



ANNUAL *Report* 2023-2024



DuPage Regional Office of
EDUCATION
Excellence in Education

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear DuPage County Education Stakeholders,

It is with great excitement and a deep sense of purpose that I write to you in my first year as Regional Superintendent of Schools for DuPage County. I am honored to step into this role after serving as the Assistant Superintendent for two years. As I reflect on my first year, I am proud of the work we've accomplished together and excited by the opportunities that lie ahead.

This year has been marked by growth, collaboration, and a shared commitment to elevating education across our county. The DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) continues to serve as a vital support system for our schools, educators, administrators, and—most importantly—our students.

Professional Development & Administrator Academies

The ROE provided hundreds of high-quality professional learning experiences for educators and school leaders this past school year. Through workshops, seminars, and administrator academies, we empowered our professionals with the tools, strategies, and insights necessary to meet the evolving needs of today's learners. These offerings have not only enhanced classroom instruction but also strengthened school leadership across DuPage County.

Innovation in Education: The First Annual AI in Education Conference

We hosted our first annual conference on Artificial Intelligence: *Unleashing the Power of AI in Education*. This conference brought together educators, computer experts, and thought leaders to explore the transformative impact of artificial intelligence on teaching and learning. From personalized instruction to data-informed decision-making, AI is rapidly



reshaping education—and DuPage County is leading the way in preparing our schools for this exciting future.

School Safety & Violence Prevention

The safety of our students and staff remains a top priority. This year, the ROE conducted a series of comprehensive school safety trainings focused on violence prevention, emergency preparedness, and mental health awareness. These efforts, in partnership with local law enforcement and mental health professionals, have equipped school personnel with the knowledge and tools to create secure, supportive learning environments.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, my vision for education in DuPage County is clear: We will continue to support our teachers, empower our administrators, and partner with our schools—because when we invest in those who serve students, we ultimately invest in our future.

Together, we will embrace innovation, uphold excellence, and ensure every student in DuPage County has the opportunity to thrive. Thank you for your commitment to our schools and for being part of this journey.

Kindly,

Amber Quirk
Regional Superintendent of Schools
DuPage County

2023-2024

WHAT IS THE REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION?

The state of Illinois is divided into 102 counties, and there are 852 school districts within those counties. These counties are grouped together into 38 smaller regions to provide regional access to supports and services. **DuPage County is served by the Regional Office of Education (ROE) #19 and is led by Ms. Amber Quirk**, the Regional Superintendent of Education, who was elected for a four-year term in 2022.

WHAT DOES THE REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION DO?

The **DuPage ROE** works with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to carry out the duties required by Illinois law. The ROE also partners closely with DuPage school district superintendents and is often the first point of contact for districts needing assistance or information. Below are some of the duties of the ROE as required by Illinois Code, as well as some of the **DuPage ROE's "Value-Added" services** that were provided as a service to school districts, their staff, the community, and the children of DuPage County during the 2023-2024 school year.

required services

- **Educator Licensing** | 13,000+ educators aided in obtaining credentials
- **Professional Development** | Research-based academies & workshops provided
- **Truancy Intervention** | 631 students served
- **Operation of Regional Safe School & Alternative Learning Programs**
- **Health, Life, & Safety Inspections and Compliance Reports**
- **Oversight of Compliance to State & Federal Laws**
- **Provision of a Homeless Student Advocate** | 3,232 DuPage students identified as homeless

value-added services

- + **School Safety Training** | Annual Safety Summit
- + **Networking & Collaborative Learning for School Administrators**
- + **Fingerprint & Background Check Services** | 1,725 current & potential employees served
- + **Short-term Substitute Teaching Training** | 125 trainees
- + **Parents as Teachers Program** | 200+ children served
- + **Area 1 Lead Hub**
- + **Area 1 Social-Emotional Learning Hub**
- + **Civics Hub**
- + **Bus Driver Instruction**
- + **School Improvement Specialists** | Math & Literacy Coaches
- + **Truancy Specific Additions** | Professional Development for Tier 2 instruction and Tier 1 school climate/culture assessments

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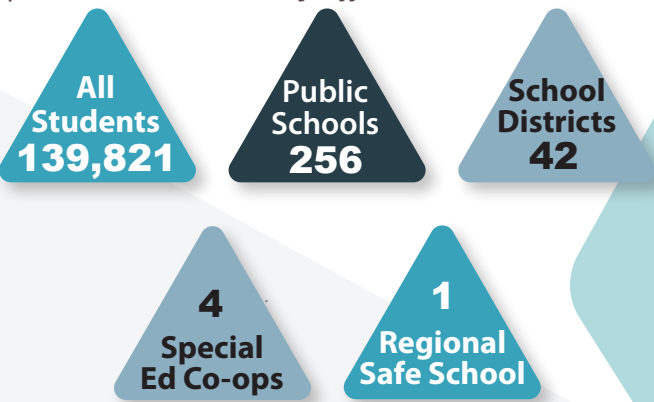
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in Brief

Excellence in Education is our Guiding Principle

The ROE partners with DuPage County schools so every child can succeed—while respecting the rich diversity of cultures and viewpoints our democracy affords us.



EQUITY

At the DuPage Regional Office of Education, equity is the cornerstone of a more just and humane society. All students, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, language, religion, family background, or family income should have the resources they need at the right moment in their education.

The Equity and Excellence Network (EEN) continues to focus on creating learning opportunities aligned directly with the five strands of the Equity and Excellence Framework listed below:

1. Systemic Equity
2. Employment and Retention
3. CIPA (Curriculum, Instruction, Professional Development, and Assessments)
4. Student Voice, Climate, and Culture
5. Family and Community Engagement

The EEN meeting on November 29, 2023, focused on addressing opportunity gaps and sharing best practices. Patrice Payne delivered a comprehensive presentation on the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Patrick Hardy followed with an insightful session on Standards-Based Learning. Kristin Brandt and Jason Jaffe discussed strategies to make education more equitable. They highlighted the importance of embracing diverse literature, incorporating student voices, engaging in community conversations, and examining and improving hiring practices to foster diversity and inclusion.

