



Illinois State Board of Education


100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
www.isbe.net

James T. Meeks
Chairman

Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

June 30, 2016

TO: The Honorable Bruce Rauner, Governor
The Honorable John J. Cullerton, Senate President
The Honorable Christine Radogno, Senate Minority Leader
The Honorable Michael J. Madigan, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Jim Durkin, House Minority Leader

FROM: Tony Smith, Ph.D. 
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: Progress Report of the Comprehensive Strategic Plan
for Elementary and Secondary Education

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) respectfully submits this progress report to the Governor and the General Assembly in fulfillment of the requirements of Public Act 93-1036.

In 2005, ISBE first developed and submitted its Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Elementary and Secondary Education in Illinois. ISBE monitors progress on the initiatives and evaluates the plan on an annual basis, making needed changes and additions to ensure that it remains a meaningful plan to lead education initiatives in Illinois.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Karen Corken, First Deputy Superintendent, at (217) 782-4648.

Enclosure

cc: Tim Anderson, Secretary of the Senate
Tim Mapes, Clerk of the House
Legislative Research Unit
State Government Report Center



Illinois State Board of Education



June 2016

PROGRESS REPORT

COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

James T. Meeks, Chairman • Tony Smith, Ph.D., State Superintendent



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June 30, 2016

The Honorable Governor Bruce Rauner
The Honorable Members of the Illinois General Assembly
Illinois Statehouse
Springfield, Illinois

Re: Illinois State Board of Education Comprehensive Strategic Plan – June 2016 Report

Dear Governor Rauner and Members of the General Assembly:

Each year, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) updates its continuing, five-year comprehensive strategic plan for elementary and secondary education, per the Education Reform and Accountability Act of 2004. ISBE's Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Elementary and Secondary Education, also known as our Progress Report, is designed to inform you about how the agency concentrates its efforts and resources to fulfill our Board's mission and goals.

Our State Superintendent, Board Chairman, and four new Board members completed their first full year with the agency during the 2015-16 school year. This change in leadership provided a great opportunity to reexamine how our agency can provide the most support to districts so they can best serve children and families. ISBE now has five key areas of focus to guide the agency's initiatives.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

- **Funding:** Establish an adequate and equitable education finance system.
- **Quality:** Common definition of, and fair access to, quality education.
- **Autonomy:** Maximize district autonomy to provide quality education to all families.
- **Competency:** Encourage competency-based learning.
- **Community:** Districts and schools as centers of healthy communities.

In September, the State Board amended its strategic plan to improve student success in Illinois by refocusing on specific, high-reaching goals that are measurable.

ISBE'S VISION

Illinois is a state of whole, healthy children nested in whole, healthy systems supporting communities wherein all citizens are socially and economically secure.

ISBE'S MISSION

Provide leadership and resources to achieve excellence across all Illinois districts through engaging legislators, school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders in formulating and advocating for policies that enhance education, empower districts, and ensure equitable outcomes for all students.

ISBE'S GOALS

Every child in each public school system in the state of Illinois deserves to attend a system wherein...

- *All kindergartners are assessed for readiness.*
- *Ninety percent or more of third-grade students are reading at or above grade level.*
- *Ninety percent or more of fifth-grade students meet or exceed expectations in mathematics.*
- *Ninety percent or more of ninth-graders are on track to graduate with their cohort.*
- *Ninety percent or more of students graduate from high school ready for college and career.*
- *All students are supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.*
- *Every school offers a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.*

While ISBE has long sought to have every student graduate college and career ready, we believe we need to make this goal more personalized and concrete. We now have an extraordinary opportunity to redesign how to support every public school system in Illinois to bring these goals to life.

We understand these goals are ambitious and some districts are far closer to achieving them than others. But using more specific indicators to measure our success will help us better understand the quality of teaching and learning happening in individual school districts. We can then pinpoint what specific, targeted supports and resources are needed to close achievement gaps and help every student reach these levels of success.

The Board is now in a great position to create a problem-solving culture that builds on the good work already occurring and eliminates what's holding our districts back from tapping into our students' full potential.

There are several data points and accomplishments that tell the story of our progress to date and the direction we want to go moving forward. These highlights are detailed throughout this report. We also want to take the opportunity to highlight several achievements that ISBE, our students, educators, and communities have made together to continue our momentum forward –

- Illinois was selected to participate in the K-12 Broadband and Digital Learning Policy Academy to help the state expand students' and teachers' access to digital technologies. The academy is led by a partnership between the National Governors Association and national

nonprofit EducationSuperHighway. High-quality broadband access in schools creates rich digital learning environments in which students can develop 21st-century skills, take advantage of open education resources, and become college and career ready.

- ISBE secured a \$100,000 grant to develop a detailed action plan to better prepare students for career success and, in turn, improve the economic opportunities available to all youth across the state. Illinois is among 24 states and the District of Columbia that received grants for this work through phase 1 of the New Skills for Youth grant opportunity. These grants are one piece of a \$75 million, five-year initiative developed by JPMorgan Chase, in partnership with the Council of Chief State School Officers and Advance CTE. They are aimed at increasing economic opportunity for young people by strengthening career-focused education.
- Illinois became the first state to partner with the Lead Higher Initiative in a statewide challenge to close equity gaps for lower-income students and students of color in its high schools' most rigorous courses. Lead Higher represents a groundbreaking initiative to increase Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate course access by 100,000 low-income students and students of color over the next three years. Through a competitive national process, Lead Higher chose Illinois for its commitment to close gaps by 2019.
- Illinois ranks 11th in the nation for the percentage of 2015 graduates – 25 percent – who scored at least a 3 on the rigorous College Board AP exams during their high school career. The national average is 22.4 percent, according to the latest AP Cohort Data Report. Illinois also continues to report record numbers of graduates taking AP exams, with a total of 48,627 graduates (nearly 38 percent) taking at least one AP exam, more than double the number of graduates who took the exam in 2005. The percentage of Illinois graduates who scored a 3 or higher grew by 11.7 percentage points from 13.3 percent in 2005 to 25 percent in 2015. Illinois is fourth in the nation for the largest percentage point increase over the last decade.
- ISBE has awarded \$20.4 million in School Improvement Grants (SIG), which will be distributed to five schools across the state over the next five years to help them implement comprehensive programs to improve student performance and college readiness. The SIG program is designed to help the state's lowest-performing schools that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to using the dollars to provide adequate resources in order to substantially raise their students' achievement levels.
- The Institute of Education Sciences awarded ISBE a \$7 million grant to develop its Illinois Statewide Longitudinal P-20 Data System (ILDS). The ILDS will help track the progress of Illinois students as they move from prekindergarten through postsecondary education and into the workforce. Over time, the data collected will provide an in-depth, comprehensive picture of individual students' progress and, ultimately, will help policymakers decide where to invest time, energy, and resources to most effectively improve student achievement.

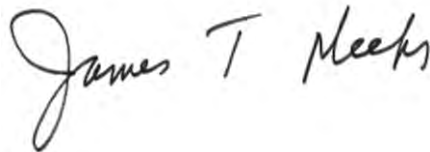
- Illinois was one of eight states selected to receive a State Educational Agency grant from the federal government. This five-year, \$42,286,226 award will support the development and growth of new, high-quality public school options, including charter schools, across the state.

We are grateful to have the full support of our Board as we've set out to meet new, higher expectations and reexamine how ISBE can best support districts to meet the needs of children and their families. We will hold ourselves accountable for ensuring that our organization adapts and changes to make each system support steady growth and progress toward our new outcome measures. We are also proud to be able to partner with the Governor's Office, the legislature, and the multiple state agencies tasked with addressing our children's educational needs from birth to career. Together, we all share responsibility for how well our young people are prepared when they enter the workforce. We appreciate your continued support and investment in a promising future for each child in our care. Their success will pay dividends toward Illinois' long-term growth and vitality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James T. Meeks". The signature is cursive and clearly legible.

James T. Meeks
Chairman

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Illinois State Board of Education

Progress Report

Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Elementary and Secondary Education

June 2016

Executive Summary

Public Act 93-1036 requires the Illinois State Board of Education to develop and maintain a continuing, five-year strategic plan for elementary and secondary education. The 2016 Comprehensive Strategic Plan is the agency's 12th such report. The first plan focused on ISBE's three primary goal areas: enhancing literacy, improving educator quality for all children, and expanding data-driven management and school support practices. Since 2005, agency staff members revisit the plan each year to review the agency's accomplishments and to update and refine strategies to ensure every student in the state is prepared for success. During the 2015-16 school year, the State Board amended its strategic plan to create a new vision for public education, establishing a new mission and refocused goals.

On May 1, 2015, longtime educator and administrator Tony Smith, Ph.D., became the 28th Illinois State Superintendent of Education. State Superintendent Smith identified five key areas of focus to guide the agency's initiatives and strategic goals going forward:

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

- **Funding:** Establish an adequate and equitable education finance system.
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- **Autonomy:** Maximize district autonomy to provide quality education to all families.
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Funding

An adequate and equitable education finance system is crucial to support the needs of Illinois children and families. It is also the greatest investment we can make in building a stronger workforce that can support a thriving economy. Illinois' education finance system, however, is known as one of the most inequitable in the nation. The State Board believes the state needs a system that aligns funding with need, taking into account the diverse needs and characteristics of Illinois' 850-plus school districts. ISBE is committed to being a good partner in this reform and taking advantage of the chance to create a better system by working together with the Governor and legislators.

