range, including: personnel files and credentials of employees, student records, school improvement plans, special education services, instructional programs, board policy, website requirements, treatment of homeless students, staff evaluation methods and procedure, and mandatory staff trainings.

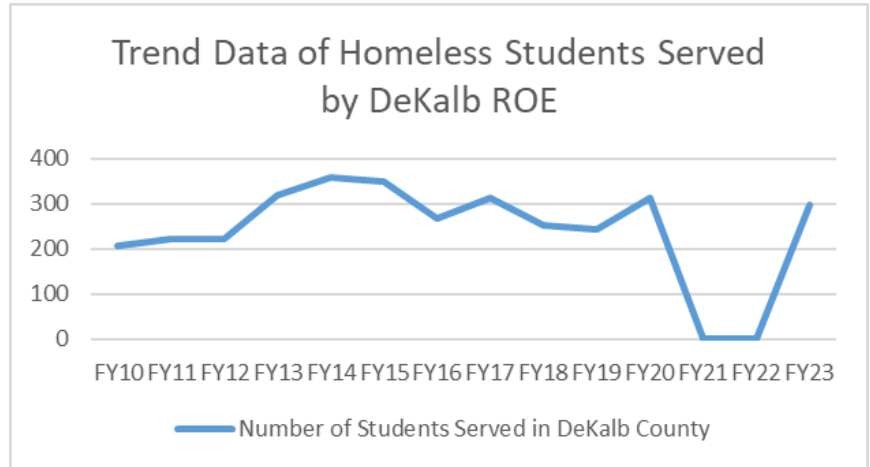
Services for Substitute Teachers

The ROE maintains records for substitutes: blood-borne pathogens training, physical exams and TB results, mandated reporter acknowledgement, criminal background results, and licensure. Substitute teachers enrolled with the DeKalb ROE are eligible to guest teach in any school in DeKalb County pending district hiring decisions. During FY23, 278 substitute teachers used this service. DeKalb County schools are still experiencing a substitute shortage. This does not include substitutes who are directly processed through a school district for long-term placements.



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School Year	Students Identified
2010-2011	222
2011-2012	221
2012-2013	319
2013-2014	359
2014-2015	349
2015-2016	267
2016-2017	313
2017-2018	253
2018-2019	242
2019-2020	313
2020-2021	
2021-2022	
2022-2023	298



INCOMPLETE DATA FOR FY21 AND FY22

Services for Homeless Students

The McKinney-Vento Act, signed into law in Illinois on January 24, 1995, ensures that students who are considered homeless maintain consistent school attendance with minimal disruption. Schools are responsible for identifying these vulnerable students and notifying the ROE for services. An ROE staff member serves as the DeKalb County Liaison for Homeless Students, training school district personnel in identifying homeless children and those in housing crises and providing the supports necessary to ensure consistent school attendance with reduced barriers. Additional social work services include limited transportation assistance, clothes, hygiene products, food, tutoring, and access to medical care or mental health services. Homelessness is defined as a student who lacks fixed, adequate, or regular nighttime residence. Resources can be found at nche.ed.gov.

Kishwaukee Education Consortium (KEC)

KEC serves DeKalb, Genoa-Kingston, Hiawatha, Sycamore, Hinckley-Big Rock, Indian Creek, Sandwich, Somonauk and Rochelle. KEC is the Regional Safe School Program, providing alternative education to students who have multiple suspensions or an expulsion. This program gives students the opportunity to restart their academic, social, and emotional growth. Enrollment averages 50 students per year. We have continued to receive the Regional Work Education grant for Safe School students to engage in career technical education, learn career skills, and obtain work placements under a KEC supervisor. KEC also serves as the Career Tech Ed center for Hiawatha, Genoa-Kingston, Sycamore, and DeKalb.

Indian Valley Vocational Center (IVVC)

IVVC serves Hinckley-Big Rock, Indian Creek, Somonauk, and Sandwich in DeKalb County as well as these communities outside of DeKalb County: Earlville, Leland, Newark, Plano, Serena, and Yorkville. IVVC is the Career Tech Ed center for the southern county school districts and offers programs ranging from Fire Science to Culinary to Welding.

