



# Illinois State Board of Education

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**Darren Reisberg**  
*Chair of the Board*

**Dr. Carmen I. Ayala**  
*State Superintendent of Education*

March 30, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

I know I'm joined by millions of students and families across the state in saying how thankful we are for your hard work and inventiveness over these past two weeks. We now begin a new phase in Illinois education together as we transition from of Act of God Days into remote learning. I am so appreciative of your efforts, and I am committed to the Illinois State Board of Education continuing to serve as a conduit of guidance and support.

Our [Remote Learning Recommendations](#) and latest [guidance document](#) are available on the ISBE website at [www.isbe.net/covid19](http://www.isbe.net/covid19).

Illinois' schools have found so many creative ways to meet students' needs during this crisis. For example, Belleville Township High School uses buses to provide WiFi hotspots next to which families can park and download their students' homework assignments. Lake Louise Elementary teachers recently "rode along" with school buses via a Chromebook set up by the bus door to greet their students (virtually, of course) when families got their meal delivery.

I am happy to report that ISBE filed emergency rules today to allow all transportation expenditures that support the health and well-being of Illinois pre-k-12 students – such as costs related to the distribution of food and instructional materials and the use of buses to provide WiFi – to be reimbursed by ISBE's regular transportation reimbursement formula. These new rules, effective immediately, cover expenses incurred from March 17, 2020, through the end of the 2019-20 school year. Read the full text of the rules at [www.isbe.net/Documents/23-120RG-E.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/23-120RG-E.pdf).

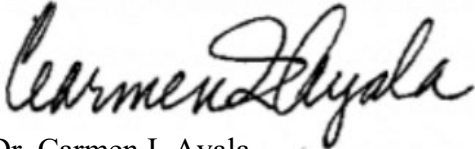
These emergency rules recognize the unexpected and unprecedented hurdles we currently face – and the generosity and agility of Illinois' educators in overcoming them. Serve Illinois also recognizes these herculean feats and announced one extraordinary educator as [Illinois' Volunteer of the Week](#). James DeLoach teaches math and science at York Alternative High School, which serves students at the Cook County Department of Corrections. In addition to teaching, Mr. DeLoach has volunteered at Lakeview Pantry in Chicago to ensure that those in need receive food swiftly and safely. According to [Serve Illinois](#), Mr. DeLoach wears many hats for the food bank; he "organizes inventory, prepares the pantry for distribution by sorting and restocking, packs boxes for distribution, and overall helps to serve clients in need." Thank you, Mr. DeLoach!

You all never cease to inspire me.

I will end tonight's message with a reminder to please continue to check in with students to make sure they are okay. These connections – over the phone, over text, over email, or on video chat – are more meaningful and important than ever, now that students are out of physical presence and daily line of sight.

Keep up the great work. I look forward to staying connected with you as we embark on our Remote Learning journey together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carmen I. Ayala". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Carmen I. Ayala  
State Superintendent of Education  
Illinois State Board of Education