Quality

The State Board is streamlining its efforts to develop a clear consensus of what constitutes "quality" and clarifying expectations for schools to best ensure students stay on the path for success from cradle to career. ISBE's review and update of all learning standards is ongoing. The result of this work is expectations for all students that focus on real-world application and critical thinking to better prepare them for the next grade level and, ultimately, college and careers. With the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam, the state has a new assessment that aligns with the rigor and scope of the Illinois Learning Standards. The more detailed data made available from the PARCC test results is a valuable tool to help improve the quality of instruction and help educators and parents work together to provide appropriate interventions for students.

ISBE has also partnered with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice to create high-quality educational options for youth who are incarcerated and for those who will transition back to their home communities. The agency also continues to collaborate with other state agencies to develop and implement the Illinois Statewide Longitudinal P-20 Data System (ILDS). This system will help track the progress of students as they advance from prekindergarten through postsecondary education. ILDS data will help administrators, policymakers, teachers, and parents alike make better informed decisions about where to invest time, energy, and resources to better support students.

Autonomy

ISBE understands that local school leaders and educators are best positioned to understand their staff and students' unique needs, challenges, and achievements. The agency wants to provide mandate relief in order to maximize individual school districts' autonomy, thus providing innovative leaders the freedom they need to transform struggling schools, provide access to educational opportunities for students, and share their success stories and experiences. To enhance local autonomy, ISBE is leading a legislative effort to create Districts of Innovation in Illinois. The proposed School Districts of Innovation Act (Senate Bill 3422) would allow districts to use their tools and resources in ways they know work best for children and families. It would also strengthen the capacity for districts and regional offices to serve as peer coaches and mentors. In order for a district to be identified as a District of Innovation, it would develop its innovation plan with input from a variety of stakeholders. The innovation plan represents a communitywide commitment to increase student outcomes through the activities described in a District of Innovation plan. Districts of Innovation would then have the

freedom to use groundbreaking teaching and learning methods to improve student achievement and prepare students for college and careers.

Competency

The State Board believes the high school experience should allow students to demonstrate their mastery of appropriate concepts and skills. The agency supports the proposed Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act (House Bill 5729), which includes development of a pilot program for competency-based high school graduation requirements. Students would earn a high school diploma based on what they know and how they apply this knowledge and not the amount of "seat time" in the classroom. ISBE has partnered with education organizations to create improved pathways to college and careers to meet the state-wide goal that 60 percent of Illinoisans earn a high-quality, postsecondary certificate or degree by the year 2025.

Community

ISBE wants to facilitate meaningful connections locally with schools, other agencies, and their communities and their members. The agency has proposed establishing a Healthy Community Incentive Fund, which would support grants to community partnerships, with school districts as the lead applicants among local government entities, education organizations, faith-based organizations, civic organizations, and philanthropists. The Healthy Community Incentive grant funds would help coordinate, align, and leverage efforts to solve complex social problems within communities aimed toward serving the broad spectrum of individual children's needs.

The new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) will also help Illinois increase and improve its supports for schools to promote the

development of healthy communities. The state will have greater freedom under this federal law to develop a thoughtful state plan to better serve all students, especially those considered most at risk. ISBE also continues to administer the 5Essentials Survey to collect feedback about individual schools' climate and culture. Survey results help drive school improvement by providing data on proven school components that improve outcomes for students. By turning these insights into targeted actions, schools' use of 5Essentials data helps build collaborative, healthy communities for all children.

Considering these areas of focus, the State Board amended its strategic plan during its retreat in September 2015 to create a new vision and mission statement with specific, more personalized goals that are measurable.

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ISBE'S GOALS

Every child in each public school system in the state of Illinois deserves to attend a system wherein...

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The State Board believes these challenging goals will help the agency better focus its efforts on understanding and supporting the quality of teaching and learning in individual districts. The first step this past school year was identifying these goals and building a consensus on the kind of high-quality public education system Illinois students and their families deserve. These goals build off of many initiatives currently in place to ensure that students are college and career ready. Over the next school year, agency staff will examine and refine what data points and results they can use to measure ISBE's headway toward achieving these goals.

Kindergarten Readiness

Kindergarten readiness plays a crucial role in putting children on track for academic success throughout their elementary, postsecondary, and higher education careers. During the 2015-16 school year, more than 3,800 teachers from 547 school districts were trained on the Kindergarten

Individual Development Survey (KIDS) instrument. KIDS is a tool for collecting comparable and meaningful school readiness data on all kindergartners. By using this instrument, teachers are able to collect information about what children are able to do to. Information from KIDS will provide parents, schools, districts, communities, and state leaders information on key indicators of readiness for elementary school. ISBE continues to work with its partner, WestEd, to further develop and modify the KIDS instrument, train teachers, and develop statewide communications and implementation strategies. Full implementation of the KIDS instrument is slated for the 2017-18 school year.

ISBE also continues to support and promote the importance of early childhood education through a variety of initiatives, including the agency's four-year, \$80 million federal Preschool Expansion Grant. This grant supports expansion of preschool to vulnerable students who lack access to other programs. The State Board is collaborating with other state agencies to ensure that Illinois is able to serve children and families across the continuum and strengthen communities through a range of collaborative efforts, including the Early Childhood Leadership Team, Early Learning Council, and the Governor's new Children's Cabinet.

Third-Grade Reading

Illinois students in grades 3-8 and high school took the PARCC assessment for the first time in spring 2015. Under the state's previous assessments, a student's results were reported as one of three mastery levels: not having met expectations, having met expectations, or exceeding expectations. The PARCC assessment reflects student readiness across five new, more nuanced performance levels. Students scoring a 4 or 5 demonstrate a thorough understanding of

grade-level standards and are on track to being ready to enter college or the workforce. Students receiving a 3 are approaching expectations, but may need limited additional assistance mastering specific aspects of the content. Students receiving a 1 or 2 require additional assistance in mastering the content and are in need of greater supports.

The 2015 PARCC test results show that 32 percent of third-grade students achieved a level 4 score in English language arts, meaning they met expectations. Three percent earned a level 5 score, exceeding expectations. Another 24 percent of third-grade students approached expectations by earning a level 3 score.

The PARCC assessment aligns to higher standards, asks students to demonstrate their understanding in a different way, and reflects student performance across five performance levels. Therefore, these results provide a brand new baseline for measuring student progress moving forward. The PARCC results will help ISBE provide districts with the appropriate supports as they work with their students as well as give the agency a better understanding of schools' strengths and areas that need improvement. Such data is a valuable tool to promote literacy and help all third-grade students, as well as all elementary students, master grade-level reading skills.

ISBE grant programs, including the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Grant, also provide enrichment and additional supports to improve reading and literacy. The CCLC grant program provides academic and enrichment opportunities for children in prekindergarten through 12th grade that focus upon supporting student academic achievement for those standards in core academic disciplines. ESSA also provides new, flexible federal grants to support well-rounded students, while preserving and improving 21st CCLC programs.

Fifth-Grade Math

According to the 2015 Illinois Report Card, the first PARCC test results showed that 24 percent of fifth-grade students earned a level 4 score and met expectations in math, while 3 percent scored a level 5, exceeding expectations. Another 30 percent of fifth-grade students approached expectations in math by earning a level 3 score.

To support standards-aligned math professional development for teachers, the federal Illinois Math and Science Partnership Grant encourages partnerships between science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) departments at higher education institutions and high-need school districts. The grant currently serves more than 750 K-12 math and science educators across the state. More than 42,700 students have received services during the 2015-16 school year. ISBE content specialists have designed Math Shift Kits to promote high-quality math instruction in the classroom aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards in math. The Math Shift Kits aim to help teachers know and understand the shifts in mathematics instruction predicated upon the Illinois Learning Standards in math. ISBE has also taken the lead in creating state-developed model math units to help students master concepts at each grade level as schools put the math standards into practice in the classroom. Math resources have also been expanded to include an “Illinois Teach and Talk” website that promotes mathematical discourse in the classroom.

Ninth-Graders on Track

According to the 2015 Illinois Report Card, 83 percent of the state’s freshmen were considered “on track” for high school graduation. Research shows that the number of students on track and the graduation rate rise when schools actively intervene by identifying freshmen at risk and

providing tutoring, additional instruction, and other individualized services.

The Illinois Virtual School (IVS) is a statewide learning resource that provides increased learning opportunities to help students stay on track and become college and career ready. The virtual school allows students to enroll in courses they could not fit into their daily school schedule. It also enables students to take courses that are not offered by the school in which they are enrolled. The IVS is also an option to retain students looking for online learning opportunities or who may have previously dropped out of school. ISBE’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs also help high school students develop the academic, career, and technical skills needed to stay on track to graduate prepared for postsecondary success. During the 2014-15 school year, more than 95.4 percent of the seniors who concentrated in CTE courses (those who complete more than three credits in one CTE area) graduated from high school and 85.2 percent of special needs CTE concentrating students graduated.

Graduates Ready for College and Career

The 2015 Illinois Report Card shows 86 percent of high school students graduated in four years, while 88 percent graduated within five years. College remediation and enrollment rates, however, suggest that graduates are not ready for what is next once they pursue college and/or enter the workforce. The 2015 Report Card also shows that 49 percent of the students in Illinois’ class of 2013 who attended a state community college were enrolled in remedial courses. Seventy percent of students who graduated with a regular high school diploma from a public high school in Illinois were enrolled in a two- or four-year college within 12 months, according to the latest Report Card. That percentage jumps to 73 percent when looking at 16 months after high school graduation.