Health/Life Safety and Inspections

- Provides and interprets Life Safety Code information for school officials
- Inspects every public school every year
- Issues building permits, occupancy permits, and demolition permits
- Conducts walkthroughs of construction sites with architects in preparation of occupancy
- Maintains records of districts' 10-Year Surveys and Amendments
- Processes school maintenance grants and use of health/life safety funds
- Facilitates a county-wide safety and security committee

Northwestern Illinois Association (NIA)

The NIA is an association of public school districts in the ten northwestern counties of Illinois, which provides services to children with low-incidence disabilities such as severe sight or hearing problems or orthopedic impairments. A large geographic area is needed in order to provide an effective and economical program since a very small percentage of children are found with these needs.

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Professional Development for Educators

ROE PD consultants provide imbedded and sustained professional learning tailored to meet the evolving needs of our educational community.

ROE PD consultants presented workshops at district institute days, provided in-classroom instructional support, and assisted with curriculum implementation. As an ISBE-approved learning partner for **Illinois Empower**, consultants supported schools in their continuous improvement processes based on State designations.

With tremendous support from community sponsors and donors, our office hosted **Educator Spirit Day** on June 21, 2023. This event, a celebration honoring educators, included many opportunities to develop educator wellness including puppy and art therapy and other wellness activities. Participants were eligible for numerous community donated raffle prizes, receiving free raffle tickets in exchange for hygiene products for families in need.

On October 7, 2022, the ROE PD team, in collaboration with county partners, coordinated the **Countywide Institute Day** at DeKalb High School. Highlights included keynote speaker, Cornelius Minor, author of *We Got This* and featured speaker, Adam Peterson, author of *Teach, Play, Learn*. In addition to the featured speakers, the event offered more than 100 breakout sessions for teachers, administrators, and related service personnel.

July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

**ROE PD consultants delivered:
74 workshops***

1,522 participants

**10 one-to-one instructional
coaching cycles**

**28 push-in lessons with class-
room teachers**

**Highlighted topics: play-based
learning, restorative practices,
social emotional learning, stu-
dent engagement, cultivating
adult resilience and self-care**

***excludes IL Empower**



Family and Community Engagement

The purpose of Community Outreach is to increase awareness of and engagement in quality opportunities to strengthen the health of families, children, and youth. The outreach team goes into the community and meets families “where they are” at community events, resource fairs, food pantries, and school events.

In 2022-2023, DeKalb County ROE’s outreach team promoted Basics DeKalb County, referred families to Coordinated Intake for home visiting, and linked families to community resources.

In September 2022, the ROE launched IRIS, an Integrated Referral and Intake System. This system not only allows for internal referrals between programs to be processed in a more diligent and efficient manner, but also creates a portal for external stakeholders who choose to partner with the ROE. There are 17 external partners such as 4-C, DeKalb County Health Department, and Family Service Agency. Since launch, 674 referrals for services have been processed.



A Youth Mental Health Coalition was formed with the founding agencies of the ROE, Adventure Works, and Family Service Agency. The purpose of the Coalition is to work collaboratively, share resources, increase communication, and collectively promote the 40 Developmental Assets. The program, DAYS (Developmental Assets for Youth Success), has several components including community saturation of the assets so that any adult in the community can mentor youth and help build those assets. It also includes the opportunity for students to participate in DAYS 12-week programs where they can choose which assets to develop in a group setting. The school year 22-23 was the first year of implementation.

