# IVSA Newsletter

November 2026 Edition



As we welcome November, I find myself reflecting on just how much we have to be thankful for at IVSA. Each day, I am reminded of the incredible dedication of our teachers, staff, school partners, students, and families who make our mission possible.

Our theme this year, **"Mindset Matters,"** reminds us that growth doesn't happen overnight. It happens through perseverance, embracing challenges, and believing in what is possible. As we move further into the school year, I encourage our students to celebrate their progress, recognize how far they've come, and continue setting goals for what lies ahead.

On a personal note, I am especially looking forward to Thanksgiving this year because our family of five will finally be back together under one roof! As our children have grown and life has taken everyone in different directions, I've come to appreciate those moments together even more. There is something special about having everyone around the table again, sharing stories, laughing, and simply enjoying time together. It's a wonderful reminder that sometimes the greatest things we have to be thankful for are the people in our lives.

I am equally grateful for our IVSA family and the relationships we continue to build across Illinois. Thank you for being part of this journey and for the difference you make in the lives of students every day.

**Wishing you and your families a wonderful November and Thanksgiving season filled with gratitude, laughter, and time with those you love!**

Melissa Lundgaard

IVSA Executive Director




## Art Competition

### Submissions may be turned in November 3-14!

Whether you draw, paint, sketch, or create digitally, this is your invitation to pick up your tools and show us what community means to you. The National Art Competition is open to all enrolled students in grades K–12 in any of the Virtual Schools Accel is connected to. Submit your original artwork for a chance to win prizes, have your work featured across the network, and earn a People's Choice vote from students and families nationwide.
What You Can Submit

We welcome all two-dimensional original artwork including drawing, painting, watercolor, collage, mixed media, and digital art. Submissions must be the student's own original work. AI-generated images are not permitted — all entries will be reviewed, and any submission suspected of containing AI-generated content will be disqualified.

## IVSA Teacher Highlight

### Meet Mrs. Ferguson



Mrs. Ferguson has been part of the IVSA family since fall 2022. Ask her what she loves most about the job, and she'll tell you it's **getting to know her students and building relationships with them**.

She also enjoys finding out why families choose IVSA, whether they are abroad, traveling the country for extracurriculars, or simply prefer the environment at home. Our Teacher Shortage Solutions students get her attention too, and she loves learning about their school events and extracurriculars.

A recent highlight for Alana was teaching a lesson for the University of Illinois President's State Tour. In her words, it was "really fun and a great experience."

https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1FuLDi4HY6/



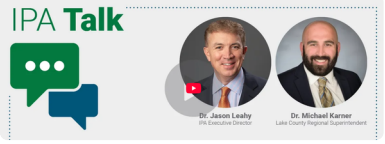






## A Look inside IVSA with the Illinois Principal Association

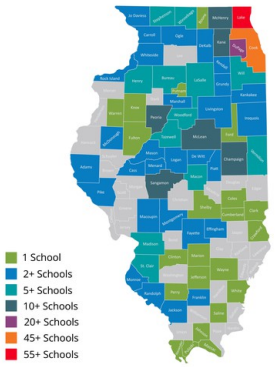
Listen in as Dr. Michael Karner and IPA Executive Director Dr. Jason Leahy discuss how Illinois Virtual Schools & Academy got started and learn more about why IVSA exists! IPA TALK



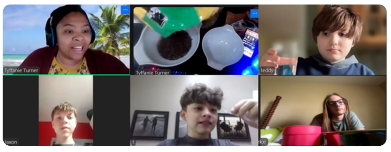

## Welcome NEW PARTNER SCHOOLS!

Did you know that IVSA added ***4 NEW PARTNER SCHOOLS*** just this month! We are GLAD you chose to join the ***IVSA FAMILY***!

Riverwood Elementary School - McHenry, IL
Manhattan Intermediate School - Manhattan, IL
Lincoln Elementary School - River Forest, IL
Illini West High School - Carthage, IL




## January REGISTRATION is OPEN!



**IVSA** offers over 400 courses in our Fall Program. Do you need **Consumer Economics**, **Health, PE, World Languages** or an **Elective**? What about taking **Photography**, **Geometry, Digital Media, Forensics**, or get credit for working this fall with our **Workplace Experience** course.

IVSA COURSE CATALOG

## Monthly Math Challenge

Do you like to solve math problems? Join other students across the country in a Monthly Math Riddle Challenge! Sign up link is also on the flyer! Prizes are awarded.



## School Partner Corner

### Have you lost a teacher and need help with a Teacher Shortage Solution? Intake Form is below!

If you anticipate a need for IVSA to support your school in SY2627 with TSS, please fill out this TSS intake form to let us IVSA know what needs you are anticipating. Filling this out does not bind you to using IVSA, but we can begin to explore this partnership.

Synchronous or Asynchronous options are available!




## Full-Time Academy CORNER

### REGISTRATION

Registration for our January 2027 COHORT is OPEN! Do you have a student who would thrive with a flexible learning solution? Enroll your student today.




## IVSA Programs



- ***Full-Time Academy*** - We offer a highly supportive full-time virtual learning option for students.
- ***Next Chapter*** - Our Brand New Credit Recovery Program
- ***Single Course Offerings*** - Choose original credit or credit recovery courses in Core Subjects, Electives, World Languages, Business and CTE courses and more.
- ***Teacher Shortage Solutions*** - Are you experiencing a teacher shortage that may eliminate programs and courses. IVSA offers synchronous and asynchronous instruction options for full classes.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Help Guides for School Partners and Parents to assist with Applications, Registration, Passwords, Payments and more can be found on the IVSA website.




