



We Heard You: ISD in Action

Staff Support & Wellness

Strong schools are built on strong teams. You told us you want more support for staff well-being, balanced workloads, and opportunities to feel valued and connected — and we are taking action. This is a work in progress, but here are the steps we've taken, the initiatives underway, and our goals for continued growth in supporting the people who make our schools strong.

Health & Wellness Resources

ISD Health Clinic

ISD Employee Health Clinic, operated by Marathon Health, serves the Independence School District, providing convenient and affordable access to health care. Staffed with Nurse Practitioners, the Clinic offers acute care, preventive care, chronic condition management, physical therapy, and occupational health services. Appointments are free or low-cost for ISD employees, their spouses, and children.

ISD Wellness Center, Henley Aquatic Center

All ISD employees, their spouses and children, and ISD retirees have access to the ISD Wellness Center and Henley Aquatic Center, offering opportunities for fitness, relaxation, and community connection outside of the school day.

ISD Wellness Center is a 9,000 square foot state-of-the-art fitness facility that caters to all fitness levels. It is free to use for all full-time ISD employees and retirees, as well as their spouses and children (out of high school, ages 18-26). Part-time staff can access the ISD Wellness Center for \$18/month.

Henley Aquatic Center is a premier facility that provides a wide range of aquatic programs and activities for the Independence School District community. With its modern indoor pool and well-equipped amenities, Henley offers swimming lessons, recreational swimming, and competitive swimming events. It is a valuable resource for students, families, and local residents, promoting water safety, fitness, and enjoyment for all ages.

Mobile Mammogram, Flu Shot clinics

In partnership with local healthcare providers, the district hosts on-site mobile mammogram screenings to make preventive care easy and accessible for staff. The district also provides clinics to offer free flu vaccines at nearly a dozen locations across the district each year, regardless of a person's insurance.

Monthly Wellness Updates

Each month, staff receive a digital Wellness Newsletter which includes wellness tips, resources, and opportunities to stay active, balanced, and supported throughout the school year.

Employee Assistance Program

All employees have access to confidential counseling and mental health support through the SupportLinc EAP, including sessions for stress management, grief, relationships, and work-life balance. One of the valuable benefits for ISD employees is that they can receive up to six free counseling sessions, per concern, per year.

Employee Benefits & Support

Retention Incentives

To show appreciation for staff commitment, the ISD is providing a one-time Retention Incentive for employees continuing their service through the 2025–2026 school year. Eligible full-time employees will receive \$1,500, and benefit-eligible part-time employees will receive \$1,000, paid in two installments during the school year. This incentive reflects the district's ongoing dedication to recognizing and rewarding the incredible work of ISD staff.

Employee Childcare Reimbursement Benefit

In one of the only programs of its kind in school districts across the country, the ISD Childcare Reimbursement Program reimburses employees who live in district boundaries up to 75% of the cost of using district childcare (Early Education and Kids' Safari). The ISD Employee Childcare Benefit helps make quality early learning affordable and convenient for district families, supporting a healthy work-life balance.

Benefit Enrollment Assistance / Benefits Counselors

Following feedback from the 90-Day Survey (read more below), Benefits Counselors are available to guide ISD employees through benefit enrollment and answer plan questions one-on-one.

Workers' Compensation information added to start-of-school department meetings

To ensure clarity and awareness, Workman's Compensation information is now shared at all start-of-school department meetings.

Board-paid life insurance, Long-Term Disability, HSA

The ISD provides comprehensive financial protection and wellness benefits to support employees and their families. Board-paid life insurance offers peace of mind through coverage for all full-time employees. Long-term disability coverage ensures continued income security during extended medical leave. In addition, employees can participate in a Health Savings Account (HSA) to set aside pre-tax funds for medical expenses, promoting financial wellness and proactive healthcare planning.

Best Money Moves

Through "Best Money Moves," employees can access resources and articles on budgeting, retirement planning, and overall financial wellness, all housed within the staff portal. Best Money Moves also sends out periodic, districtwide emails to staff with important financial information.

Growth & Recognition

New Teacher Academy

New Teacher Academy provides onboarding, mentorship, and hands-on support to help new-to-the-ISD educators build confidence, connection, and classroom readiness in their first year. Participants receive practical tools, peer networking opportunities, and guidance from experienced mentors to ensure a strong start.

ISDF Classroom Grants / Gift cards for all new teachers

The ISD Foundation supports innovation and appreciation through annual classroom grants that fund creative learning ideas. In addition, every new teacher receives a \$100 gift card to help launch their classroom with essential supplies and resources.

550 mentors for new teachers

The 550 Mentor Program provides intensive support for first-year teachers new to the profession. Mentors offer weekly coaching, classroom collaboration, and personalized guidance to help new teachers grow in confidence and skill. The mentorship includes lesson planning, co-teaching, and ongoing support for both professional and personal well-being throughout the school year.

Career Ladder

Through the Career Ladder program, employees can earn additional pay—up to \$5,000 annually—for engaging in extended professional responsibilities that support student learning and school improvement.

Professional Development

ISD offers a variety of professional learning experiences designed to empower staff with tools and strategies that support student success. From district-led and department-led workshops to state and national conferences, professional development focuses on instructional excellence, leadership growth, and continuous improvement across all departments and employee groups.

Employee Surveys

Employee feedback helps shape the district's culture and continuous improvement efforts. Surveys at key milestones—30, 60, and 90 days, as well as the 7-year and exit surveys—help leadership understand employee experiences and identify opportunities to improve support systems, communication, and workplace satisfaction.

Annual Employee Awards

Each year, the district celebrates outstanding employees through the **Certified Employee of the Year, Classified Employee of the Year**, and **Starfish Award**, honoring those who go above and beyond to make a lasting difference for students and colleagues.

Coming Soon

Expanded Dental Benefits

The district is enhancing dental coverage to better support the diverse needs of our employees and their families. New options will provide additional resources for preventive care and specialized support to help all staff access more effective, personalized dental treatment.

Each of these initiatives is a work in progress, and we remain dedicated to continuous improvement. The Independence School District is committed to clear communication, meaningful staff engagement, and fostering a supportive environment where every employee feels valued and equipped to succeed. We will continue listening, evolving, and sharing updates as we strengthen the programs and resources that help our staff—and our students—thrive.