



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Illinois Central College Advances Regional Educator Pipeline Through Future Teacher Summit

East Peoria, IL (04/21/2026) – Illinois Central College welcomed students from across central Illinois on April 21 for the 2026 Future Teacher Summit, a full-day experience designed to expand awareness of careers in education and strengthen the region’s future educator pipeline.

Supported by Grow Your Own Illinois (GYO-IL) funding, the summit connected prospective teachers with educators, higher education faculty, and current college students through a day of interactive learning, networking, and career exploration opportunities. The event reflects ICC’s ongoing commitment to increase access to education pathways and address workforce needs across the region.

Students participated in breakout sessions focused on the wide range of careers in education, the roles and responsibilities of teaching across grade levels, and the skills required in today’s classrooms. Additional sessions highlighted opportunities beyond traditional classroom teaching and provided interactive experiences aligned with real-world educational settings.

The summit featured keynote speaker Dr. Lindsey Jensen, Illinois Teacher of the Year and state coordinator for Educators Rising Illinois. Her career in education spans 19 years, and she currently serves in a statewide leadership role supporting aspiring educators.

“Our schools and communities depend on the next generation of educators,” said Sandy Arreguin, Dean of College and Career Readiness at Illinois Central College. “With support from Grow Your Own Illinois, this summit provided meaningful exposure to education careers and helps students taking the first steps toward those pathways. Building a strong educator pipeline begins with access and opportunity.”

The event also included a student panel and opportunities for participants to engage directly with educators and peers as they explore their next steps. Illinois Central College continues to partner with K-12 districts, universities, and statewide initiatives to expand access to education careers and support regional workforce needs. Events like

the Future Teacher Summit are part of a broader effort to connect students with clear, accessible pathways into high-demand fields.

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Illinois Central College is a two-year community college with campuses in East Peoria, Peoria, and Pekin, Illinois, providing a high-quality, affordable education to prepare students to enter the workforce or to transfer to a four-year institution. ICC is the 2020 awardee of the National Community College Charles Kennedy Equity Award from ACCT, a 2022 and 2025 EDA Good Job Challenge Institution, and the Lead College for the state of Illinois' Workforce Equity Initiative. ICC also conducts original research in agricultural fields, including water quality and soil conservation. For more information, visit icc.edu.