During the January 26, 2024 meeting, Ashley Cuthbertson presented on the development of culturally responsive music programs. Dr. VaLarie Humphrey shared Addison Trail High School's journey from struggles to success,



focusing on strategies that impacted the African American student body. The meeting concluded with Dan Wolf and Alisa Zawodny's presentation showcasing how Woodridge SD68 integrated Social Emotional Learning (SEL) with equity-focused professional development, aligning with the newly adopted Illinois Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards.

The March 6, 2024 EEN meeting addressed the importance of equitable identification practices in advanced academic programming and the role of SEL in promoting equity. Jeanine Buishas and Kim Freitag led a session on identifying underserved students in advanced programming. Sharon Frys discussed leveraging SEL to promote equity and shared five insights from school districts that have successfully implemented SEL as a tool for equity.

On June 10, 2024, the EEN wrapped up the year by sharing

information to address the unique needs of newcomers. Barbara Marler and Shadia Salem guided the attendees in crafting frameworks within their existing repertoire of language assistance services that are responsive to the unique needs of multilingual learners new to U.S. schools and reflective of the community in which they reside.

Major Initiatives and Achievements

Throughout the year, the EEN focused on initiatives to promote equity in education. Systemic equity efforts included implementing data-driven approaches to identify and support marginalized students. Curriculum and instruction improvements emphasized culturally responsive teaching practices and the inclusion of diverse literature in classrooms. Professional development offered training on SEL and equity, leveraging the Illinois Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards. Community engagement initiatives enhanced partnerships with the community to support student success. Employment and retention strategies were examined, and hiring practices were improved to foster a diverse and inclusive workforce. Additionally, incorporating student voices ensured educational practices reflected their needs and experiences.

The 2023-2024 EEN Steering Committee Members included Alexia Ellet; Tony Bradburn; Dr. Jean Barbanente; Dr. Jennifer Rowe; Dr. Limaris Pueyo; Michael DiNovo; Dr. Rakeda Leaks; Robert Lang; Susanna Melon; Patrice Payne; Nader Najjar; and Dr. Vickie Trotter.

Learn more at dupageroe.org/professional-development/equity.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING



The Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Hub continues to support DuPage County school districts in creating safe and healthy school climates. This support includes SEL-related workshops, on-site coaching and professional learning, presenting at local conferences, and assisting with school improvement planning. Much of this work is done in collaboration with the [Center for Childhood Resilience at Lurie Children's Hospital](#) and the [ISBE Learning Renewal Department](#). Given that the SEL Hub funds were extended for next year, this work will continue and even expand in the coming year.

During the 2023-2024 school year, 222 leaders and educators from DuPage County participated in more than 40 SEL Hub activities. The participation reflects more than 90 percent of the school districts in DuPage County.

Area-Wide Activities in 2023-2024

- Area 1 SEL Hub coaches were invited to participate in several train-the-trainer opportunities, including a trainer session for Emotional Poverty and for Teen Mental Health First Aid. As a result, Area 1 now has 27 individuals trained to deliver Emotional Poverty training and 13 individuals trained to facilitate Teen Mental Health First Aid.
- An area-wide calendar of professional learning opportunities was created that allows the ROEs and ISCs in Area 1 to collaborate and expand supports available to schools.
- The first statewide SEL conference was held in February 2024 with 48 individuals from Area 1 attending. This [video](#) was created as part of the SEL Conference.
- A [newsletter](#) featuring major events from each SEL Hub was published this year.
- New coaches who started working with the SEL Hub in Area 1 participated in onboarding sessions created and facilitated by Sharon Frys.

Professional Development Opportunities

- The SEL Hub sponsored many professional learning opportunities, including:
 - *Restorative Practices training for staff from the Illinois Service Resource Center (ISRC) staff*
 - *MTSS - K-12 Call to Action through Empathy and Equality*
 - *A Hidden School Safety Crisis? Bullying Among Adults*
- A specific need in our area is helping districts address the needs of newcomer students. The SEL Hub assisted with these efforts by making

several networking and workshop opportunities, which focused on newcomers, available at no cost to participants.

- Our Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) trainer, Mary Ellen Esser, conducted five YMHFA sessions in DuPage County and Area 1 during the 2023-2024 school year.
- The SEL Hub supports the quarterly meetings of the SEL Network in which SEL Leaders from across the county collaborate around various SEL topics.

Presentations Given

- *Addressing Mental Health and Wellness: A Systemic Approach*, by Sharon Frys and Maureen McAbee at the Rising Student Achievement Conference on 12/11/23
- *Embracing SEL Across the Curriculum*, by Sharon Frys and Maureen McAbee at the Democracy Schools Convening on 9/28/23
- *Supporting Student Learning and Well-Being with SEL*, by Sharon Frys at the DuPage IASBO meeting on 3/4/24
- *Working Together...Statewide Efforts to Address the Mental Health Needs of Students and Staff in Illinois*, by Sharon Frys and Ruth Cross at the CASEL Exchange on 11/8/23
- *Staff Wellness: A Systemic Approach*, by Sharon Frys at the Middle School Network on 1/17/24
- *Building a Plan for Trauma and SEL*, by Sharon Frys at the County Wide Institute Day on 3/1/24
- *Equity and SEL*, by Sharon Frys at the Equity and Excellence Network on 3/6/24
- *Ruby Payne's Emotional Poverty*, by Mary Ellen Esser at Niles Township District for Special Education #807 on November 16, 2023

Project Proposal Work

The SEL Hub supports ongoing work with districts through project proposals that allow for more customized work with districts. Project proposals have been initiated or continued with the following districts. Riverside District #96; Burr Ridge District #180; Oak Grove School District #68; Joliet School District #86; and Wood Dale School District #7.

Learn more at dupageroe.org/professional-development/social-emotional-learning-sel.

ATTENDANCE & TRUANCY DEPARTMENT

The DuPage Regional Office of Education Attendance and Truancy Department is committed to supporting positive school attendance for DuPage County students, families, and schools. Behavior Interventionists manage caseloads of students identified as chronically truant, working collaboratively with families to identify and resolve barriers to attendance. A comprehensive range of services is provided, including:

- Home visits
- Parent support groups
- School visits
- Referrals to support services

These interventions are designed to assist families in prioritizing school attendance. When truancy persists despite these efforts, Interventionists collaborate with the County Courts to implement more intensive services.

