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**Illinois State University & Educators Rising Celebrate 75 Future Educators on Signing Day**  
*Grow Your Own Chapters: An investment in students and the future of our communities*

**ARLINGTON, Va, September 27, 2023**— Educators Rising and Illinois State University (ISU) celebrated their inaugural Educator Signing Day this month at ISU's DeGarmo 20. The special event which took place on September 6, was attended by 75 ISU freshmen education majors who actively participated in their local high school's Educators Rising Illinois chapters.

"Educators Rising Grow Your Own teacher chapters are an investment in students and the future of our communities. When schools and communities nurture and cultivate their own educators, they help ensure we have dedicated professionals who understand and are deeply committed to their community's needs," said James Lane, CEO of PDK International. "I'd like to congratulate each of the newly signed ISU future educators and thank them for taking this important step to advance their education and future success."

Through curriculum and student activities, Educators Rising provides Grow Your Own programming for high school/middle school students who are interested in pursuing a career in education. Educators Rising provides a pathway to ensuring all students have access to highly qualified teachers who understand and represent their communities. As students progress towards their teaching degree, they also have the opportunity to join Aspiring Educators at the collegiate level to receive support and professional networking to help them persist through graduation to become gainfully employed educators.

Dr. Lindsey Jensen, State Coordinator for Educators Rising Illinois, encouraged the freshman to reflect on the influential educators in their lives as she welcomed them into the profession. She stated that there would be people who didn't understand their decision to become educators, but that ultimately, "We don't choose Teaching. Teaching chooses us."

Christine Schweitzer, Assistant State Coordinator for Educators Rising Illinois, shared that, "It's so exciting to see that the support that many of these students received in high school as members of Educators Rising chapters helped to inspire them to enter higher education as the next step towards pursuing their dream of becoming a teacher." As students signed their certificates, she thanked them for becoming an integral part of the educator pipeline in Illinois.

The Educator Signing Day event marked a milestone in the journey of these Illinois future educators, underscoring the importance of community support and fostering the next generation of dedicated teaching professionals. To learn more about Educators Rising and starting a Grow Your Own program in your district or community visit

<https://educatorsrising.org/>

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**About PDK International**

Established in 1906, PDK International supports P-20 educators, researchers, and policy makers by strengthening their commitment to the profession throughout the entire arc of their careers. We are committed to elevating the profession through the intersection of research and practice. Through our core values of social justice, engagement, excellence, and

results, we encourage educators and stakeholders to elevate the discourse and change the narrative around teaching and learning to ensure that every student has a high-quality equitable education. [www.pdkintl.org](http://www.pdkintl.org)

#### About Educators Rising

In 2015, PDK International – in its 115-year commitment to the profession of education – launched Educators Rising, formerly the Future Educators Association (FEA). Today, Educators Rising is cultivating a new generation of highly skilled educators by guiding young people on a path from high school through college and into their teaching careers. By working with aspiring educators who reflect the demographics of their communities and who are passionate about serving those communities through public education, Educators Rising is changing the face of teaching.

<https://educatorsrising.org/>