To provide students greater access to higher education opportunities, Illinois is committed to providing a college entrance exam at no cost to all 11th-grade students. Last fall, ISBE selected the College Board's SAT as the state's college entrance exam. The SAT, which is closely aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards, is able to measure what students are learning and determine their level of readiness for their next step after high school. The agency plans to administer the SAT in spring 2017.

Illinois' ongoing update of all content standards, including in science, social science, and the fine arts, will help ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for the rigors of college and careers. ISBE's CTE programs also play a key role in strengthening students' technical skills, helping them meet learning standards expectations, and closing achievement gaps to prepare students for college and careers. The agency has also secured a \$100,000 career readiness grant to develop a detailed action plan to better prepare students for transitioning from school to career. ISBE has also formed partnerships with higher education and business organizations to define, align, and create quality high school and community college Programs of Study as they relate to career pathways.

Illinois agencies and businesses have also partnered to implement the Illinois Pathways Initiative, which creates complementary community and state-level approaches to address the skills gap faced by employers. The initiative also led to the creation and support of STEM Learning Exchanges to help high schools and community colleges meet the demand of high-skill STEM industries. Illinois was also the first state selected to partner with the Lead Higher Initiative in a statewide challenge to close equity gaps in high school Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses.

Prepared and Effective Teachers

Over the past 10 years, the percentage of teachers with a graduate degree has increased more than 10 percent, with 61 percent of teachers holding a master's degree or higher, according to the 2015 Report Card. The statewide teacher retention rate is 85 percent, compared to 86 percent in 2014. Stability in the teaching staff often helps to foster a collaborative environment in which teachers work together to advance student achievement.

ISBE's Center for Educator Effectiveness continues its work to strengthen educator preparation programs in Illinois. To improve the quality of educator preparation programs, the Educator Licensure Division has introduced rules that include new accountability components for program reporting. The division is also collaborating with other organizations to develop a data collection system and an accountability system for the state's educator preparation programs. Additionally, the division is revising standards for educator preparation programs to ensure candidates are receiving the knowledge and skills to be outstanding teachers.

Illinois districts also continue to implement new comprehensive educator evaluation systems that incorporate student growth and professional practice, as required under the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA). Implementation has been phased in since 2013, and all school districts must include student growth as one portion of their educator evaluation ratings no later than the 2016-17 school year. PERA emphasizes ISBE's belief that districts are in the best position to determine their approach to teacher evaluation insofar as PERA allows districts to develop and implement their own evaluation systems that meet minimum state standards. A district defaults to the state model regarding the use of data and indicators of student growth for those aspects that cannot be agreed upon.

Safe and Healthy Learning Environment

Illinois was among the first states to set standards for social and emotional learning (SEL). The SEL standards and grade-level performance descriptors for grades K-12 explain the process through which children develop awareness and management of their emotions, set and achieve important personal and academic goals, use social-awareness and interpersonal skills, and demonstrate decision making and responsible behaviors. Illinois is also a national leader in valuing student health and the positive effects it has on learning and development. Full implementation of the revised Illinois Learning Standards for physical development and health took place over the 2015-16 school year. These standards promote healthy development and foster workplace skills, including identifying short- and long-term goals, utilizing technology, following directions, and working cooperatively with others.

ISBE believes in using a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to train and support districts on evidence-based practices that best serve students' needs and help create healthy school climates.

In Illinois, MTSS is defined as a framework for continuous improvement that is systemic, prevention-focused, and data-informed in order to provide a coherent continuum of supports responsive to meet the needs of all learners. To support MTSS in school districts, ISBE has developed the new Illinois Multi-Tiered System of Supports Network (IL MTSS-N). IL MTSS-N supports districts by addressing students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs in a holistic manner to help school districts improve student outcomes.

ESSA also presents an opportunity to increase and improve support for schools and foster the development of healthy communities. The law will help Illinois increase support for its most vulnerable students, with a strong emphasis on identifying homeless youth and eliminating the barriers they experience in school. ISBE and local school districts will also have to develop, review, and revise policies to address existing obstacles in identifying, enrolling, and retaining homeless students in school, including those related to fees, fines, and absences.



Students at Half Day School in Lincolnshire designed and built unique creations as part of a Cardboard Challenge, which was inspired by the documentary film "Caine's Arcade." (Photo courtesy of [District 103](#))

Section One:

Key Areas of Focus

Funding: Establish an adequate and equitable education finance system.

An adequate and equitable education finance system is essential to the health of children and families and the long-term economic well-being of the state. Illinois' education finance system is routinely referenced as one of the most inequitable in the country due to its overreliance on property taxes. Additionally, fiscal year 2016 represented the fifth consecutive year that General State Aid was substantially underfunded.

The way the education finance system is structured in Illinois has produced extraordinary distress on districts. Districts have managed this difficult situation by finding more and more ways to reduce costs. Illinois districts may be running efficiently, but too often it is at the expense of providing a high-quality, effective education. Districts have been forced to reduce staff, forgo supplies, delay necessary building repairs and maintenance, and eliminate programs for students. These cuts are taking away valuable opportunities from students.

Unfortunately, decreased spending is still not enough to keep districts financially afloat. ISBE's 2016 Financial Profile report analysis found that 499 or 58.6 percent of school districts are expected to deficient spend, based on districts' budget submissions for fiscal year 2016. Many districts also continue to borrow to maintain daily operations, with districts issuing \$307.2 million in debt in their operating funds in FY 2015 – and they still must continue to make difficult choices to cut spending.

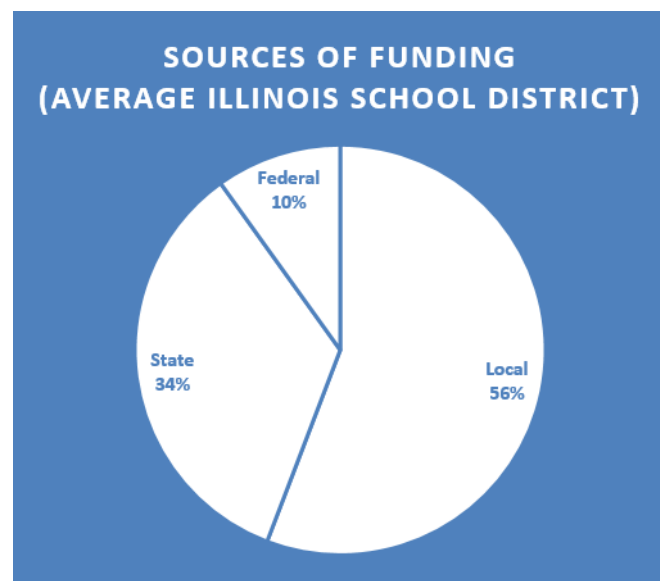
This data is deeply troubling. Such financial hardship affects many students who rely on public school services the most. This reality strengthens

ISBE's commitment to establishing a more equitable education finance system.

Illinois needs a funding system that aligns financial support with need, while taking into account the differences among its 850-plus school districts. Schools' unique student populations and the amount of local resources available to them must be given due consideration. ISBE is committed to being a good partner in this reform and taking advantage of the chance to create a better system.

ISBE will work to bridge the many efforts to improve the funding system that are underway. The main point of emerging consensus is to create a universal investment with clear expectations of results. It is also to acknowledge that some students are situated nearer – or further – from opportunity and therefore need different amounts of support to reach the same goal.

Figure One



Source: Illinois State Board of Education 2015 Annual Report

Last fall, the State Board adopted more specific, challenging agency goals that are measurable.

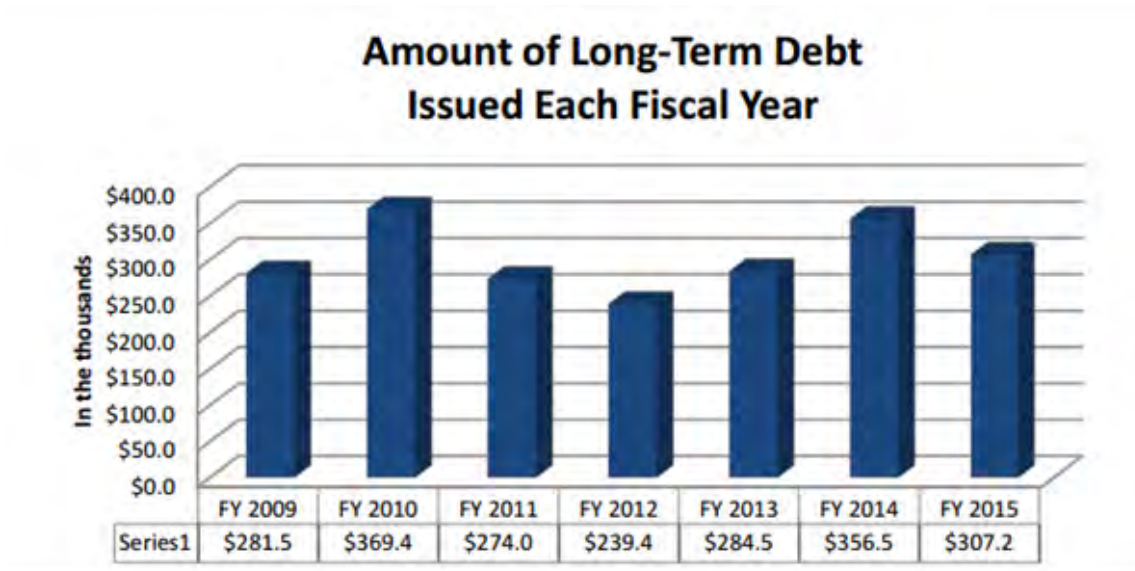
These goals are:

- Every child in each public school system in the state of Illinois deserves to attend a system wherein...
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 - Ninety percent or more of fifth grade students meet or exceed expectations in mathematics.
 - Ninety percent or more of ninth-graders are on track to graduate with their cohort.
 - Ninety 90 percent or more of students graduate from high school ready for college and career.
 - All students are supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.
 - Every school offers a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.

Illinois’ education finance system should be aligned with these goals and ensure that no child is shortchanged because of their family’s income level or ZIP code.

The State Board views itself as an advocate to support districts across the state as they strive to continually improve educational opportunities for students. The agency wants to ensure school districts and other education service providers have more resources and support to meet the unique needs of each and every child throughout all communities in the state.

Figure Two



Source: Illinois State Board of Education 2016 Financial Profile

Quality: Common definition of, and fair access to, quality education.

In order to develop a common understanding of and expectations for what constitutes “quality,” the Illinois State Board of Education is streamlining its efforts from early childhood services to higher education and workforce training. ISBE is committed to supporting all students to meet higher expectations aimed at preparing them to be successful in college and their chosen career path.

This past year, ISBE continued to update all learning standards to focus on real-world application, helping students meet the challenges of higher learning and the workplace in the 21st century. Enhanced physical education standards, which the Board adopted in 2014, were implemented during the 2015-16 school year. These standards are based upon neuroscience research that links physical activity with improved academic performance.

ISBE also adopted revised social science standards in 2015, with full implementation scheduled for the 2017-18 school year. These standards are based on recommendations from a task force led by the Illinois Civic Mission Coalition. They seek to cultivate civic-mindedness and emphasize historical thinking, economic decision making, and geographic reasoning, utilizing psychological and sociological concepts across all disciplines and grade levels. New fine arts standards are also planned for full implementation during the 2017-18 school year. Arts Alliance Illinois, a statewide advocate for arts education, has led this initiative in partnership with ISBE staff to bring together educators, organizations, and advocates from across the state to develop arts standards that reflect best practices.

The State Board is pleased to have modern, comprehensive learning standards that are applicable and relevant to the issues and experiences students will encounter in their personal, professional, and civic lives. By improving content standards, ISBE is strengthening its investment in each child served in Illinois schools.

Illinois’ transition to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test provides another tool to assist in improving the quality of education for all students by providing better information used in the design and delivery of high-quality instruction for all children. PARCC was administered statewide for the second time in spring 2016. ISBE continually strives to strengthen statewide assessments so that educators have high-quality, comparable assessments that will allow them to target the needs of and provide supports for all students as they become ready for college and/or careers.

In the past, assessments focused on what students have done – whether they have learned or mastered what has been taught. The move to the PARCC test is an important shift for Illinois’ students. It asks a new question – a question about readiness as opposed to mastery. Put differently, the next generation of assessments provides data on both what a student knows and, more significantly, what she or he is ready to learn. There are many data points, from employment rates to college remediation rates, which suggest students may do well along their preK-12 journey but they are not ready for what’s next once they pursue college and/or enter the workforce. The PARCC test results provide a new baseline to

measure this readiness. They will also help us build the right environment to support our students and teachers in achieving readiness.

This spring, Illinois also administered a new online science assessment to students in grades 5 and 8 and once at the high school level. The Illinois Science

Assessment is aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards in science, based on the Next Generation Science Standards. The exam, which used an open-source technology platform, is an important tool to help support the more engaged, hands-on science learning and teaching taking place in schools across the state.

ISBE also remains committed to providing a college entrance exam at no cost to all 11th-grade students, a practice that has afforded opportunities and provided access to higher education to students for whom this otherwise would not have been a reality.

ISBE has also begun working collaboratively with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) to create high-quality educational options for youth who are incarcerated and youth who will be transitioning back to their home communities. These options will prepare them for future employment and the continuation of their education to support their goals and dreams. The mission for the partnership of ISBE and IDJJ is to reduce recidivism. IDJJ is making a philosophical shift from relying on incarceration as the solution, to emphasizing high-quality education as the springboard to changing the life trajectory for these youth. ISBE is proud to

“The move to the PARCC test is an important shift for Illinois’ students. It asks a new question – a question about readiness as opposed to mastery.”

partner with IDJJ to help these individuals become more deeply engaged civically and set them up for academic success while at Illinois Youth Centers and beyond. This partnership will change the system in a way that offers the greatest benefit to these youth.

ISBE and IDJJ will make it a priority to identify and serve these children. Together, ISBE and IDJJ will:

- Create an enriching learning environment with varied educational offerings to further inspire current and future learning and open up career opportunities.
- Develop the ability to cater to the individual learning needs of each child.
- Improve the provision of services to students with disabilities and ensure sustainability.
- Emphasize education in developing solutions for these youth.
- Help attract the highest-quality staff and teachers.
- Creatively and collaboratively pursue alternative education providers and programs as innovative options to improve the educational impact and outcomes.

Illinois has an opportunity to do historical things and improve the lives and outcomes for these young people.

The state is also improving its data collection to track students throughout each step of their academic career to their chosen career field.

ISBE – in collaboration with six other state agencies, including the Illinois Board of Higher Education and the Illinois Community College Board – continues to develop and implement the Illinois Statewide Longitudinal P-20 Data System (ILDS). The ILDS partner agencies plan to produce technology tools, reports, and research datasets in five areas of initial focus: early childhood, high school to college success, community college feedback, career pathways, and college/career certificate completion. Further, the ILDS will enhance ISBE data collection to support teachers, administrators, agency staff, parents, and policy-makers in making informed and effective data-driven decisions aligned with the Board’s mission and goals.

In fall 2015, ISBE received a \$7 million grant from the Institute of Education Sciences to fund the ILDS development. The ILDS will help track the progress of Illinois students as they move from prekindergarten through post-secondary education and into the workforce. Over time, the data collected will provide an in-depth, comprehensive picture of individual students’ progress. It will ultimately help policymakers, school leaders, teachers, and parents decide where to invest time, energy, and resources to most effectively improve student achievement.

An effort is underway to give these stakeholders and members of the public quick and easy access to ILDS information through the Illinois Data for Fiscal and Instructional Results, Study, and Transparency (Illinois Data FIRST) project. This project is funded by the U.S. Department of

Education Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant program. This improved data access will support and strengthen state and local resource allocations, instruction, and learner outcomes. Illinois Data FIRST will connect resource allocation information to student outcomes and educator information and significantly expand the use of ILDS for intuitive and “real-time” instructional feedback.

“The ILDS will help track the progress of Illinois students as they move from prekindergarten through postsecondary education and into the workforce.”

Illinois Data FIRST has two components: Fiscal Equity and Return on Investment (ROI) and Instructional Support. The ROI component will strengthen the ability of the state, school districts, and early childhood centers to use ILDS information more accurately to allocate resources to improve educational outcomes. The Instructional Support component will help Illinois adopt a service model of data management focused on the use of data to meet state and local district goals. The integration of Illinois Data FIRST with other Information Technology

strategic initiatives provides a technology solution that supports educators with high-quality data that can be understood and acted upon in order to achieve equity and excellence for each and every student in Illinois.

ISBE is implementing high-quality learning standards and assessments and maximizing our resources through partnerships with other agencies to streamline and coordinate efforts. The agency is in a strong position to provide all children access to a first-rate public education system throughout their academic careers.

Autonomy: Maximize district autonomy to provide quality education to all families.

The State Board recognizes that teachers, principals, superintendents, and school boards best understand the unique needs, challenges, and achievements of their schools and students. Since 2009, more than 130 additional statutes have been applied to school districts, resulting in roughly 200 more reporting requirements.

ISBE also conducted a workflow study in fall 2015 that determined the amount of time spent on regulation was disproportionate to the time spent on service and support for school districts. ISBE wants to focus on more deeply supporting Illinois schools and districts. The agency also wants to provide mandate relief to maximize school districts' autonomy to give innovative leaders the freedom they need to transform struggling schools and share their achievements.

ISBE is now leading a legislative effort to create Districts of Innovation in Illinois. This spring, ISBE initiated the introduction of Senate Bill 3422 (SB 3422) by Sen. Karen McConaughay to create the School Districts of Innovation Act. This legislation would give school districts greater independence to apply innovative practices that improve student academic performance and benefit the whole child by removing obstacles that currently exist in laws or rules. Districts could use groundbreaking ways of teaching and learning to improve student achievement and ensure that students graduate from high school ready for college and careers.

SB 3422 would set up a process for a school district to be designated as a District of Innovation. These districts would identify

ambitious, achievable performance goals aligned with the five goals adopted by the State Board of Education. These performance goals must incorporate ways to show measurable improvement in specific areas of student performance. District of Innovation plans would be prepared by a local innovation committee made up of school board representatives, a principal, teachers, support staff, parents, a student, and the broader school community.

Innovation plans would be developed with and certified by the Regional Superintendent of Schools and would contain requests for exemptions from specific statutory and regulatory mandates directly related to the success of the plan.

"Since 2009, more than 130 additional statutes have been applied to school districts, resulting in roughly 200 more reporting requirements."

With this effort and our new, refocused goals and mission statement in place, ISBE is in a great position to create a problem-solving culture that builds on the good work already taking place in districts and mitigates regulations that inhibit autonomy and keep districts from tapping into their students' full potential. ISBE believes that teachers, principals, superintendents, and community members are in the position to best determine and provide the highest-quality education and care for each child in the public school system.

Competency: Encourage competency-based learning.

ISBE believes that it must rethink how students are taught and demonstrate knowledge in order to adequately prepare for today's world. Education should not focus on how long students are in the classroom, but on what they know and if they are mastering the appropriate concepts. Therefore, the Board is partnering with other organizations, including Advance Illinois and the Northern Illinois University Education Systems Center, to transform the high school experience in Illinois to create new and improved pathways to college and careers.

Expectations for what it means to be prepared for college and careers are varied and inconsistent. This lack of consensus hurts Illinois employers as they struggle to find the highly skilled and qualified job candidates their industries need to grow and be successful. ISBE is a member of the Illinois P-20 Council, which is made up of government, business, school board, higher education, union, and nonprofit representatives as well as teachers and parents. Its purpose is to develop a statewide system of quality education and support, from birth to adulthood. The council has set a goal that 60 percent of Illinoisans earn a high-quality, postsecondary certificate or degree by the year 2025. This charge is challenging as roughly half of the state's graduates who attend community college must take remedial coursework in subjects including reading, mathematics, and

communications. To address this problem, House Resolution 477 was introduced in spring 2015 to create advisory committees to identify and build support for effective strategies to ensure more students are college and career ready.

These committees' recommendations, which were adopted by the P-20 Council's College and Career Readiness Committee, led to the introduction of House Bill 5729 this spring. This legislation creates the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act and includes development of a pilot program for competency-based high school graduation requirements. The bill also creates transitional mathematics courses, reading and communication transitional competencies, and College and Career Pathway Endorsements.

School districts that wish to voluntarily participate in the pilot would have to create a plan for introducing standards-aligned competencies to replace existing high school graduation requirements. Students would earn a high school diploma based on what they know and are able to

do and not the amount of "seat time" spent in a classroom. In addition, districts would be encouraged to develop coursework that integrates academic standards with career coursework, leading to the development of rigorous and relevant courses and work opportunities. Educators and professionals from the field will jointly develop and implement this work.

"Education should not focus on how long students are in the classroom, but on what they know and if they are mastering the appropriate concepts. "



Steven Elza, Illinois Teacher of the Year in 2015, and some of his students participated in the Illinois Association for Career and Technical Education Rally Day last year at the Illinois State Capitol.

House Bill 5729 would also establish a College and Career Expectations Framework that uses benchmarks from eighth through 12th grade for career exploration and development; college exploration, preparation, and selection; and to show students how to access financial aid opportunities. Additionally, the act defines high school coursework and criteria that will place students into college credit-bearing classes and provides for College and Career Pathway Endorsements on high school diplomas.

ISBE is proud to support this legislation and work toward ways school districts can embrace a competency-based approach at the high school level. Illinois' students have extraordinary talents and abilities. ISBE should work with districts to ensure the conditions for success of this work.

Districts should focus on awarding credit in ways indicative of how a student demonstrates what he or she knows, understands, and is able to do. ISBE is committed to collaborating with educators, families, business, higher education, and community partners to create a new high school experience that is more valuable to the individual student and that increases the likelihood that a high school is an asset in the local community for workforce development, community service, and youth leadership.

Community: Districts and schools as centers of healthy communities.

The world is rapidly changing. These changes can put enormous pressures on students. The Illinois State Board of Education believes the agency is in a strong position to address these modern stresses and support schools as places of deep belonging and connection. Illinois educators exhibit tremendous care and concern for their students and are in the position to best develop their talents and address areas of struggle.

Now more than ever, ISBE believes the role of schools and districts is to create and bolster healthy communities. ISBE’s fiscal year 2017 budget request included \$15 million in new dollars for the Healthy Community Incentive Fund. This fund would support grants to community partnerships between school districts and local government entities, education organizations, faith-based organizations, civic organizations, and philanthropists. The grant funds would help coordinate, align, and leverage efforts to solve complex social problems within communities aimed toward serving the needs of the “whole child.”

These grants would enable school districts to take a lead role in cross-organization collaboration and become centers of collective impact and responsibility to the children of the community. Addressing these issues would help ensure that students are present, focused, and ready to take advantage of high-quality instruction in the classroom. The Healthy Community grants would support schools that show need and collaboration in order to activate services that would improve outcomes for students.

ISBE also sees great opportunity in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to increase and improve its supports for schools to promote the

development of healthy communities. The new federal education law gives the state and school districts opportunity to

better serve all students, especially those considered most at risk. ESSA grants Illinois greater freedom to develop a thoughtful state plan to ensure each child in the state’s diverse student body has access to a high-quality education. The law will take effect in phases over the next two school years. State Board staff continues to carefully review the law to determine the full impact to the state’s education system and any necessary changes to state law. ISBE also held a series of listening tours this spring to hear from the field about how to design a plan that works best for Illinois educators and students.

ESSA will provide additional supports for the state’s most vulnerable students, including a stronger focus on homeless students. The bill emphasizes the continued need to remove barriers homeless students face in our schools. In particular, the law supports Illinois’ ongoing work to ensure that very young homeless children have adequate access to public preschool programs. The law also equips Illinois to support English Learners (ELs) as they develop English language proficiency and meet academic standards. It ensures that schools have latitude to measure ELs in their native languages to appropriately gauge growth and achievement.

“Now more than ever, ISBE believes the role of schools and districts is to create and bolster healthy communities.”

ESSA also ensures that Illinois must measure the performance of low-income, minority, and EL students. The Illinois Report Card will continue to provide communities this important information to drive school improvement efforts. Illinois also expects to have more flexibility to identify schools that have not met state-determined standards.

The law also maintains Title I-A funding, ensuring that Illinois' at-risk schools and students will continue receiving needed federal support. In FY 2016, Illinois will receive \$627,541,589 to support low-income students and schools.

ESSA also includes new Student Support and Enrichment Grants that specifically focus on well-rounded education, safe and healthy schools, and technology.



ISBE's 5Essentials Survey continues to provide valuable feedback about individual schools' climate and culture. This supports efforts to build collaborative, healthy communities for all children. The 2015-16 school year was the fourth administration of the online statewide survey. The 5Essentials is a research-based diagnostic assessment of school organization that promotes school improvement by providing educators –

and communities at large – with data on components of schooling that have been proven to connect to improved outcomes for students. Practitioners are able to use their individualized school-level report to better understand strengths and areas for improvement in their school and turn these insights into targeted actions.

All schools within a district are required by legislation to participate in the survey at least every other year to help provide a more complete picture of what happens in the classroom. In 2016, only districts participating in Race to the Top and those that did not participate in the survey the previous year (133 districts) were required to participate, though all districts had the option to participate and were strongly encouraged to do so. A total of 307 districts comprising 1,476 schools participated in the survey. The 5Essentials provides valuable data that can help schools continually assess their progress and build positive relationships within their communities.

"ISBE's 5Essentials Survey continues to provide valuable feedback about individual schools' climate and culture."

Finally, members of ISBE's management team have read the report, "For Each and Every Child: Education Equity and Excellence," a product of a two-year effort by the Equity Commission (sponsored by the Office of Civil Rights).

Managers have since met to discuss how ISBE's internal structure supports or hinders the outcomes outlined in the document. Weaving the lessons from this report into our daily operations will further advance the State Board's efforts to make meaningful connections locally with other agencies and community members.

Section Two:

Progress on Agency Goals

Goal: All kindergartners are assessed for readiness.

RESULTS TO DATE

During the 2015-16 school year, 3,869 teachers from 547 school districts were trained on the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) instrument. These figures represent more than 70 percent of the school districts that enroll kindergartners. As part of the phased implementation, 1,020 Illinois teachers entered 26,792 KIDS records in 2015-16. These teachers represent 341 Illinois schools in 172 school districts.

KIDS is a tool for collecting comparable and meaningful school readiness data on all kindergartners. The instrument enables teachers to use local assessment and instructional information about what children are able to do to report on measures of development. ISBE partnered with the WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies and the Berkeley Evaluation and Assessment Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley's Graduate School of Education to develop and administer KIDS. In November 2015, the KIDS Advisory Committee recommended the collection of 14 key measures that are foundational for school readiness and predictive of future academic success.

The KIDS Advisory Committee recommended the collection of these 14 key measures that are foundational for school readiness and predictive of future academic success:

- *Curiosity and Initiative in Learning*
- *Self-Control of Feelings and Behavior*
- *Engagement and Persistence*
- *Relationships and Social Interactions with Familiar Adults*
- *Relationships and Social Interactions with Peers*
- *MATH 1 – Classification*
- *MATH 2 – Number Sense of Quantity*
- *MATH 3 – Number Sense of Math Operations*
- *MATH 6 – Shapes*
- *Communication and Use of Language (Expressive)*
- *Reciprocal Communication and Conversation*
- *Comprehension of Age-Appropriate Text*
- *Phonological Awareness*
- *Letter and Word Knowledge*

PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES

Kindergarten readiness is an important foundation for meeting the milestones that will lead toward being college and career ready as well as becoming self-sufficient adults. ISBE remains committed to collecting data on the school readiness of all kindergartners that is meaningful and doable for school districts.

Information from KIDS will provide parents, schools, districts, communities, and state leaders information on key indicators of whether our youngest learners are prepared to enter elementary school. Given the importance of school readiness as part of the pathway to college and career readiness, school readiness data is an

important tool for the planning of services, distribution of resources, and development of programs so that all kindergartners enter school ready to learn and succeed.

To best ensure that KIDS is providing teachers and parents with actionable information, ISBE has continued to work with WestEd to further develop and modify the KIDS instrument, train teachers, and develop statewide

communications and implementation strategies. Full implementation of the KIDS instrument, with all schools collecting and reporting school readiness data for all kindergartners, is slated for the 2017-18 school year.

ISBE continues to support and promote the importance of learning in early childhood to prepare students for success in kindergarten and the rest of their elementary and secondary education. The State Board's fiscal year 2017 budget recommendation included a \$75 million increase in the Early Childhood Block Grant to restore the loss of funding since fiscal year 2009 and support the agency's four-year, \$80 million federal Preschool Expansion Grant. This grant supports expansion of preschool to vulnerable students who lack access to other programs. ISBE also has a strong partnership with the Governor's Office for Early Childhood Development on the Early Learning Challenge Grant and Preschool Expansion Grant Initiatives.

ISBE realizes it is not enough to have strong early childhood programs. Studies demonstrate

that gains made in early childhood must be followed by high-quality K-12 experiences to make a lasting impact. We understand the importance of high-quality, meaningful

experiences for all children in the early years that are bridged to kindergarten and the early elementary years to ensure a more seamless transition for children. That is only possible by aligning and integrating our

systems. This all commences with teaching and learning in early childhood.

ISBE is also engaging deeply with other state agencies to ensure that we are able to serve children and families across the continuum and strengthen communities through a range of collaborative efforts, including the early childhood Leadership Team, Early Learning Council, and now through the Governor's new Children's Cabinet.

Additionally, the Every Student Succeeds Act offers new opportunities and supports for early childhood programs. Illinois will be able to further work with school districts to strengthen and align early learning and K-12 programs, support early childhood professional development, and better evaluate local needs to expand opportunities for early learning. The law also supports Illinois' ongoing work to ensure that young homeless children have adequate access to public preschool programs.



Goal: Ninety percent or more of third-grade students are reading at or above grade level.

RESULTS TO DATE

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment reflects student performance across five new performance levels. Students scoring a 4 or 5 demonstrate a thorough understanding of grade-level standards and are on track to being ready to enter college or the workforce. Students receiving a 3 are approaching expectations, but may need additional assistance mastering some aspects of the content. Students receiving a 1 or 2 need more assistance in mastering the content and are in need of greater supports.

Illinois students in grades 3-8 and high school took the PARCC assessment for the first time in spring 2015. In December, ISBE released the results from this first administration. The PARCC assessment aligns to higher standards, asks students to demonstrate their understanding in a different way, and reflects student performance across five performance levels. The 2015 PARCC scores provide a brand new baseline for measuring student progress moving forward.

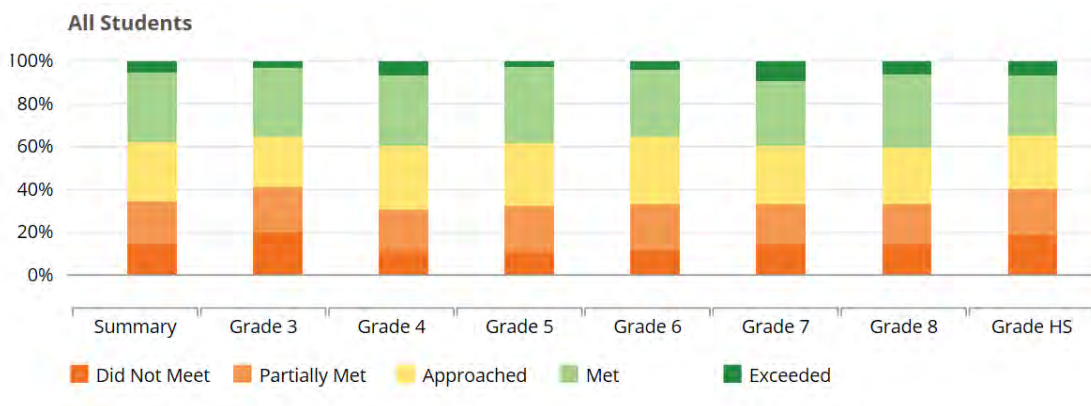
Figure One provides data from the 2015 Illinois School Report Card on grade-level PARCC assessment performance in English language arts (ELA). Thirty-two percent of third-grade students achieved a level 4 score, meaning they met expectations. Three percent earned a level 5 score, exceeding expectations. Another 24 percent of third-grade students approached expectations by earning a level 3 score. Students who met or exceeded expectations are likely to be on track for the next grade level and, ultimately, for college and career readiness.

PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES

Under the Illinois Standards Achievement Test and Prairie State Achievement Examination, results were reported as having met or exceeded expectations or not. PARCC, on the other hand, uses five performance levels, which range from 1 to 5. With these new performance levels, ISBE is now focusing on student performance on a continuum.

Level 3 is a key performance level as it represents that a student is becoming aware of what's ahead

Figure One: PARCC Assessment Performance by Grade Level in English Language Arts



Source: 2015 Illinois Report Card (www.illinoisreportcard.com)

in the next grade level and, with more support, will be ready for what's coming next in the curriculum. This more distinctive performance level will help educators be more intentional in their design and delivery of instruction and give students the appropriate interventions to help them better understand content.

The information ISBE receives from the PARCC results will help determine how ISBE can provide districts with the appropriate supports as they work with their students. PARCC statewide data also identifies and celebrates Illinois' successes, and provides a clearer picture of areas that need improvement. This data is therefore a valuable tool to promote literacy and help all third-grade students, as well as all elementary students, master grade-level reading skills.

ISBE grant programs also provide enrichment and additional supports to improve reading and literacy. Illinois' Agricultural Education program supports teaching agriculture literacy to students in grades K-8 through lessons and activities aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards in ELA, math, and science. The program also provides resources on these learning standards for educators

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Grant provides academic and enrichment opportunities for children in prekindergarten through 12th grade in order to meet state and local student academic achievement standards in core academic disciplines, such as reading and math. These opportunities help bridge achievement gaps in high-poverty, low-performing schools.

The purpose of the 21st CCLC grant program is to serve schools where low-income students make up at least 40 percent of the population or schools that are eligible for Title I schoolwide programs. Title I provides financial assistance to schools with high

numbers of children from low-income families to ensure all students meet state academic standards.

The 21st CCLC program offers a variety of services to students and their parents/caregivers to promote social-emotional development and cultural enrichment, including drug and violence prevention lessons; counseling; art; science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs; music and recreation classes; technology education; and character education. It also sponsors family events and provides literacy and related educational services for parents and caregivers to better engage families in school activities.

The 21st CCLC grants are awarded as federal appropriations are available. The latest competition took place in fiscal year 2015 and provided about \$25 million to support 87 after-school and extended day academic enrichment projects across the state.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) also provides new, flexible federal grants to support well-rounded students, while preserving and improving 21st CCLC programs. The law expands the scope of activities for the program, including ensuring that students are exposed to college and career readiness activities. ESSA also includes provisions that will help Illinois continue to support gifted and talented students and promote their development and engagement in the classroom. States must now include information about how to plan to improve educator and school leaders' skills to help them identify gifted and talented students and provide appropriate instruction when applying for Title II professional development funds. States and districts are also now required to report student achievement data at the advanced level and not just performance at the proficient level and below.

Goal: Ninety percent or more of fifth-grade students meet or exceed expectations in mathematics.

RESULTS TO DATE

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam reflects student performance across five more nuanced performance levels than the state’s previous assessments. Students scoring a 4 or 5 demonstrate a thorough understanding of grade-level standards and are on the right track to being ready to enter college or the workforce. Students receiving a 3 are approaching expectations, but may need additional assistance mastering some aspects of the content. Students receiving a 1 or 2 need more assistance in mastering the content and are in need of greater supports.

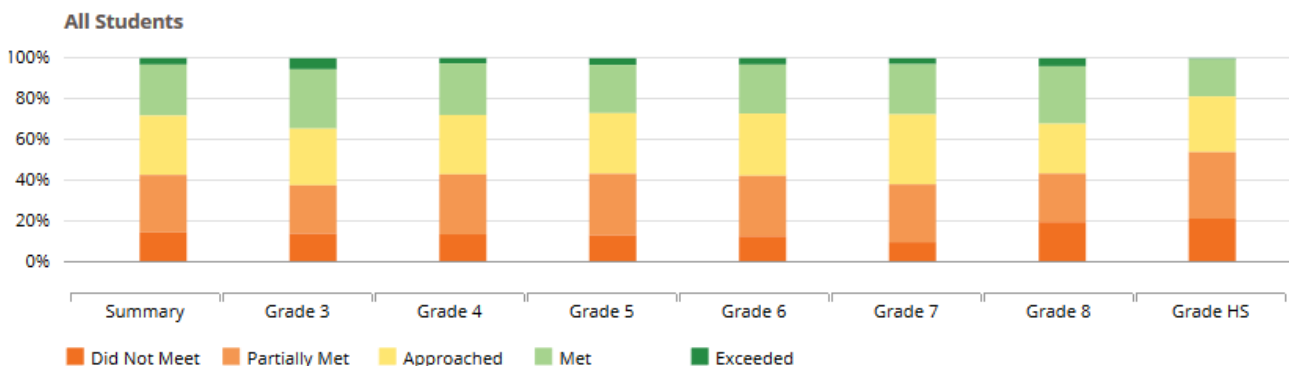
According to the 2015 Illinois Report Card, the first PARCC test results showed that 24 percent of fifth-grade students scored a level 4 and met expectations in math, while 3 percent earned a level 5 and exceeded expectations (Figure One: PARCC Assessment Performance by Grade Level in Math). Another 30 percent of fifth-grade students approached expectations in math by

scoring a level 3. Students who met or exceeded expectations are likely to be on track for the next grade level and, ultimately, for college and career readiness.

PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES

The Illinois Math and Science Partnership Grant is a federal formula grant program that supports partnerships between science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) departments at higher education institutes and high-need school districts. The grant currently serves more than 750 K-12 math and science educators across the state and provides 80 hours of researched, standards-aligned math professional development. A total of 42,702 students have received services through this grant in fiscal year 2016. ISBE awards approximately \$5 million total to grantees per grant year, with the current grant set to expire in August 2017. Grant awards are made to partnerships that include Regional Offices of Education, institutions of higher learning, high-needs local education agencies, and businesses.

Figure One: PARCC Assessment Performance by Grade Level in Math



Source: 2015 Illinois Report Card (www.illinoisreportcard.com)

ISBE content specialists have designed Math Shift Kits to help support high-quality math instruction in the classroom that is aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards in math. The Math Shift Kits are designed to help teachers know and understand the shifts in mathematics instruction with the current math standards. The kits include PowerPoint presentations, handouts, research, and advice on how teachers can use the information to gain a better understanding of how best to implement the standards.

Illinois adopted its current math standards, based on the Common Core Standards, in 2010. The math standards generate major instructional shifts in *focus*, *coherence*, and *rigor*.

They *focus* on the skills that students truly need to master at each grade level in order to succeed in subsequent grades, resulting in fewer standards but more teaching time for those standards that do remain.

The standards are *coherent* both within a single grade and across grades. Therefore, new concepts build upon previously learned concepts so that math topics are linked to one another. The standards and their expectations become more focused as a child progresses in his or her schooling.

Finally, the standards are *rigorous* because they support conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with equal intensity. This conceptual understanding means students comprehend the actual mathematical process behind their work instead of simply memorizing multiplication tables or using “tricks” to get a solution. Resources for the Math Shift Kids are available at <http://education.illinoisstate.edu/casei/math/> and have been put in place to facilitate

professional development without teachers having to leave the building and forfeit classroom time.

ISBE has also taken the lead in creating state-developed model math units to help students master concepts at each grade level as schools put the math standards into practice in the classroom. The nationally recognized units were the first of their kind. They were developed by a statewide team of educators in response to legislation that called for more math resources and support. The models are available at www.isbe.net/common_core/htmls/math-model-units.htm.

The models inspire teachers to dig deeper into math content and create better lessons, which help provide students a strong, deep foundation in math as they improve their skills. They help teachers develop lesson plans that meet internationally benchmarked math standards. The models are not a complete curriculum, but instead are a blueprint for instruction, lesson planning, and assessments. Districts may choose to adopt or adapt the models as they develop their full curricula. The ongoing math model project will focus on developing additional grade level resources based on input from teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, higher education faculty, and national experts through the process.

Math resources have also been expanded to include an “Illinois Teach and Talk” website (www.ilteachandtalk.org/) for K-8 math teachers that promotes mathematical discourse in the classroom. The website provides sample math talks aligned to the standards and designed for a 15-minute introduction to math lessons. A series of Math Talk workshops was provided statewide during the 2015-16 school year to support the importance of math discourse in the classroom and highlight the website.

Goal: Ninety percent or more of ninth-graders are on track to graduate with their cohort.

RESULTS TO DATE

The 2015 Illinois Report Card reports the number of freshmen “on track” in a high school and at the district level (Figure One: Freshmen on Track). For 2015, 83 percent of the state’s freshmen were considered on track. Students identified as on track have earned at least five full-year course credits (10 semester credits) and have earned no more than one semester “F” in a core course (English, math, science, or social science). Course credits from summer sessions are not included in this calculation.

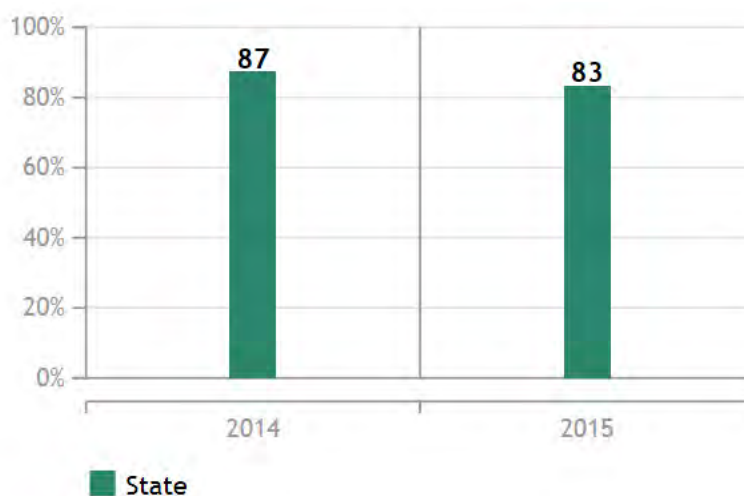
The “freshmen on track” metric is a key predictor of high school success. Students who finish the ninth-grade year on track are almost four times as likely to graduate from high school as students who are not on track. Research shows that the number of students on track and the graduation rate rise when schools actively intervene by

identifying freshmen at risk and providing tutoring, additional instruction, and other individualized services.

PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES

The Illinois Virtual School (IVS) is a statewide learning resource that provides increased learning opportunities to help students stay on track and become college and career ready. Teacher-facilitated courses are available online to public, private, and home-schooled students in grades 5-12 and cover a number of curricular areas, including language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, business and economics, and career planning. Upon completion of an IVS course, students and their schools receive a Completion Certificate, and the school determines the final grade and awards course credit.

Figure One: Freshmen on Track



Source: 2015 Illinois Report Card (www.illinoisreportcard.com)

The virtual school allows students to enroll in courses they could not fit into their daily school schedule. It also enables students to take courses that are not offered by their local “face-to-face” school, such as Advanced Placement, world languages, and other enrichment opportunities.

The IVS is also an option to retain students looking for online learning opportunities or who may have previously dropped out of school. IVS has recently expanded its course access for high school students and provides credit recovery options to help them graduate on time. IVS’ credit recovery courses are proficiency-based and are intended for students who failed a course and need to retake it in order to recover credit. The courses include prescriptive pretests to identify what a student has learned previously and areas of deficiency for each unit of content. An individual learning plan is automatically generated based on the results of each unit pretest.

ISBE’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs have also made strides in helping high school students develop the academic, career, and technical skills needed to stay on track to graduate prepared for postsecondary success. In fiscal year 2015, 46.3 percent of all Illinois high school students participated in CTE programs, a slight decrease from the 2013-14 school year and an increase of 6.6 percent from 2012-13. During the 2014-15 school year, 826 high schools in Illinois offered at least one program in CTE, and 434 high schools provided approved CTE programs in at least four different content areas. More than 95.4 percent of the seniors who concentrated in CTE courses (those who complete more than three credits in one CTE area) graduated from high school and 85.2 percent of special needs CTE concentrating students graduated. Among those CTE concentrators, 66.8 percent went on to enroll in postsecondary education, according to the National Student Clearinghouse.

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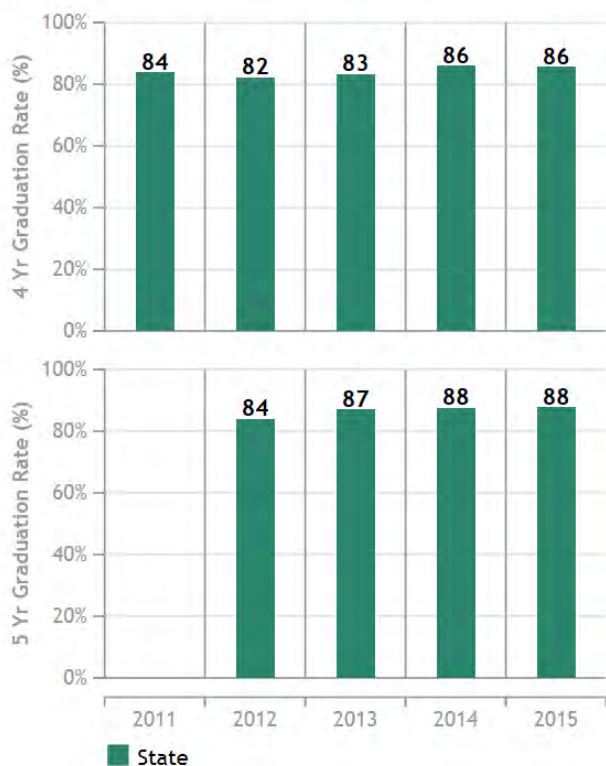
Additionally, Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) are co-curricular entities that provide secondary students with activities that expand classroom instruction to strengthen academic and technical skills. CTSOs apply knowledge and skills from the classroom through various competitive events. Participating students also receive opportunities for personal growth, leadership development, and career exploration. During the 2014-15 school year, 34,393 students across the state were members of a state-recognized CTSOs. These included the Business Professionals of America, Future Business Leaders of America, Future Healthy Professionals, and the Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America. Students in CTSOs demonstrate higher levels of academic engagement and motivation, civic engagement, career self-efficacy, and employability skills than other students, according to the National Coordinating Council for CTSOs.

Goal: Ninety percent or more students graduate from high school ready for college and career.

RESULTS TO DATE

The 2015 Illinois Report Card provides the four-year and five-year graduation rate (Figure One: Four- and Five-Year Graduation Rates). A five-year graduation rate was not measured before 2012. It illustrates completion of high school by students who require up to one additional year of instruction.

