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**BOONE-WINNEBAGO  
REGIONAL OFFICE  
OF EDUCATION #4**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
FY24**



**SCOTT BLOOMQUIST**  
REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**ALLISON PIERSON**  
ASSISTANT REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT

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# SUPERINTENDENT'S FY24 MESSAGE

As FY24 began, we at Boone-Winnebago Regional Office of Education 4 were more than prepared and eager for the new school year to commence. We were energized by the addition of new department leaders who would bring fresh perspectives and a wealth of expertise from their diverse professional backgrounds. These new hires precisely complemented our experienced leaders already in place, who had been instrumental in driving success and fostering growth at the Regional Office. Together, this blend of seasoned leadership and bright-eyed new talent was poised to strengthen our organization's capacity to deliver on our stated mission and vision. There was no doubt this team could deliver an innovative, dynamic, and collaborative approach to meet the needs of the district communities we serve.

In line with our goals of ensuring our districts and the ROE itself would flourish during the FY24 term, we continued to step up our already robust game of educational and community services. We were proud to host the 2nd Annual Administrators' Breakfast and the 40th Year Anniversary of the Regional Spelling Bee with 26 local participants. We were able to recognize student leaders in the classroom by awarding \$500 ROE 4 scholarships to TWO Student Leadership winners at the Illinois Principals Association Kishwaukee Region Annual Breakfast.

Summit Academy continued to make ripples in the alternative education arena both at the state and national levels during FY24. The academy increased staff to accommodate increased classrooms as enrollment numbers continued to soar. This also included the addition of a school resource officer and two interns. Also, as program recognition spread, a steady stream of noteworthy visitors visited to tour the campus.

School Support Services expanded by adding a Director of Professional Learning, a Social Emotional Learning Specialist, a PL Coach, a new School Safety/Compliance Officer, and a Professional Learning Coordinator. The PL team offered hundreds of training experiences for thousands of participants in FY24. Right across the Regional Office hallway, Student Support Services also grew their dedicated staff. This permitted increased focus on the most at-risk students. Regional Services also hired Finance and Marketing Specialists and welcomed back the part-time HR Specialist.

These mentions only scratch the surface of how FY24 unfolded at the Regional Office. We invite you to dive into this End-of-Year Summary as we reveal the impactful ways each organizational division persistently cultivated avenues of growth. Our education-focused work is thriving as our teams offer support to the districts, school communities, and region we are proud to serve.



**Scott Bloomquist**  
Regional Superintendent of Schools



**Allison Pierson**  
Assistant Regional Superintendent

# ROE 4 REGIONAL SERVICES

## REGIONAL SERVICES: Serving Schools and Community



*Current Regional Staff (L-R): Mary Wilson, Leah Blake, Zayra Quintero, Denise Rux, Madelynn Glenn*

In FY24, ROE 4 Regional Services (formerly known as Central Office) implemented role and task changes to continue the office's mission of service during a season of tremendous growth. In order to sidestep the growing pains that often accompany an unprecedented expansion, Superintendent Scott Bloomquist and Assistant Superintendent Allison Pierson took an intentional approach to the adjustment of position expectations and restructured some positions altogether. This allowed for better time management while still delivering the same level of quality service ROE 4 is known for. The office remodel also forged ahead as visitors noted signage changes and upgrades to the public spaces. Madelynn Glenn joined the front office team as Regional Services Administrative Assistant.

The Regional Office continued to offer GED test proctoring for community members and for local inmates housed at the Winnebago County Jail. Logan Watts stepped into the role of ROE 4 GED Coordinator, documenting testing and traveling to the jail several afternoons. Since jail GED testing was in hot demand, Mr. Watts set a goal to eliminate the waiting list that had been building. Viewed as a community asset, the inmate GED program provided these individuals the chance to earn a diploma, thus increasing their opportunity for gainful employment and a more productive lifestyle following release - supporting community health.

The ROE 4 School Bus Driver Training Program, coordinated by Mary Wilson, continued to have sold out courses and testing dates. The bus driver shortage seems to have leveled off a bit in our region. This may be due to districts opting-in for the new trend of contracting with companies that offered private and semi-private transportation for students. Those private drivers also required certification, and the data of the at-capacity training classes indicates the number of bus drivers being trained remains steady.

Spring 2024 brought the 40th anniversary of the annual Regional Spelling Bee. Ananya Joshi, a 6th grader at Roscoe Middle School, was crowned the winner by spelling the word "ensued" during the competitive event. Second place winner was 7th grader Julia Kurien from Thurgood Marshall Middle School, while Aaron Austin from Harlem Middle School secured the third place plaque and prizes. The Bee is generously funded by the Eunice Wishop Stromberg Spelling Bee Endowment Fund of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois.

The implementation of a new employee monthly e-newsletter and incorporation of the Regional Office Core Values helped create a fresh climate for employees. Licensure experienced an incredibly busy FY24 licensure season, which opened in April 2024 and extended into the summer.

With an extensive library of educational knowledge, the Regional Services Team at ROE 4 is delighted to assist area customers and educators who utilize our office for a wide range of services or to answer professional questions. Regional Services is located on-site at ROE 4 and is ready to support districts, schools, and members of the community now and anticipates an equally exciting FY25.

# ROE 4 REGIONAL SERVICES

## FY24 GENERAL DATA



### 52,677

# of K-12 Public School Students We Serve

### 801

# of Square Miles We Serve

### 95

# of Attendance Centers We Serve

### 25

# of K-12 Non-Public Schools We Serve

### 13

# of School Districts We Serve

### 1

# of Alternative Schools We Serve

## TESTING CENTER PROCTORED TESTS

- 78 Paraprofessional Tests
- 1,012 Pearson Vue Tests
- 1,717 GED Tests

## ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

- 305 GED Diplomas Earned

## SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING

- 21 Initial Classes
- 341 Drivers Certified
- 29 Refresher Classes
- 829 Drivers Re-Certified

## SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

- 43 New Regional Substitutes\* (\*Final 3 Months of FY24)

## FINGERPRINT SERVICES

- 1,732 Individuals Fingerprinted

## ILLINOIS MINOR WORK PERMITS

- 121 Permits Issued

# ROE 4 SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: Growth and Success in FY24



ROE 4 Professional Learning experienced a remarkable transformation in FY24. This was, in part, due to the addition of a new Director of Professional Learning, a Social Emotional Learning Specialist, a Professional Learning Coach, a School Safety/Compliance Coordinator, and a second Professional Learning Coordinator. Meshing well and creating innovative content in FY24, this dynamic team is already preparing for even more growth, with **FIVE** new positions planned for FY25. Joining School Support Services at that time will be a Senior Director, a new School Improvement Director, an additional SEL Specialist, and two PL Specialists.

Since July 1, 2023, the School Support Team has hosted over 600 professional learning experiences, engaging more than 6,800 participants. Their work has made a significant impact across the region, including custom training tailored for Harlem, Belvidere, Hononegah Nations, and Winnebago Districts' School Improvement Days. The department also hosted the highly successful **2024 SEL Summer Symposium**, which drew an **impressive 450 registrants**.

Prime notables are the SEL Specialist spearheading the first full day of well-being activities at the Nashold Early Childhood Center, welcoming early education professionals into the diverse learning community created by a powerful team at ROE 4. The team also launched the new Literacy Collective of Illinois (LCI) in an effort to support updated regional

literacy standards released by the State of Illinois in FY24. Additionally, the Director of School Improvement became a Certified Working Genius Facilitator, enhancing the department's capacity to foster leadership, collaboration, and working efficiency.

Further expanding their reach, the School Support Department was selected by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Association of Regional School Superintendents (IARSS) to participate in a Chicago Public Schools Successful Strategies Pilot Program. This is a true testament to the growing influence of this ROE 4 division.

Congratulations to the School Support Services Team for their exceptional work and for setting a high standard of innovation, collaboration, and service in FY24. With even greater growth on the horizon, the future looks brighter than ever for the district, educators, and school communities who benefit from a learning partnership with the Regional Office.

### In-District PL

- 80 Events
- 1,729 Participants

### Regional PL

- 159 Events
- 2,194 Participants

### One-on-One Coaching

- 67 Events
- 527 Participants

# ROE 4 SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

## AREA 2 SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING: SEL Support in NW Illinois

Once again under the leadership of Assistant Regional Superintendent Allison Pierson, the Area 2 Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Hub began the FY24 school year strong. One of only seven hubs in the state, the Hub started off hosting the regional section of an Illinois State Board of Education Listening Tour on Student Behavior and Mental Health Screening in schools with SB 724. This well-attended opportunity was an amazing way to begin a new school year.

SEL's FY24 produced significant milestones for the Area 2 SEL Hub, which is headquartered at ROE 4. Those included the launching of the Class of '23/24 Social Emotional Leadership foundations (SELf) cohort, bringing together a dedicated group of leaders committed to advancing SEL in their schools. This program equips participants with advanced tools and strategies to provide effective SEL leadership support within their school communities. In addition, brand-new online SEL courses were released for school professionals, delivered by well-known national SEL presenters.

Throughout the year, the SEL Hub introduced several impactful initiatives. Among them was training designed to address the holistic needs of educators. The Hub also hosted Poverty Simulation Experiences for regional schools/districts, enabling educators to better understand the social and economic challenges faced by some students and families. Specialists also presented SEL topics at district SIP days and partnered with the City of Rockford's 6th Annual Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence Awareness Conference to spotlight critical issues affecting the lives of students and the community as a whole.

The entire team attended the 2024 State SEL Conference, gaining new insights to enhance their training offerings and sharing best practices with SEL peers. In response to increased school participation, the Hub expanded its team by hiring an additional SEL Specialist to meet the growing demand for SEL support across the region.

In addition to these objectives, direct support to schools across NW Illinois remained a priority. The Hub offered in-person and online professional development opportunities—many at no cost—including training sessions eligible for PDCs and CEUs for social workers, counselors, and therapists. SEL Specialists conducted school visits across Northwest Illinois, providing tailored support and follow-ups to meet the unique needs of each district. The year culminated with the Area 2 SEL Hub and ROE 4 Second Annual Summer Symposium on Social Emotional Learning, held at Embassy Suites Rockford Riverfront. Selling out in record time, the conference drew more than 450 participants. This event brought together educators, administrators, and SEL experts for a day of powerful learning and collaboration.

We remain in awe of the Area 2 SEL Hub's work and its incredible FY24, marked by innovation, growth, and a steadfast commitment to ensuring that schools in the region are both trauma-informed and trauma-responsive. Their efforts are making a lasting impression on the mental health of students, staff, and schools.



# ROE 4 SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: Focusing on Effectiveness

Lounging in a pool during summer break is often the dream of those in education, but for dedicated leaders like Chris Collins, Director of School Improvement for ROE 4, it's a time of preparation and progress. A seasoned administrator, Chris uses this time to empower regional educators and lay the groundwork for a successful school year.

FY24 saw Chris taking on numerous impactful projects, starting with his role as project manager for the Second Annual Administrators' Breakfast. With the theme "Manage Your Time or Your Time Will Manage You," the event offered practical strategies and inspiration for nearly 80 regional school leaders to kick off their year with purpose.

Beyond inspiring administrators, Chris spent the summer working directly with school teams, including the Kinnikinnick Administrative Team, who dedicated their time to strategic planning at the scenic Torstenson Lodge. He also supported the Flinn Falcons of RPS 205, whose hard work with Boone-Winnebago ROE 4 during the summer of FY24 showcased the dedication local educators bring to their students and schools.

Chris's commitment to professional development expanded in FY24 as he became a trained Evaluator Academy presenter. This qualification allows him to provide critical training to evaluators of school teachers and administrators, further enhancing leadership quality across the region. His ability to build networks has also been transformative, playing a key role in developing the popular Women in Leadership Network. He also became a certified Working Genius Facilitator, a program that guides effective meetings and drives internal innovation and growth.

In addition to his training and mentorship roles, Chris was instrumental in interviewing and selecting new ROE 4 administrators and employees, ensuring that top talent joins the organization. He also investigated another resource for ROE 4 - expertise in grant writing. This will aid in securing benefits for schools and students across the region.

Through his tireless efforts, Chris Collins continues to elevate leadership and collaboration with education partners. From helping teams prepare for the new normal in the classroom to providing actionable insights for administrators, his work ensures a brighter future for the schools and districts in Boone and Winnebago Counties. Thank you, Chris, for your impactful contributions to the region.



— THE 6 TYPES OF —  
**Working Genius**  
 —————

# ROE 4 SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

## SCHOOL COMPLIANCE: Health/Life Safety in Our Region

The purpose of the health/life safety provision is to establish minimum standards for public school facilities which will protect the health, safety, and general welfare of pupils, school staff, and communities, as well as others who use them.

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New Schools or  
Buildings Constructed

\$56,983,113

Work Completed

77

Permits  
Issued

## FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024

The Health/Life Safety (HLS) Team at ROE 4 continues to play a vital role in ensuring safe, compliant, and well-maintained facilities for students and staff across Boone and Winnebago Counties. Under the authority of the Regional Superintendent of Schools, each local school board is tasked with maintaining compliance for its facilities, with annual inspections serving as a critical checkpoint for safety and operational standards.

Like FY23, no new schools or buildings were constructed in FY24. The total number of facilities inspected by the ROE 4 HLS Team remained steady at 111 buildings.

The fiscal year began on July 1, 2023, kicking off a rigorous inspection schedule aimed at completing all evaluations by mid-November. These inspections are conducted in close collaboration with local fire departments to ensure strict adherence to codes and safety standards.

In addition to inspections, the HLS Department also issued building permits for planned construction projects within the region's 13 school districts and compiled detailed reports for state-mandated submissions. These reports, alongside the annual inspection results for each building, are made available at the Regional Office of Education and filed with the Illinois State Board of Education, as required by law.

The dedicated HLS team—led by Regional Superintendent Scott Bloomquist and new HLS coordinator Will Hartje—includes a skilled crew of ROE 4 employees, all certified by the Illinois State Board of Education in health/life safety compliance. Their thorough assessments ensure that schools meet all regulatory requirements, providing a safe environment for learning.

Throughout the remainder of the fiscal year, the HLS Department resolves unique compliance issues that pop up and finalizes data compilation and reporting prior to the end of FY24.



# STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

As Director Meghan Hawkinson continued to lead the charge in advocating for at-risk students, her team remained steadfast in providing essential resources and support to families in Boone and Winnebago Counties. The Student Support Services Department (formerly known as At-Risk Student Services) consistently shared information about critical resource opportunities, including free groceries events, medical clinics, holiday gift and food assistance, runaway assistance projects, trauma and bullying prevention resources, parenting leadership workshops, and numerous attendance and educational barrier-focused campaigns. These efforts ensured that families had access to vital tools to help students thrive.



Meghan Hawkinson  
Student Support Services  
Director

Meghan also understood that to remain successful in getting all students consistently in the classroom, increased resources would be required. She created an intensive attendance interventionist position, the first step in a new 'school avoidance' team she was in the process of creating.

Meghan and her team also took part in several public outreach initiatives, including an informative radio segment with Northern Public Radio titled, "How Can a School District Help Thousands of Students Experiencing Homelessness?" This insightful discussion highlighted the barriers homeless students face and actionable ways schools can support them. Additionally, she participated in another broadcast focusing on the relationship between truancy and the legal system, shedding light on how court involvement impacts families and students.

Professional development and advocacy were central to the department's mission, with Mrs. Hawkinson continuing to train school officials and professionals on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and hosting workshops to equip districts with tools to support homeless youth and their families.

The entire team attended the Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth (ICEARY) Conference, further enhancing their knowledge and strategies for assisting at-risk populations in schools. The department also participated in community events such as Hands Around the Courthouse and Hands Around the Park, both held in honor of Child Abuse and Family Violence Prevention Month. This underscored their commitment to protecting and uplifting vulnerable children.

A bittersweet milestone for the team came with the retirement of Mary Bawinkel after 35 years of dedicated service to children in Boone County. Mary's outstanding contributions were recognized by the Belvidere School Board, the ICEARY Excellence in Education Award, and an unprecedented honor by Winnebago County Chairman Chiarelli, who presented her with the first-ever Blue Bow Champion for Children Award on Child Abuse Prevention Day. These accolades highlighted Mary's unwavering commitment to student welfare throughout her career.

Through these impactful initiatives, Meghan Hawkinson and her team continue to build bridges for at-risk students, ensuring they have the tools, resources, and support to overcome barriers and succeed in their educational journey. Big things are coming for Student Services in FY25 - *stay tuned!*

## FY24 Truancy Information

<b>Open Court Cases</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>Open Truancy Intervention Cases</b>
<b>Closed Court Cases</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>Closed Truancy Intervention Case</b>
<b>Districts Served</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2,179</b>	<b>Children Identified as Homeless Under McKinney Vento Assistance Act</b>
<b>Total Interventionists</b>	<b>9</b>		

# EDUCATION SERVICES

## SUMMIT ACADEMY: Setting National Standards

The Summit Academy FY24 school year began with a strong focus on professional development and community-building. Before the alternative education classes resumed, educators, staff, administrators, and a new SRO participated in Restorative Practices training. This initiative set the tone for a year grounded in empathy, collaboration, and student-centered growth.

August rolled in, marking the return of students and staff to the campus, as well as the opening of a brand-new feature: The Eagle's Nest. This special space, reserved for students who achieve the highest "Eagle" level of privileges, celebrates and rewards student leadership, academic success, and exemplary behavior within the school community.

With enrollment steadily increasing, Summit Academy continued to hire, ensuring every classroom was fully staffed and allowing the school to maintain its high standards of individualized support. The team's commitment to excellence did not go unnoticed. In October, Summit Academy was spotlighted at the National Alternative Education Association (NAEA) Conference in Tampa, Florida, one of only eight alternative schools nationwide to receive this honor. Additionally, the Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth (ICEARY) recognized Summit for its innovative practices and leadership, sharing their success story with members statewide.

Throughout the year, Summit Academy welcomed notable visitors, including Dr. Tony Sanders (Illinois Superintendent of Schools), Illinois House Minority Leader Tony McCombie, state legislators Steve Stadelman and Maurice West, and Rockford Police Department Chief Carla Redd. These tours were guided by student ambassadors, whose presence showcased the program's emphasis on leadership and community engagement. Summit also hosted representatives from a suburban safe schools program, furthering its reputation as a model for alternative education.

Summit's impact extended beyond its campus. The academy received a NAMI award for its contributions to mental health and community well-being. Staff achievements were another highlight of FY24 as three educators were nominated for a Golden Apple Award and were invited to attend the nominee dinner, while three others were recognized as 2024 Those Who Excel and Teacher of the Year recipients. Additionally, four team members graduated from Rockford University with Master's degrees in Special Education.

Summit Academy concluded the year with its 2024 High School Graduation ceremony, celebrating the achievements of 30 high school graduates. This milestone was a testament to the resilience and hard work of the students, supported by the unwavering dedication of the staff.

Congratulations to the Summit Academy Team for another extraordinary year of transforming the lives of youth in our communities and redefining alternative education - for the state and the nation.



[www.saeagles.org](http://www.saeagles.org)

### SUMMIT ACADEMY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION FY24 DATA

TOTAL STAFF	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	SECOND CHANCE ENROLLMENT	STUDENTS SERVED	TOTAL GRADUATES
91	343	16	517	30

# FY24 SPECIAL MENTIONS



**ROE 4  
SUPERINTENDENT OF  
SCHOOLS  
SCOTT BLOOMQUIST  
NAMED 2023-2024  
SUPERINTENDENT OF  
THE YEAR BY  
ILLINOIS PRINCIPALS  
ASSOCIATION  
KISHWAUKEE  
REGION**

**ROE 4 SECOND ANNUAL  
ROE 4 YOUNG PICASSO ART  
COMPETITION**

**BOONE-WINNEBAGO ROE 4  
LEADERS ATTEND  
AES A ANNUAL CONFERENCE**



**AREA 2 SEL HUB 2024 SOCIAL  
EMOTIONAL LEARNING  
SUMMER SYMPOSIUM**



**MARY BAWINKEL NAMED  
BLUE BOW CHAMPION FOR  
CHILDREN AWARD WINNER**

**2024 SUMMIT ACADEMY HIGH  
SCHOOL GRADUATION**



# CONTACT INFORMATION

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## Area 2 Social Emotional Learning Hub

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## Student Support Services

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## Summit Academy/SOAR Academy

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## Regional Board of School Trustees

### TERM EXPIRES

<b>David Carlson</b> Loves Park, Illinois	<b>2025</b>
<b>Nathan Danielson: Vice President</b> Belvidere, Illinois	<b>2029</b>
<b>Tosca DeGennaro</b> Belvidere, Illinois	<b>2025</b>
<b>Todd France</b> Rockford, Illinois	<b>2027</b>
<b>Chuck Johnson</b> Cherry Valley, Illinois	<b>2025</b>
<b>Bob Walberg: President</b> Belvidere, Illinois	<b>2025</b>

## WHO WE SERVE

### PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS:

- 8 - Unit Districts (K-12)
- 4 - Elementary Districts
- 1 - High School District

### PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS:

- 61 - Elementary Schools
- 17 - Jr. High/Middle School
- 15 - High Schools
- 15 - Other Buildings

### STUDENT ENROLLMENT:

- 13 Public School Districts – 52,677
  - 7,472 Belvidere CUSD #100
  - 505 Durand CUSD #322
  - 6,254 Harlem UD #122
  - 1,865 Hononegah CHD #207
  - 1,725 Kinnikinnick CCSD #131
  - 1,509 North Boone CUSD #200
  - 904 Pecatonica CUSD #321
  - 790 Prairie Hill CCSD #133
  - 1,607 Rockton SD #140
  - 27,743 Rockford SD #205
  - 105 Shirland CCSD #134
  - 930 South Beloit #320
  - 1,268 Winnebago CUSD #323
- 25 Non-Public Schools –
  - \*Data Unavailable for FY24
- **TOTAL ENROLLMENT – 52,677\***

## Contact Us

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