PERMIT NO. 4 Altamont, IL **ECRWSS** U.S. POSTAL PAID

Serving Over 20,000 Homes In Moultrie, Douglas & Coles Counties

Wednesday, November 3, 2021

Vol. 16, Issue 44- one section

HS and MHS volleyball teams raise funds for SBL Cancer Cent





Charleston and Mattoon volleyball teams raised \$2200 from the sale of t-shirts during its recent Volley for a Cure event. The funds were donated to Sarah Bush Lincoln's Regional Cancer Center.



Presenting the checks to SBL Special Events Officer Kim Lockart is (L-R) Genna Braden, Coach Amanda Hackett, Lockart, Coach Steve Pamperin and Makenzie Pamperin of Charleston; and Bella Smith, Averie Smith and Lockart of Mattoon.

rcame challenges of the pandem

2021 Illinois Report Card shows that schools overcame the challenges of the pandemic to prepare students for college and career and to increase teacher diversity and retention.

Data also illustrate the significant impact of the pandemic and remote learning on student enrollment, attendance, and academic achievement.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) today announced the release of education data from the 2020-21 school year. (The data are preliminary, subject to change, and under embargo until 9:30 a.m. Oct. 29.) The data illustrate the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lack of access to in-person learning on student achievement, enrollment and attendance. The data reveal higher rates of chronic absenteeism, lower rates of ninth graders on track to graduate, and steep declines in students across grade levels attaining proficiency in math and English language arts.

However, the data also show Illinois schools overcame significant challenges to reach new heights in preparing students for college and career and to increase teacher diversity and reten-

Illinois schools have received more than \$7 billion in federal funding to address the impact of the pandemic and help students recover academically and emotionally. ISBE has directed its federal pandemic relief funding to not the whole story. Illinois' close the digital divide, provide mental health supports to students and educators, help students transition to college after graduation, and launch a high-impact tutoring initiative slated to begin in early 2022. "The 2021 Illinois Re-

port Card is a testament to the progress we can make when we invest in our classrooms with more students than ever taking college and career preparation coursework – as well as the tremendous challenges the pandemic has created for school-aged children the world over," said Governor JB Pritzker. "As we move forward, helping our children process this experience and restoring their learning must sit at the heart of evschool administrators across the state to ensure the \$7 billion dedicated to renewing K-12 learning for Illinois students properly addresses this long period of disruption and devastation. Together, with our incredible educators at the forefront, we are revitalizing our classrooms, student by student, for the betterment of all of Illinois."

"We have witnessed both tragedy and heroism in our schools over the past year," said State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala. "Students and educators have lost so much and lived and learned through unthinkable obstacles, but loss is

schools also stepped up the rigor of high school coursework, ensured students still graduated and earned early college credit along the way. Our teachers have stayed in classrooms when we have needed them the most, and the number of people choosing this wondrous profession in our state continues to grow. We know we have a steep road ahead of us to help students regain skills in math and reading, and we are confident that we have the funding, supports, and talent in our schools to climb that

Increases in College

and Career Preparation More students than ever took college and career preparation coursework last year. ery action. And for months, Illinois saw nearly 9,482 my administration has been more students enrolled in working hand-in-hand with dual credit, 2,885 more students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP), and 954 more students enrolled in career and technical education (CTE). Even in the midst of a pandemic, students took academically rigorous courses to prepare for college and

> Governor Pritzker's fiscal year 2021 budget included a \$500,000 increase in funding for AP to cover the cost of AP exams for lowincome students, which has continued to fuel Illinois' nation-leading growth in AP success and equity. Illinois' state plan for CTE, supported by \$43 million in state funding annually since FY 2020,

has raised the bar for CTE federal pandemic relief fundcourses, incorporating dual credit as part of the standard for a high-quality CTE pro-

The state's four-year graduation rate also held steady with 2019 and previous years – a testament to the incredible work of Illinois' educators to keep students engaged and on the path to college and career under extremely difficult circum-

More Teachers of Color

Efforts to recruit and retain teachers of color continue to pay off – with Illinois schools adding 1,251 more Hispanic teachers and 184 more Black teachers to their ranks. As the overall number of teachers has continued to grow, Hispanic and Black teachers have represented a greater and greater proportion of Illinois educators up from 5.6 and 5.8 percent, respectively, of the teacher workforce in the 2016-17 school year to 7.9 and 6 percent of the teacher workforce last year. ISBE has awarded \$3.5 million in state funding for CTE Education Career Pathways Grants to support 100 high schools in creating a pipeline for future educators with a focus on recruit-

ing future teachers of color. continue ISBE will to support diversity in the teaching profession, working this year with institutions of higher education to develop plans for the recruitment and retention of teachers of color and dedicating \$2 million in ing to create affinity groups for teachers of color.

Teacher pay and teacher retention also increased with teachers earning \$70,705 on average - 3.9 percent more than in 2020 – and remaining in the profession at a rate of 87.1 percent – a 1.4 percent increase over 2020. The law Governor Pritzker enacted in 2019 to raise the minimum teacher salary began to take effect last year. ISBE partnered with the Illinois Education Association and Illinois Federation of Teachers on a teacher mentorship and instructional coaching program to provide more support to new educators who started their teaching careers during the pandemic. ISBE also offered all Illinois educators a free virtual learning community through the Center for Childhood Resilience at Lurie Children's Hospital to promote self-care and trauma-informed practices in the classroom.

Challenges in Student Enrollment, Attendance, and Learning

Last school year started with fewer than 10 percent of Illinois students learning fully in-person. While more and more students returned to school buildings as the year progressed, the data released today show the significant impact of last year's remote environment on student enrollment, attendance, and learning.

Nearly 70,000 fewer students enrolled in Illinois public schools statewide. Prior years' enrollment trends meant ISBE would have anticipated a 1.1 percent decrease in enrollment in a typical year, which leaves a 2.5 percent drop attributable to the pandemic - on par with the approximately 3 percent average drop in enrollment reported by other states.

One in five Illinois students was chronically absent last year, missing 10 percent or more of the school year (with or without a valid excuse) - a 21 percent increase over 2019.

Preliminary spring testing data also show far fewer students met grade-level standards in English language arts and math. Data from the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR), taken by students in Grades 3-8, and the SAT, taken by 11th grade students, show that 16.6 percent fewer students met grade-level standards in English language arts in 2021 than in 2019 and 17.8 percent fewer students met gradelevel standards in math.

The data show larger decreases in proficiency among younger students, who may have struggled more to engage in remote learning than their older peers.

The rate of ninth-grade students on track to graduate dipped 5 percent from 2019 to 2021, reflecting an increase in students receiving failing grades.4 Students identified as on track have earned

See REPORT page 6

Carle to offer M & Johnson C

Carle will begin offering the Johnson & Johnson and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine booster doses to qualifying individuals beginning Saturday, Oct. 30. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) expanded the use of a booster dose for these CO-VID-19 vaccines in eligible populations.

Carle will offer booster options throughout the clinical service area.

Champaign County: The vaccine clinic at Kohl's Plaza in Champaign will begin administering the Moderna booster Saturday, Oct. 30, in addition to the currently approved Pfizer booster.

'We are excited to offer these booster vaccinations to qualifying patients in order to ensure the best protection against COVID-19," Robert Healy, MD, chief quality officer said. "We have seen success in administering the current approved Pfizer booster and continue to follow CDC guidance as we work to limit the spread of infection in our communities.

The Moderna booster is available 6 months after completion of the primary series for patients:

Aged 65 and older Age 18+ who live in long-term care settings

Age 18+ who work or live in high risk setting Age 18+ who have underlying medical condi-

The Johnson & Johnson booster is available at least 2 months after completion of the single-dose vaccine for those 18 years of age and older, without limitation.

Those wishing to schedule their appointment can do so through their MyCarle ac-

count and on Carle.org. 'As we move into the colder months and gatherings start moving indoors, it's incredibly important to make sure you are maximizing your protection against COVID-19," Dr. Healy said. With cold and flu season approaching, I want to encourage everyone to take all the necessary steps to keep yourself and your loved ones healthy and limit the spread of the virus.'

ommended that each of the available COVID-19 vaccines can be used as 'mix and match' doses in eligible individuals following the completion of primary vaccination series with a different available COVID-19 vac-

As the most researched medical offering in history, the COVID-19 vaccine has proven to be safe and effective. It is important for everyone to get vaccinated to limit the spread of infection and reduce the opportunity for the COVID-19 virus to mu

tate in the future. Carle is collaborating with local public health departments throughout the region to ensure everyone who qualifies for a booster vaccine has access. Booster recipients should bring their COVID-19 vaccine card to appointments if possible.

Visit carle.org/covid-19 for more information to schedule a vaccine appointment today.

Visit Downtown Mattoon Chiropractors

Freesmeier Chiropractic – Helms Chiropractic