Beyond direct engagement with families, the team engages in various preventive activities aimed at enhancing school attendance across the county. These activities include:

- Training school staff and providing curriculum for attendance-focused groups
- Hosting monthly attendance Q&A sessions for schools
- Organizing quarterly network meetings to support school staff in addressing attendance issues
- Attending legal updates on state attendance laws
- Collaborating with international colleagues to share interventions and strategies

Through these comprehensive efforts, the department strives to improve school attendance and effectively address truancy.

Data for the 2023-2024 School Year:

- Total students served through the Attendance and Truancy Department: 631
- New referrals received for the school year: 413
- Referrals made to support services: 490
- School meetings attended: 784

Learn more at dupageroe.org/services/truancy.

GIFTED SERVICES

Gifted Services are in place to guide area educators in supporting advanced learners in their schools. These services include scheduled professional learning opportunities, resources for alignment to evidence-based practices and ISBE guidelines, consultation services, and networking events.

During the 2023-24 academic year, three gifted network meetings were held. These meetings addressed social-emotional learning, acceleration and enrichment, twice-exceptional learners, and instructional resources for advanced learners. The meetings were held on September 28, 2023, November 14, 2023, and March 6, 2024.

Gifted Coordinator Roundtables were held on October 17, 2023, and April 11, 2024. Discussions focused on sharing practices for equitable identification and programming practices, updates to the Illinois Accelerated Placement Act, and professional learning.

Finally, on the County-Wide Institute Day in March 2024, Gifted Services presented a workshop titled Supporting Elementary Advanced Readers: Rationale, Routines and Resources. This was attended by teachers

and administrators from multiple school districts and private schools from DuPage and other neighboring counties.

Learn more at dupageroe.org/professional-development/gifted.



WORK-BASED LEARNING CONSORTIUM

The DuPage Work-Based Learning Consortium is designed to help junior and senior year high school students access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in high-demand and high-need careers in DuPage County.

The Consortium started with a pilot in January of 2021. This year 79 students from 13 area high schools were involved in the project with 56 fully completing paid student apprenticeships/internships at local business partners during their school day. The advanced manufacturing career pathway is beginning its third full year of implementation, the IT pathway is in its second full year of implementation, and the collaborative has expanded into other pathways—including early childhood and automotive—at the request of local school districts. Additionally, pathways in business and healthcare are set to begin in the next school year.

With the goal of reaching every high school in the County, and to expand to other high-demand career paths, the DuPage Regional Office of Education continues to work toward a braided funding model that will provide sustainability for regional work-based learning experiences.

The ROE will continue to work with our many partners including the DuPage Area Occupational Education System (DAOES), Project Hire-Ed (College of DuPage),



WorkNet DuPage, Choose DuPage, and GPS Education Partners to build this regional model throughout DuPage County so our students have access to industry credentials, post-secondary education, and employment opportunities in fields that are critical to the economic development of DuPage County.

Learn more at wbl.dupageroe.org.

HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY

The DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) is available to assist those who have not graduated from high school and are interested in the opportunity to earn the High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma. Testing options include GED and HiSET. Individuals who have completed at least 75 percent of the high school graduation requirements may be eligible to apply for transcript evaluation, which may reduce the number of tests/requirements to be met before High School Equivalency can be completed.

The DuPage ROE is the custodian of records for DuPage County residents completing the HSE process. Our office can verify completion of HSE to candidates and their designated recipients at no cost and can generate official transcripts and diplomas upon written request with payment.

During the period of July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024:

- 530 individuals participated in HSE testing
- 828 HSE documents were issued (in-house only)
- 425 HSE verifications were processed
- Visit [DuPageROE.org/services/GED-HSE](https://dupageroe.org/services/GED-HSE) for more information.

Learn more at dupageroe.org/services/ged-hse.



THE CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



ALOP

The DuPage ALOP program serves students at risk of withdrawing from high school due to severe credit deficiencies or social-emotional concerns.

Rebound

Rebound is an alternative to out-of-school suspension for students placed on four-to-ten day suspensions and provides academic and restorative support.

PfS

Partners for Success is for students with suspensions longer than three days along with expulsion. PfS offers academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support for students who struggle in a traditional school setting.

RWECEP

The Regional Work Experience & Career Exploration Program offers career technical education to help students transition to post-secondary education and careers

CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (CSS)

The **CSS** in Addison is one building that houses four programs: ALOP (Alternative Learning Opportunities Program), Rebound, PfS (Partners for Success), and RWECEP (Regional Work Experience Career Exploration Program).

During the 2023-2024 school year, the CSS served a total of 173 students. The goals of the CSS focus on continual improvement and a renewed commitment in the following areas:

- Engaging students in academically rigorous coursework that leads to:
- Middle school students—completion of students' middle school experience
- High school students—graduation and ready for college and/or career
- A continued commitment to further bolstering students' social emotional learning skill
- A renewed emphasis on providing ongoing professional learning for staff to further implement restorative practices within the classroom setting and throughout the day
- Ensuring our classrooms are trauma-informed in order to meet the diverse needs of our students

Keep reading to learn more about the programs housed at the CSS, or visit css.dupageroe.org.

ALOP

(ALTERNATIVE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM)

The DuPage **ALOP** program serves students at risk of withdrawing from high school due to severe credit deficiencies or social-emotional concerns. Each student who entered the program was provided with a personalized student success plan focused on their individual academic and social emotional needs, including post-secondary planning.

DuPage ALOP served a total of 43 students throughout the 2023-2024 academic year. With the unwavering support of program instructors, 26 students obtained a High School Equivalency diploma, and nine students will be returning to complete their remaining courses.

Partners for Success

(Alternative to Out of School Suspension)

PARTNERS FOR SUCCESS (PfS) serves as the Alternative Regional Safe School for 42 member districts in DuPage County at the middle and high school levels. PfS offers academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports for students who struggle behaviorally in a traditional school setting. The PfS team partners with the student services teams of students' local schools to create Alternative Education Plans that set goals focused on academic performance, attendance, behavior, and social-emotional learning. Students spend anywhere from one-to-four semesters working on these goals, and every semester their progress is evaluated. Then, based upon this evaluation, meetings are held to determine students' readiness to return to their respective school.