## PARENT/GUARDIAN CORNER

### Observer Access to Canvas

We have a new way that you can follow your student's IVSA course(s) by creating an observer account in our learning management system, Canvas. Please use the HELP GUIDE to walk you through this.

# Coming Up!

### IMPORTANT DATES

**November 2-6: IXL Benchmark for 9-12th grade Academy Students**
**November 25-27: Thanksgiving Holiday, no LIVE classes**

## Follow IVSA on INSTAGRAM

## Like our FACEBOOK Page

You can find us on LINKEDin

IVSA Illinois Virtual Schools & Academy

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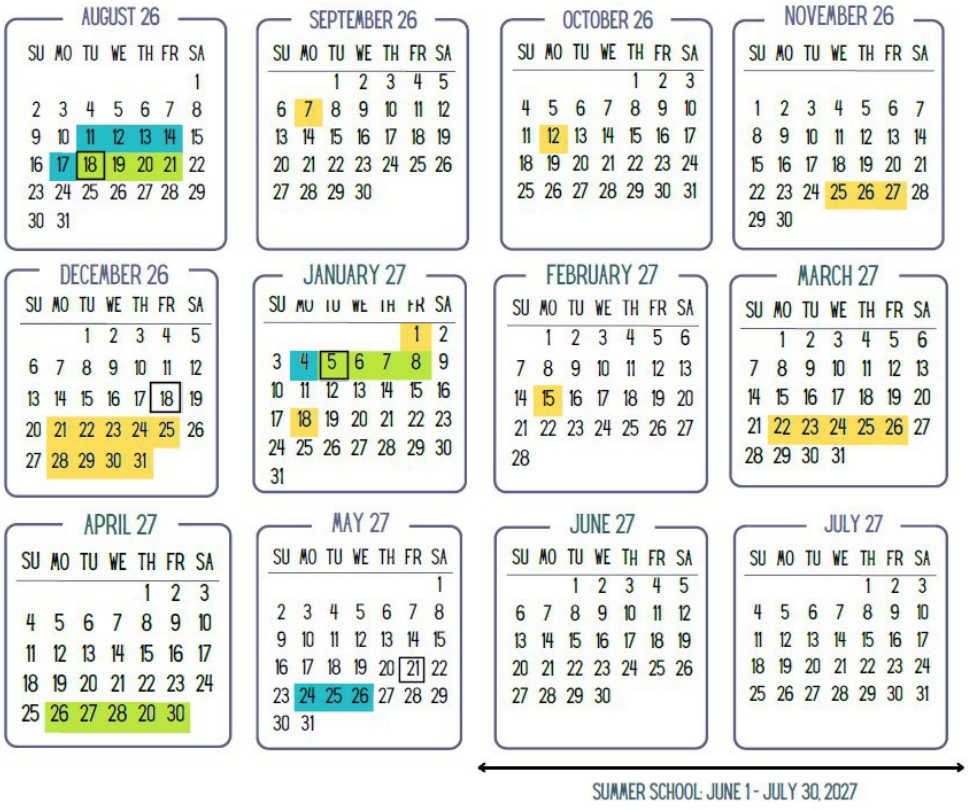
# FTA 2026-27 ACADEMIC CALENDER

Total instructional days: 176

**EVENTS**

AUG 5-7 - NEW TEACHER TRAINING
AUG 6 - ADJUNCT FACULTY TRAINING
AUG 10 - NEW TEACHER FTF TRAINING DAY
AUG 11 - FTA STAFF FTF TRAINING DAY
AUG 12-14 AND 17 - FTA STAFF WORK DAYS
AUG 18 - FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
AUG 18-21 - DIAGNOSTIC TESTING
SEP 7 - LABOR DAY - SCHOOL CLOSED
OCT 12 - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY - SCHOOL CLOSED
NOV 25-27 - THANKSGIVING - SCHOOL CLOSED
DEC 18 - END OF 1ST SEMESTER
DEC 21- JAN 1 - WINTER BREAK - SCHOOL CLOSED
JAN 4 - TEACHER WORK DAY - SCHOOL CLOSED
JAN 5 - FIRST DAY OF 2ND SEMESTER
JAN 5-8 - MID-YEAR DIAGNOSTIC TESTING
JAN 18 - MLK DAY - SCHOOL CLOSED
FEB 15 - PRESIDENTS DAY - SCHOOL CLOSED
MAR 22-26 - SPRING BREAK - SCHOOL CLOSED
APRIL 26-30 - END OF YEAR DIAGNOSTIC TESTING
MAY 21 - LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
MAY 24-26 - TEACHER WORK DAYS
JUN 1 - SUMMER SCHOOL BEGINS
JULY 30 - SUMMER SCHOOL ENDS

**KEY**
No student attendance
Teacher work day
Semester start/end
Diagnostic testing




IVSA Illinois Virtual Schools & Academy

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## Illinois Virtual Schools & Academy

The mission of IVSA is to partner with local Illinois schools to provide engaging and supportive online educational experiences to meet the needs of all learners.

**Any Questions?** Reach out to info@ivsaschool.org
**Website:** https://ivsaschool.org/
**IVSA Phone Number:** 866-890-IVSA (4872)



**Melissa Lundgaard**
Melissa is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters