

## **North Cook ISC Releases Annual Report**

The North Cook Intermediate Service Center (ISC) / Regional Office of Education #5, located in Des Plaines, has released its annual report for the 2020-2021 school year.

The primary function of North Cook ISC (NCISC) is to provide professional development for educators in the northern Cook County public school districts. In addition, North Cook ISC handles student truancy and homeless issues, educator licensure, supports and monitors school construction and renovation projects, and systematically reviews and inspects school facilities and operations to ensure compliance with mandated standards for health and safety and incorporation of current State laws into their practices.

### **Covid-19 Impact**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, student instruction in North Cook area schools during FY21 was conducted in one of three ways: virtually, in-school or using a hybrid model. NCISC joined a purchasing co-op to buy Covid-related PPE products for its staff, and in cooperation with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, helped distribute PPE supplies to its local schools.

### **Professional Development**

North Cook ISC responded to the Covid-19 pandemic by offering all professional development events and support services virtually. This included conducting 38 workshops for educators, 50 Administrator Academy courses, and 22 customized in-district consultations or virtual training. In addition, virtual networking meetings were held periodically with five employee groups, such as Curriculum and Instruction, Technology, and Buildings and Grounds leaders, and new online courses and book studies were created for educators to continue their professional development remotely.

In January 2021, a new partnership was established with North Central College to expand the availability of Character Education resources for school districts served by the North Cook Intermediate Service Center.

North Cook ISC facilitated a cohort for educators interested in becoming National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT). In FY21, there were 8 new NBCT teachers and 25 renewals among seven North Cook elementary districts and five high school districts.

Also, the North Cook ISC website ([www.ncisc.org](http://www.ncisc.org)) underwent a major update with new content, links, photos and resources for users, such as employment opportunities for educators and bus drivers at all of our districts.

### **Principal Mentoring**

North Cook ISC also offered principal and assistant principal mentoring services virtually to 17 new administrators during FY21.

### **Teacher Licensure**

NCISC is the local licensure and endorsement expert to help educators obtain and register their Professional Educator License with the Illinois State Board of Education. During the 2020-21 school year,

NCISC registered more than 5,500 licenses and performed background checks and fingerprinting services for 605 individuals.

### **Regional Safe School**

North Cook Young Adult Academy (NCYAA) shares the same site as North Cook ISC in Des Plaines. It is a Regional Safe Schools Program for at-risk students in grades 6-12 who have multiple suspensions, have been expelled, or are pending expulsion from their home schools. Last year, NCYAA provided a safe and inclusive learning environment for 24 students.

### **Bus Driver Training**

North Cook ISC manages school bus driver training, including initial and annual refresher courses, for all Cook County and Chicago Public Schools so that bus drivers remain current with the Secretary of State's rules and regulations. Fifty-four initial training courses and 300 refresher training courses were held during FY21, most virtually.

### **At-Risk/Homeless Students**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Act provides support for students/families who are in temporary living situations, need homeless student services or are unaccompanied youths. In FY21, more than 1,900 cases were documented in the North Cook region. At the beginning of the school year, 1,600 backpacks with school supplies and personal hygiene kits were provided to McKinney-Vento eligible students, paid for with grant money.

### **Health/Life Safety**

Meetings were held with school personnel and district architects to support school construction or renovation projects. Last year, a total of 206 building permits were issued. In addition, 223 health/life safety inspections were conducted, and compliance monitoring was completed virtually with 10 different North Cook school districts to ensure compliance with Illinois State Board of Education statutes.

### **Population Served**

In total, North Cook ISC is responsible for 32 elementary and 7 high school districts, plus 3 Special Education Co-Operatives. It serves more than 900 public school administrators, almost 11,000 teachers, and 146,000 students in 228 public schools. For more information, see [www.ncisc.org](http://www.ncisc.org).

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