PfS is committed to creating a supportive and nurturing environment for students by employing trauma-informed practices. These practices include restorative approaches that help repair harm and rebuild relationships within the school community. We also partner with local mental health providers to ensure students have access to the necessary resources and support. Our goal is to meet the diverse needs of our students, recognizing each student's experience and background are unique.

During the 2023-2024 school year, PfS served 63 high school students and 25 middle school students, totaling 88 students. Partners for Success also celebrated five seniors who graduated from their respective high schools. As we look ahead to the 2024-2025 school year, Partners for Success will continue building strong relationships with member school districts and serving and supporting students across DuPage County.

REBOUND



Developed to address the needs of DuPage school districts in response to Illinois Senate Bill 100, the **REBOUND** program provides academic and restorative support for students placed on four-to-ten-day suspensions. The program offers students the opportunity for academic consistency with the support of a certified teacher, as well as daily restorative conversations aimed at developing a plan for the successful return to their home school.

Forty-two students participated in the program during the 2023-2024 school year. These students were supported for a total of 274 school days, which otherwise would have been Out-of-School Suspensions.

RWECEP

(REGIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE & CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM)

Designed to offer Career Technical Education to students enrolled in Regional Safe Schools, the **RWECEP** program connects students with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to successfully transition to post-secondary education and careers.

Field trips, career exploration, guest speakers, job search support, and specific job training are offered along with individualized career planning and support.

A total of 33 students participated in the RWECEP offerings during the 2023-2024 school year.



PARENTS AS TEACHERS PROGRAM

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an internationally recognized, evidence-based home visiting program designed to support parents as their child’s first and most influential teacher. The goal of the program is to support families and improve kindergarten readiness in young children. During visits, parent educators assess family needs and partner with parents to set family goals. Parent Educators provide necessary information and resources to help parents support the emotional, behavioral, and physical development of their children.

The DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) PAT Program matches parents and caregivers in 11 DuPage school districts with professional educators and doulas who regularly call on these families. The visits take place from the time the parents know they are expecting until their child is ready for preschool.

During the 2023-2024 school year:

- 176 at-risk families, 207 children, and 36 prenatal families were served by PAT
- 290 doula prenatal visits were delivered
- 2,852 home visits and virtual visits were conducted
- 347 visits were conducted with a male caregiver participating
- 20 “Group Connections” were held with 121 families attending at least one of the bi-monthly meetings

Ongoing professional development ensures home visitors stay updated and adaptable to meet families’ evolving needs, enhancing service quality and personal growth. One of the professional development trainings the PAT staff took advantage of was Near@Home, a 9-month, trauma-informed practice addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences.

Doulas

In the last year, PAT’s two doulas have become Certified Lactation Counselors and Lamaze Educators. We have begun a “Mommy & Me” breastfeeding support group for moms needing extra support and reassurance, and we have provided doula services to more than 35 pregnant mothers.

The doulas hosted two group baby shower parties during the year, providing car seat safety demonstrations and safe sleep information along with food, fun, and games. Prizes included two car seats, a portable play yard, and a stroller. Every mother attending received a self-care kit and goodie bags for their babies. These baby showers were attended by 65 family members.

Group Connections

Monthly Group Connection meetups are an essential part of the PAT program. These meetings allow families to interact with one another while providing play and social time for the children. Some of our most popular Group Connections during the 2023-2024 school year were “The Family Music Show,” attended by 130 people; “Outdoor Fun and Games,” attended by 154 people, and “Sonny Acres Pumpkin Patch,” where nearly 300 people came together to pick pumpkins and enjoy seasonal rides and attractions.

Graduation

In June, a graduation ceremony was held to recognize and celebrate 38 children who completed the Parents as Teachers program. This event was attended by more than 150 family members and friends of the children. Participants enjoyed a buffet dinner and crafts. Each graduate received a certificate of completion and a backpack filled with school supplies, books, and building blocks.

New Partners

We are excited to announce new partnerships with Faith Lutheran Church in Glen Ellyn and DuPage Credit Union. Faith Lutheran graciously hosted several of our large events, and their staff was very accommodating to our needs. DuPage Credit Union embraced the true meaning of the holidays by donating essential supplies, food baskets, and gift cards to 125 underprivileged families in the PAT program. The Credit Union also helped more than 200 families by providing them with strollers and thermometers. We are thankful for both partnerships.

To watch an overview of the PAT program, visit [youtube.com/watch?v=8QmJRgbrBI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QmJRgbrBI).



HOMELESS STUDENT ADVOCACY

During the 2023-2024 school year, there were 3,232 identified homeless students in DuPage County, which is an increase from the previous school year, when there were 2,663 identified McKinney-Vento students.

Homeless students are defined as children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime abode. This includes children or youth living in motels, transitional housing, shelters, abandoned buildings, cars, or “doubled up”—that is, living with another family due to a lack of permanent residence. Migratory children, runaways, and children whose parents or guardians will not permit them to live at home—are also considered homeless.

These children are typically eligible for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which is the primary piece of federal legislation related to the education of children experiencing homelessness. This Act states that eligible children may stay in their school of origin or enroll in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend, according to their best interest and the choice of their caregiver. In addition, McKinney-Vento eligible children and youth have the right to enroll in school immediately, even if they do not have required documents such as school records, medical records, or proof of residency. They are also eligible for free lunches and school fee waivers.

This legislation is important because research shows that changing schools causes a student to lose between four and six months of academic and developmental time. They also are 87 percent more likely to drop out of school; experience higher incidences of physical and mental illness as well as depression and anxiety, and exhibit poor classroom engagement and social skills.

The DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) employs a McKinney-Vento Student Advocate who is



funded by the grant and serves as a resource to homeless families as they navigate the law; to schools as they strive to provide the best education for students; and to community service providers as they work together to help families in need.

As the challenge of homelessness increases in DuPage County, we are glad we can make a difference by giving these students the supports necessary to stay in school.

To learn more, go to dupageroe.org/school-information/residency-homelessness.

BUS DRIVER TRAINING

Each Regional Office of Education (ROE) is responsible for conducting two types of Bus Driver trainings: The eight-hour initial training is required for all new school bus drivers prior to getting a bus permit, and the annual two-hour refresher workshop is required in the 12-month period prior to renewing their school bus permit.

While delivering the “Initial” and “Refresher” training courses, bus safety is emphasized. The modules for the courses are updated annually as we prepare drivers to transport our students. Interest in bus driver training continues to grow rapidly in DuPage County.

- Initial class registered: 1,471
- Initial participants: 1,058
- Refresher class registered: 1,749
- Refresher participants: 1,597

First Division:

- Initial class registration: 68
- Initial participants: 39

For more information, including upcoming dates for bus driver training, visit dupageroe.org/services/bus-driver-training.

SCHOOL SAFETY

School safety is a priority for the DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE). Throughout the 2023-24 school year, our safety specialists hosted and coordinated numerous events and trainings to ensure the physical and emotional safety of DuPage County's school staff, students, and visitors. School safety specialists are also available to support districts and private schools with guidance on a variety of topics, including safety drills, emergency operation plans, and security audits.

Safety Specialists lead the DuPage ROE School Safety Network (formerly known as the School Safety Task Force) with an advisory team that includes the DuPage State's Attorney, Homeland Security, the DuPage County Health Department, local law enforcement agencies, and local fire departments/Emergency Medical Services. DuPage school districts and private schools attend quarterly meetings to discuss safety topics and participate in training.

For the past two years, school reunification training has been an issue we've focused on. Two "Train-the-Trainer" events from the I Love U Guys Foundation occurred both years. This program has been heralded as the gold standard in reunification training during a school crisis, which could include fires, tornadoes, power outages, bomb threats, acts of violence, and other unplanned situations. This training aligns with the methods of the DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Studies show that without a plan to reunite students with their parents or caretakers, the stress and potential trauma of the crisis itself is exacerbated, and the district's responsibility for the chain of custody for each student is jeopardized.

The 2023-2024 school year was the first full year of implementation of DuSmart (DuPage School Mutual Aid Response Team), an agreement between school administrators to provide aid in the event of a crisis that exceeds the capacity of an individual district to handle. The focus of DuSMART is the school reunification process, closely coordinated with the DuPage Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. DuSMART participated in the West Chicago School District 33 school reunification exercise.

In January of 2024, the ROE worked in collaboration with the Will County ROE, hosting the Annual School Safety Summit in cooperation with the Northern Illinois School Safety Administrators Association. The keynote speaker was Dr. Peter Langman, a national expert on

preventing school shootings. There were 11 breakout sessions, and more than 300 participants attended the summit.

160 Participants who took part in a Threat Assessment Training during 2023-2024.

10 School districts that have used the DuPage ROE safety services for a security audit since 2022

302 Participants at the annual School Safety Summit

220 Participants who took the I Love You Guys School Reunification method "Train-the-Trainer" course

45 DuSMART school administrators responding and participating in the West Chicago District 33 Reunification exercise

85 Individuals from public and private schools who took the "School Safety Training for Support and Front Office Staff" workshop

Threats to school safety are investigated by school district multidisciplinary threat assessment teams in collaboration with local law enforcement. To support the school threat assessment teams, the ROE developed a researched-based, best-practice training using scenarios and role playing. During the 2023-2204 school year, more than 160 school staff participated.

From the top-down, the DuPage ROE is using evidence-based findings and training to create schools that are safer. For the 2024-2025 school year, we will continue to research, train, and practice safety procedures to protect the students and school employees in DuPage County.

To learn more about prevention efforts, including the School Violence Tip Line, visit dupageroe.org/services/school-safety.

LEADERSHIP

Superintendent Collaborative

The Superintendent Collaborative met seven times during the 2023-2024 school year. Superintendents across the county share best practices and critical updates throughout the year, while focusing on identifying strategies, developing tools, and solving problems identified as part of the instructional rounds process to enhance leadership performance.

Meeting topics were generated by the group to provide "just in time" support and to harness the collective efficacy of the participants. Topics included:

- the implications and use of artificial intelligence in schools,
- working with unengaged school board members,
- dual credit issues and concerns,
- curriculum challenge processes and policies,
- a process to assist with teacher morale,
- student and staff attendance issues—and the impact on the school report card,
- principal evaluation process and protocols,
- district data dashboards,
- school safety,
- and the impact to students of social media and/or phone access in schools.

Cycles of Inquiry were incorporated at each meeting. This method typically incorporates four steps: analysis of evidence, determination of a focus, implementation and support, and analysis of impact.

Women in Leadership Network

The 2023-2024 school year was the fourth year for the Women in Leadership Network. The group's purpose is to empower and equip female leaders by supporting those in their current roles and lifting others to higher

levels of leadership. This group is a collaborative venture of the DuPage ROE, DuPage Illinois Association of School Administrators, and ROE 4, who looked to find ways to bring women superintendents together for networking and support.

The regular network meetings are open to women superintendents, and twice a year the meetings are open to all aspiring female leaders. The superintendent meeting topics this year included discussion of the book *The Power of Moments*, negotiating superintendent contracts, strategies and mindsets that women leaders can use to navigate work and home life demands, and how to better identify leadership talent in others.

The aspiring female leader meeting topics included a panel of female executive search consultants who shared tips and strategies for successfully moving to the next level of leadership and a presentation by Tovi Scruggs, a Dare to Lead facilitator.

Additionally, the network supported two DuPage ROE co-sponsored Illinois Women's Retreats in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin in October and April.

To read more about how the DuPage ROE supports school leaders, visit dupageroe.org/professional-development/school-district-leadership.



APPROVED PROVIDER PD AUDIT PROCESS

The Illinois State Board of Education requires each Regional Office of Education to complete reviews of the documentation for professional development (PD) activities offered by each district, special education facility, or technical school that serves as an approved PD provider within its area. In DuPage County, each approved PD provider is audited every four years, and as part of that review process, the provider must submit documentation related to selected PD activities they offered during that year.

In 2023-2024, nine districts and entities were notified of their participation in the Approved PD Provider Audits for PD activities completed from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. All entities submitted the requested documentation and completed the audit process. In addition, various PD related questions were fielded, and a survey to gather information about current use of the ISBE PD Plus platform was conducted.

To learn more, visit dupageroe.org/services/compliance and scroll to the bottom of the page.

LICENSURE, RE-LICENSURE, & CERTIFICATION

The Regional Office of Education (ROE) Licensure Team fields answers inquiries and researches licensure issues for educators, school districts, and other stakeholders. We assist educators with initial license and credential applications, obtaining and maintaining subsequent endorsements/credentials, submission of official documents, and renewal/registration of licenses.