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Truancy Intervention

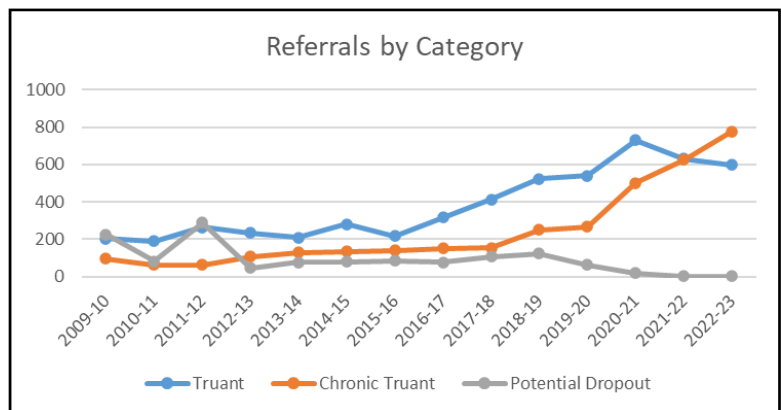
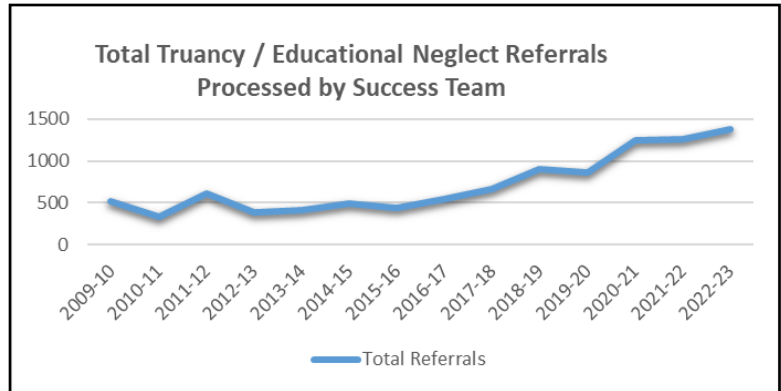
The Student Success Team receives referrals from schools for students who have unexcused absences. Caseworkers establish communication with the family, the student, and the school in order to draft an Individual Optional Education Plan. Through monitoring of attendance, a student's case can progress to a truancy hearing which involves one of the truancy officers at the ROE. Only when other interventions have not been successful will a family be petitioned to court. While early interventions are preferred, the DeKalb ROE appreciates working with the State Attorney's Office and Court Services when needed. Family Success Liaisons at the ROE work in partnership with the Caseworkers with a more intensive advocacy approach. Supports include regular home-visits, building relationships between the schools and families, and identifying and mitigating barriers to regular school attendance.

The increase in referrals can be attributed to two significant factors: 1) the pandemic and its lasting effects and 2) increased accuracy and timeliness of referrals from schools. Shifts from truant to chronic truant may also be attributed to when the ROE receives a referral.

Out of the 1,377 referred, 47% were Black or African American, 23% were Hispanic or Latino, and 24% were White. Males constituted 53% and females were 47%. The grade from which the greatest number of referrals came was 1st, followed by 2nd, followed by 5th.

A "truant" is defined as a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause, [...] from such attendance for more than 1% but less than 5% of the past 180 school days. "Chronic or habitual truant" shall be defined as a child who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 5% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days. Potential dropout is defined as a child subject to compulsory attendance and whose school absences or pattern of school attendance impedes the child's learning or contributes to the child's failure to meet the Illinois Learning Standards and/or district learning standards. Potential dropout is inconsistently referred.

Services include home visits, academic counseling, court-related services, referral to social services, health-related services, mentoring, supports for parents/families, and monitoring of attendance.



Year	Grant Funds	Truant	Chronic Truant	Potential Dropout	TOTAL
2009-10	\$112,177	204	95	225	524
2010-11	90,067	188	63	81	332
2011-12	96,669	265	62	288	615
2012-13	86,567	233	106	45	384
2013-14	83,754	209	129	77	415
2014-15	81,870	279	134	79	492
2015-16	83,754	217	139	83	439
2016-17	83,754	316	150	76	542
2017-18	83,754	412	153	106	671
2018-19	83,754	524	249	123	896
2019-20	165,683	539	267	62	868
2020-21	165,683	730	500	19	1249
2021-22	165,683	630	624	2	1256
2022-23	248,002	597	778	2	1377

Homeschooled Children

The ROE visits homeschool families and can request evidence of curriculum, completed work, and assessment as well as verification of start dates, overall satisfaction with the program and progress of the homeschool student. The ROE assists families in registering as a homeschool; there is no requirement for families to register.