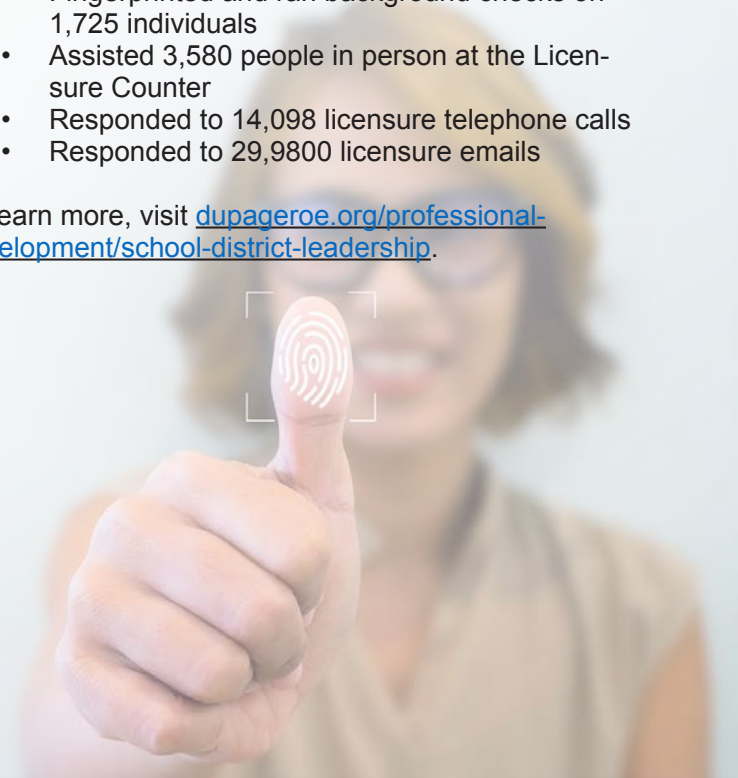
Our Licensure Specialists have direct access to an Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) liaison in Springfield, which helps facilitate resolution of licensure issues and cut through any bureaucratic red tape. Our staff stays apprised of all ISBE updates and legislative changes and can provide the most up-to-date information available.

The DuPage ROE is the contracted provider of fingerprint-based employee background checks for many DuPage school districts—and also provides this service for educators wishing to serve as substitute teachers in DuPage County school districts.

Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, the licensure staff:

- Aided educators in renewing, registering, and obtaining 13,302 credentials
- Fingerprinted and ran background checks on 1,725 individuals
- Assisted 3,580 people in person at the Licensure Counter
- Responded to 14,098 licensure telephone calls
- Responded to 29,9800 licensure emails

To learn more, visit dupageroe.org/professional-development/school-district-leadership.



HEALTH/LIFE, SAFETY & COMPLIANCE

The DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) issues building permits for all school building projects, subject to the requirements of 23 IL Administrative Code Part 180 and the International Building Code. The ROE also reviews the documentation submitted to verify proper procedure is followed by the architect and the school district.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the ROE reviewed and issued:

- 15 building addition permits
- 1 new building construction permit
- 144 major and miscellaneous renovation permits
- 160 total building permits

Also during the 2023-2024 school year:

- 293 buildings were inspected and benchmarked against OSHA standards, local fire codes, municipal codes, and ISBE protocols
- 468 violations were observed and corrected

Finally, 10 reviews were completed during the 2023-2024 school year. These included:

- 6 elementary/middle school districts
- 1 high school district
- 2 unit school districts
- 1 special education cooperative

Learn more about compliance at dupageroe.org/services/compliance.



STEM (SCIENCE, TECH, ENGINEERING & MATH)

The DuPage Regional Office of Education STEM program gets elementary and middle school educators, students, and families involved in STEM-related learning experiences. Activities include after-school workshops for middle school students, during-the-day STEM learning activities for elementary students and teachers, STEM nights for students and families, the STEM Trunk Loan program, publication of a STEM newsletter, and maintenance of a STEM web page. This work is supported through the Career and Technical Education grant.

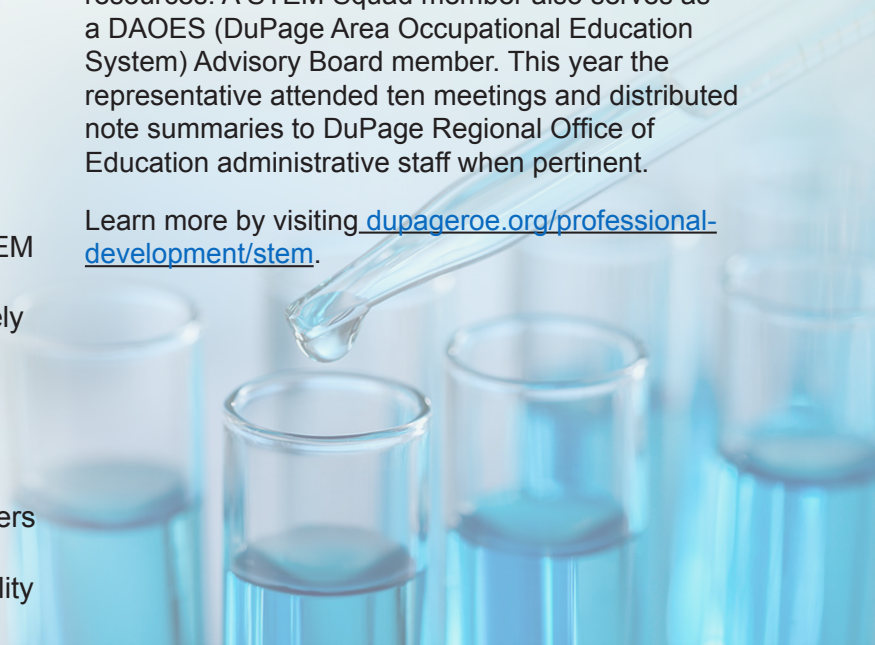
This year, 10 after-school student workshops addressing four STEM topics were held at four schools. These activities involved 21 teachers and teacher aides and approximately 143 students. In addition, STEM events such as STEM nights, enrichment days, faculty assistance sessions, and presentations involved 133 teachers and teacher aides and more than 2,600 students. These events took place at 19 schools, districts, and other educational institutions or conferences. Sixteen STEM Trunks were loaned to 18 schools for use in the classroom or for after-school activities. Approximately 226 teachers and 4,857 students used the Trunks.