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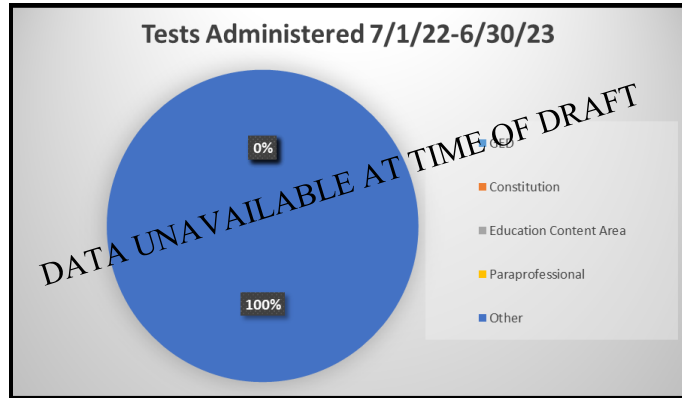
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Testing Center

DeKalb ROE operates a PearsonVUE authorized testing center. The Testing Center is open on Tuesdays only. Registrations are done online through PearsonVUE. In order to register for the ETS Paraprofessional Assessment, individuals need to go to www.dekalbroe.org.

High School Equivalency Issuance

The IHSE is a battery of high school equivalency tests. Individuals may register at www.ged.com and choose DeKalb County ROE as the testing site. Upon completing requirements, the individual may request a transcript and/or certificate for \$10 each. During 2022-23, 61 IHSE certificates and 65 IHSE transcripts were requested and issued, allowing individuals to move forward with their educational or career plans. The Constitution Test for IHSE continues to be available at no cost to the candidate and appointments are made by calling the ROE.



DeKalb County Collaborative
for Young Children

The ROE is the backbone organization for the DeKalb County Collaborative for Young Children. Within the collective impact framework, organizations work together to solve complex problems. The mission is to support an equitable early learning system through a county-wide collaboration of organizations that partner with families and communities to impact the optimal development of children. The areas of impact are 1) Access to early learning opportunities 2) Parent and community partner education, support, and resources and 3) Health and wellness of children. In addition to funders like the DCCF, we are proud partners with Birth to Five Illinois.

Educators Rising and Pathways to Play



As a means to address the State-wide teacher shortage, the Illinois State Board of Education offered competitive grant funding. The ROE is helping to grow our own teachers by funding clubs for students who are interested in becoming educators and using the resources of Educators Rising. A focus of the program is building the pipeline for early childhood educators. This is accomplished through our newly created Pathways to Play program where outdoor play spaces are installed on school properties for high school students to work with preschool children supervised by an early childhood educator.

Basics DeKalb County continued community saturation of the five nurturing practices that promote healthy brain development and Kindergarten readiness. Partner pledges continue to be secured with organizations to implement the Basics into their organizational structure. These organizations included public school districts, preschools, service organizations, and libraries. In 2022, thanks to funding from a local business, the Basics team was able to add an Early Learning Liaison to focus on the business sector. This has resulted in the Basics being in businesses like laundromats, insurance agent offices, and restaurants. One feature that is offered to families for free is the Basics Insights texting subscription. Since launching this program in February 2020, Basics DeKalb County has recruited more than 1500 family members to subscribe.

Basics DeKalb County has installed three toddler gardens in partnership with local park districts: Chamberlain Park in Genoa, Welsh Park in DeKalb, and Knights Park in Sandwich. Toddler gardens offer a space for nature-based learning aligned to the Basics. The gardens are open to the public; Basics signage encourages play and provides learning tips for the adults to engage their toddlers. ROE staff with support from community volunteers offer weekly programming at all of the gardens when the weather allows.

The ROE developed and implemented Push Play Parent Playgroups in 2022. Dedicated staff with early childhood education backgrounds facilitate weekly playgroups for parents or other caregivers. Infants and toddlers are welcome. Playgroups give the opportunity for parents to network, receive developmental toolkits for free, and learn developmentally appropriate activities that they can repeat at home. Visit www.basicsdekalbcounty.org for more information.