Nine STEM newsletters were published, each distributed to more than 700 educators. Four STEM Network meetings were held with a total of 25 individuals in attendance. Two STEM Squad members presented at the Democracy Schools convening in September. The presentation focused on water quality

and the scientific testing and societal issues related to water quality. Also shared at that presentation was information about a new Trunk that would soon be available to DuPage schools—a water quality testing STEM trunk. An open house for STEM educators was sponsored by and held at Morton Arboretum and attended by 30 STEM educators. At that event, STEM Squad members shared information about the numerous STEM resources made available to DuPage educators through the ROE STEM Program.

The STEM program also includes maintenance of a STEM web page and Instagram account, both of which highlight various STEM learning activities and resources. A STEM Squad member also serves as a DAOES (DuPage Area Occupational Education System) Advisory Board member. This year the representative attended ten meetings and distributed note summaries to DuPage Regional Office of Education administrative staff when pertinent.

Learn more by visiting dupageroe.org/professional-development/stem.



TEACHER IN-SERVICE FOR DUPAGE EDUCATORS

Teacher In-Service for DuPage Educators (TIDE) provides graduate school coursework at below-market costs to licensed DuPage County educators. During the 2023-2024 school year, the DuPage Regional Office of Education's TIDE program:

- Continued its focus on expanding teacher skills and qualifications by offering a variety of graduate courses. Some classes met in person, some were offered in a virtual format, and others in a blended format—leading to additional teaching endorsements
- Operated as a financially self-sustaining program while presenting 181 courses, serving 1,465 teachers from July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024
- Collaborated with multiple DuPage County school

districts to offer their staffs on-site endorsement-linked courses

- Partnered with four local universities to deliver a selection of cost-effective courses.

TIDE and its university partners offered classes required for popular endorsement areas such as LBS1, instructional technology, ESL, Reading Teacher, Gifted, Elementary Math Specialist, and English Dual Credit courses for our high school teachers.

Learn more about this program by visiting dupageroe.org/professional-development/tide-graduate-courses.

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY TEAM

The DuPage Instructional Technology Team supports and guides the Regional Office of Education’s operations and professional development staff while implementing the Illinois State Board of Education K-12 technology initiatives. The team’s goal is to provide support and resources to aid school districts in planning and implementing technology initiatives to improve academic achievement and provide all learners with technology-rich learning opportunities.



DuPage Technology Directors’ Network

The ROE conducts meetings for technology directors in DuPage County school districts and learning agencies five times yearly. Based on input from district staff, these meetings focus on current technology topics and trends that impact our schools and districts. This network meeting supports DuPage technology leaders who serve in various capacities such as networking, security, applications, data management, and user support. These meetings provide a shared learning environment around issues of current and future interest.

Technology Coordinators and Coaches Network

The DuPage ROE also coordinates four sessions for DuPage technology coaches and coordinators. These meetings support technology coaches who partner with their classroom colleagues to utilize technology to support and enhance student learning. The *International Society for Technology in Education’s* Standards for Students guided our discussions and provided a framework for our technology leadership’s continual growth and professional development.

Supporting Districts and Leaders in and Around DuPage County

The DuPage ROE is committed to empowering districts and educational leaders through innovative programs and professional development opportunities. Our workshops are designed to enhance teaching and learning

experiences, foster leadership growth, and promote the effective use of technology in education. Below are some highlights of our efforts over the past year.

DuPage Technology Conference: Unleashing the Power of AI in Education

The DuPage ROE hosted its inaugural DuPage Technology Conference on June 11, 2024, focusing on Artificial Intelligence (AI). Two hundred educators came together to learn, collaborate, and network with other education and technology leaders. We were fortunate to have 32 presenters share their insights and knowledge about the future of AI in schools.

Collaborations with the Illinois Learning Technology Center

The ROE continues collaborating with the Illinois Learning Technology Center (LTC) to offer professional development opportunities for educators. This year, we offered ten workshops, including:

Data Dashboards for Instructional Coaches and Other Leaders: This course equipped instructional coaches and other leaders with the skills to use technology tools for data collection and analysis. Ninety participants learned how to communicate effectively with colleagues and monitor their instructional impact.

Become an AI-Enhanced Super-Teacher: As AI rapidly transforms education, this course prepared teachers to leverage AI in their teaching practices. Educators learned the best strategies to integrate AI, ensuring they are ready for the future of education.

Drones for Creativity and Computer Science: This year, we again offered this unique course to introduce educators to the benefits of incorporating drones into their curriculum. Participants learned the basics of flying and coding drones and left with practical ideas for integrating this technology into their classrooms.

Cybersecurity: On April 4, 2024, the DuPage ROE welcomed the Learning Technology Center for a cybersecurity workshop at the DuPage Center for Professional Learning (CPL). Thirty-three participants gathered to learn ways to enhance their organization’s cybersecurity posture, fostering resilience and preparedness against evolving threats.

Learn more at dupageroe.org/professional-development/technology.

ADMINISTRATOR ACADEMIES

Administrator Academies conducted by the DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) were delivered in three formats during the 2023-2024 school year: in-person, virtual, and off-site (third party). In-person academies were held at the Center for Professional Learning, and third-party academies were held at school and district buildings. While administrators still prefer virtual learning because of convenience, they also indicated that third-party locations were a positive option.

The ROE offered a variety of Administrator Academies to inform, enrich, and train administrators. Subjects included:

- Teacher and Principal Evaluator Training
- Climate and Culture
- Crisis Management (with College of DuPage)
- School Leadership
- Restorative Practices
- Culturally Responsive Practices
- Homelessness

- Microcredentials in Social Emotional Learning, English Language, and Culture
- Illinois Social Studies Standards
- School Leadership Team Building

In total, the ROE offered 70 courses during the 2023-24 school year.

- 548 participants registered
- 536 participants attended
- 29 courses were canceled
- 41 courses were held

There were also 19 third-party academies offered.

- 591 participants registered
- 590 participants attended
- 1 course was canceled
- 18 courses were held

The Course Catalog for the 2024-2025 school year will continue to include a variety of virtual academies. Third-party academies will also continue to be an option for schools and school districts, as they are well attended in DuPage County.



Learn more at dupageroe.org/professional-development/administrators-academy.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER TRAINING

Illinois House Bill 5627, which became law in 2018, allows for individuals with 60 hours of college credit to obtain a short-term substitute (STS) teaching license. These STS license holders are required to complete training before working in the public schools. The STS license was set to sunset on 6/30/2023, but given its popularity and usefulness, legislation has extended the license expiration date through 6/30/2029.

As a service to educators and school districts, the DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) offers substitute teaching training workshops that satisfy the initial

training requirement for STS license holders. These workshops are also open to individuals who are interested in learning more about substitute teaching.

During the 2023-2024 school year, 125 individuals participated in these workshops, which were held via ZOOM in order to make them more accessible. During the class, instructors went through the steps required to become a substitute teacher. Additionally, the potential substitute teachers were instructed on topics such as expectations, classroom management techniques, and school safety.

Participants brainstormed ideas for handling potential real-life scenarios in a “What Would You Do?” activity.

Participant surveys taken after the training indicated many were grateful for the opportunity to learn about substitute teaching.

One attendee said it was a “very informative course—well prepared and perfectly presented.” Another said she would recommend the training to anyone working with children because “it provides the framework for how to be flexible, accommodating, and patient in an environment where circumstances are always changing.”

CIVICS

Democracy Schools Network

The Illinois Democracy Schools Network (DSN) held its annual convening in the Fall of 2023. The theme was *Civics for All! A K-12 Approach to Civic Learning Across Disciplines*. Two hundred-seventy people attended, and three new schools were welcomed. The convening had a number of presenters, including the DuPage SEL Hub and STEM Squad. Participant feedback was positive. One attendee said the convening gave her “hope for the future of our democracy.”

During the 2023-2024 school year, the DSN continued working with research practice partners at the Center for Research and Information on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts University. The goal was to implement two projects: 1) expansion of the current grades 9-12 Democracy Schools model to a K-12 district program, and 2) implementation of a grant from the National Network of Educational Research Practice Partnerships around Participatory Budgeting.

The DSN issued six \$1,000 mini grants to network schools to implement programming to support the

elements and indicators of the DSN. Programs included a biodiverse reflection garden, student affinity groups, creation of a service learning course, a voter registration drive, development of common civic language, and addiction education and support.

Illinois Civics Hub

During the 2023-2024 school year, the ICH continued partnering with Asian Americans Advancing Justice to provide free monthly webinars to support implementation of the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History mandate.

The ICH also published three podcast episodes of the *Civics Hive* to explore the intersection of civics and technology as a new modality of PD. The episodes include: *Is AI good for democracy?*, *What does it mean to educate for a diverse democracy?*, and *How can students practice civic online reasoning?*

Learn more at dupageroe.org/illinois-civics.

REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

The Regional Board of School Trustees is an elected board comprised of seven members. This elected board hears petitions for annexations, detachments, and changes in school district boundaries. The Regional Superintendent acts as Ex-Officio Secretary to the Board. The Regional Office maintains all records of petitions filed in the region.

- The main responsibilities of the Regional Board of School Trustees are:
- The hearing and disposal of petitions for change of school district boundaries
 - The hearing and disposal of petitions by school districts to withdraw from Joint Agreements/ Cooperatives
 - Appointment of appraisers and approval of final settlements in the division of assets when new districts are formed

Regional Board of School Trustees meetings are held on the first Monday of each quarter. Special meetings are scheduled as necessary.

- The Board of Trustees for the 2023-2024 school year were as follows:
- Carolyn Carrillo (York Township)
 - Karen Zatz (Wheatland Township)
 - John Huff (Lisle Township)
 - Marylee Leu, President (Naperville Township)
 - Paula McGowen (Milton Township)
 - Marilyn Menconi (Bloomington Township)
 - Jaye Wang, President (Downers Grove Township)
 - Amber Quirk, Ex-Officio Secretary



GRANTS

LeadHUBS are located in six Regional Offices of Education. The six established LeadHUBS are organized to provide a statewide system of support, as each has an assigned Educational Service Area that extends beyond their ROE boundaries. The DuPage Regional Office of Education (ROE) is the LeadHUB for Area 1.

For the 2023-2024 school year, the DuPage Regional Office of Education served as a LeadHUB for Leadership in Partnership. Along with the other five LeadHUBS, DuPage implemented five Grants (3 federal grants and 2 ISBE state grants). These grants support leadership development for aspiring leaders, first-year principals, early career-to-experienced principals, and central office support.

Through these grants, the DuPage ROE supported 81 educational leaders or aspiring educational leaders in Area 1 during the 2023-2024 school year.

Key components to the grants are providing learning opportunities and 1:1 coaching. However, the DuPage ROE Leadership Services is equally focused on sus-

tainability of these services when the grants expire.

In addition, the DuPage ROE is working to align content across the varied grant programs to support all educational leaders for the duration of their career. The focus is always to *develop capacity for organizational leadership for continuous instructional improvement*.

- The sustainability of content and experience for all grants is dependent on:
1. Being both flexible and personalized for the leader no matter where they are at in their career development, while maintaining the integrity and rigor of the research
 2. Training built into the onboarding of coaches/ mentors
 3. Designing learning experiences that support application of the content and align to adult learning theories for leaders

For the 2024-2025 school year, the DuPage ROE Leadership Services is recruiting central office teams for coaching and training.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

| BEGINNING FUND BALANCE (UNAUDITED) | |
|--|----------------|
| July 1, 2023 | \$4,889,058 |
| REVENUE | |
| Certification | \$329,605 |
| Interest | \$253,137 |
| Other fees | <u>\$2,080</u> |
| Total Revenue (+) | \$584,822 |
| EXPENDITURES | |
| Purchased Services | \$442,102 |
| Supplies and Materials | \$0 |
| Capital Outlay | \$0 |
| Non-Capitalized Outlay / Transfers | \$0 |
| FY Prior Period CPA Review and Accounting Adjustment | <u>\$0</u> |
| Total Expenditures (-) | \$442,102 |
| ENDING FUND BALANCE (UNAUDITED) | |
| June 30, 2024 | \$5,031,778 |

Note: All numbers are rounded to nearest dollar.

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