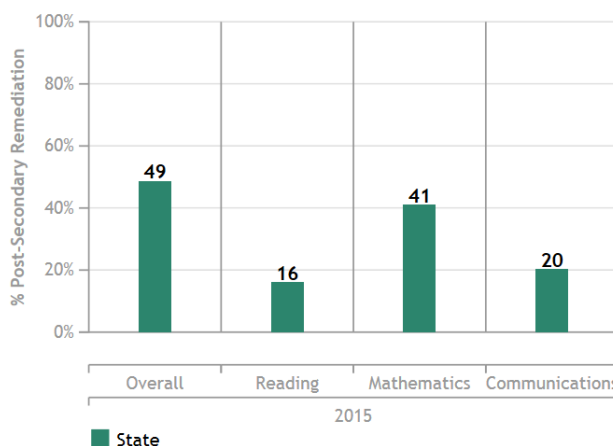
Figure One: Four-Year and Five-Year Graduation Rates



Source: 2015 Illinois Report Card (www.illinoisreportcard.com)

The 2015 Illinois Report Card provides that 49 percent of the students in Illinois' class of 2013 who attended a state community college were enrolled in remedial courses (Figure Two: Remediation Rates in Community Colleges). Figure Two includes information on the percentage of students who enrolled in any remedial course (e.g., any course that the community college identifies as remedial) and the percentage of students taking courses in the content areas of reading, mathematics, or communication skills (writing and speaking). This data does not include students from a high school in which fewer than 10 students enrolled in community college.

Figure Two: Remediation Rates in Community Colleges



Class of 2013	
	State
Graduates (N)	138,520
Attending Illinois Community Colleges (N)	39,922
Attending Illinois Community Colleges (%)	28.8%
Enrolled in Remedial Courses (N)	19,427
Enrolled in Remedial Courses (%)	48.7%

Source: 2015 Illinois Report Card (www.illinoisreportcard.com)

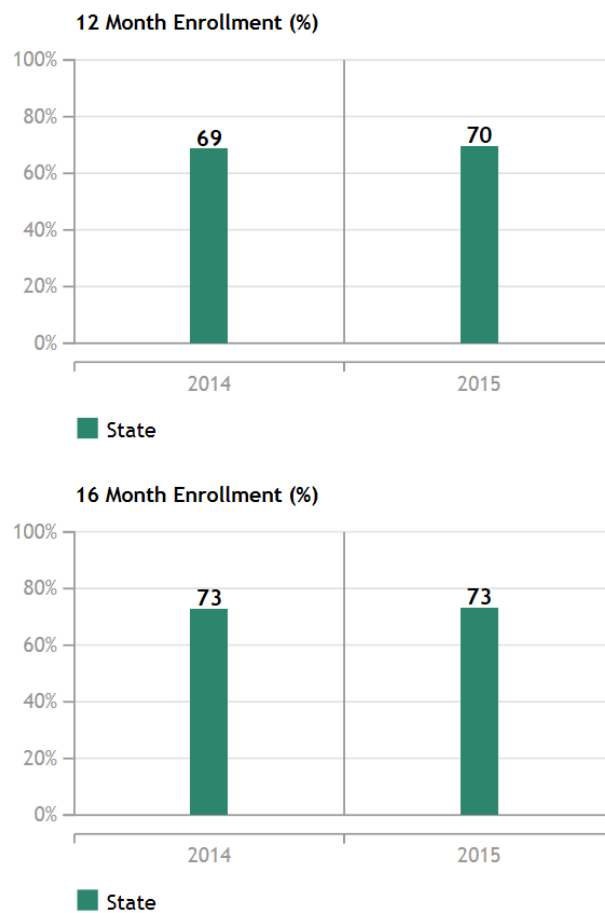
Remediation, sometimes called developmental education, is designed to help students achieve a level of college and career readiness that will enable them to succeed in core academic subjects such as reading, math, and science. Community colleges require students to take remedial courses if they are judged to need additional preparation in order to earn credit from college-level studies. Almost 50 percent of the students in the class of 2013 entering community colleges in Illinois were placed in developmental education in at least one subject. These courses incur tuition costs, but do not earn college credit. Students may be identified as needing remedial courses during high school or through college placement tests. Working with their local community colleges, some Illinois high schools are teaching college-level remedial courses to high school seniors and are seeing dramatic reductions in the number of students needing remediation at the college level. Figure Three illustrates the percentage of students statewide who graduated with a regular high school diploma from a public high school in Illinois and enrolled in a two-year or four-year college in the United States within 12 or 16 months (Figure Three: Postsecondary Enrollment).

Figure Three data includes the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) for higher education enrollment and the ISBE Student Information System for high school graduation. The NSC captures data from more than 95 percent of institutions nationwide and its data is commonly used across states.

Young adults who earn college credit are more likely to be employed and stay employed. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, in 2012 the employment rate for young adults was 87 percent for those with at least a bachelor's

degree, compared with 75 percent for those who completed some college, and 64 percent for high school graduates.

Figure Three: Postsecondary Enrollment



Source: 2015 Illinois Report Card (www.illinoisreportcard.com)

PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES

Illinois is committed to providing a college entrance exam at no cost to all 11th-grade students, a practice that has provided access to higher education to students for whom this otherwise would not have been a reality.

ISBE released a Notice of Award to the College Board in November 2015 to administer the SAT after an intensive, multi-month process reviewing sealed proposals from vendors seeking to

administer the assessment for college entrance to all 11th-grade students in Illinois¹.

The SAT is a better tool to measure what students are learning and determine their level of readiness after graduation as it is more closely aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards. The SAT is also aligned with agency goals, particularly that 90 percent or more of students graduating from high school are ready for college and career.

Illinois' ongoing update of all content standards will also help ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for the rigors of college and careers. The Illinois Learning Standards in science, adopted in 2014, are based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and identify the science and engineering practices and content that all K-12 students should master in order to prepare for postsecondary success. ISBE believes the need for high-quality science education is essential. Students require the kind of preparation that not only supports their learning now, but gives them tools and skills necessary to succeed in a rapidly and continuously changing world. The NGSS were built upon a vision of high-quality teaching and learning for all students to achieve this goal. The standards were also benchmarked against countries whose students perform well in science and engineering fields.

A strong science education equips students with skills that are necessary in many careers. Students need the right foundation to tackle long-term and difficult issues that face our generation and future generations. The Illinois Learning Standards in science are preparing students to enter the workforce with enhanced communication, problem solving, and critical thinking skills. All of these skills are vital for remaining competitive and successful in a global economy.

“Students require the kind of preparation that not only supports their learning now, but gives them tools and skills necessary to succeed in a rapidly and continuously changing world.”

In 2015, ISBE adopted revised social science standards, with full implementation scheduled for the 2017-18 school year. The Illinois social science standards are designed to ensure that all students have the opportunity to develop the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary for success in college, career, and civic life in the 21st century. The goal of the standards is to produce Illinois graduates who are civically engaged, socially responsible, culturally aware, and financially literate. The proposed standards cultivate civic mindedness, historical thinking, economic decision making, geographic reasoning, and psychological and

sociological intellect across all disciplines and grade levels.

These standards were based on recommendations from a task force led by the Illinois Civic Mission Coalition.

¹ After ACT filed an unsuccessful protest to the procurement process, ISBE began negotiating a contract with the College Board for spring 2016 in February. However, ISBE lacked an appropriation for administering assessments due to the budget impasse. For spring 2017, ISBE plans to provide two options for an SAT administration date from which districts will be able to choose.

“Illinois is a national leader in efforts to connect students to meaningful career credentials through structured pathways.”

New fine arts standards are now the last learning area to be addressed as part of the goal to update content standards and make them more relevant. Arts Alliance

Illinois, a statewide advocate for arts education, has led this initiative in partnership with ISBE staff. The new standards will address the curricular areas of visual arts, music, theater, dance, and media arts and will emphasize learning through the artistic process instead of stressing only the artistic product developed by the student. Standards under each of these curricular areas emphasize learning through the artistic process instead of stressing only the artistic product developed by the student. Four artistic processes are addressed in the standards: creating, performing/producing/presenting, responding, and connecting. Implementation is slated for the 2017-18 school year.

ISBE’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs also play a key role in strengthening students’ technical skills, helping them meet learning standards expectations, and closing achievement gaps to prepare students for college and careers. CTE funds are used to support the integration of academic skills into CTE courses, the development of career pathways/programs of study, educational and community involvement, career development, student support services, professional development, course sequencing, program improvement activities, technical skill attainment, district technical assistance, teacher recruitment, and articulation with post-secondary institutions (including dual credit opportunities).

In March, ISBE secured a \$100,000 career readiness grant to develop a detailed action plan to better prepare students for careers. The grant is part of phase one of New Skills for Youth, a collaboration of the council of Chief State School Officers, JPMorgan Chase, and Advance CTE that supports states as they work to align career-focused education with high-skill, high-demand jobs. Along with grant funds, Illinois will receive expert technical assistance and peer support from other grantees to perform a diagnostic assessment of our career preparation system and prepare for implementation of a new action plan. The money and resources build upon the agency’s efforts to help more students access robust, quality career pathways in Illinois.

Illinois is a national leader in efforts to connect students to meaningful career credentials through structured pathways. ISBE has partnered with the Illinois Community College Board, the Department of Commerce, and the Office for Community College Research and Leadership at the University of Illinois to define, align, and create quality high school and community college Programs of Study as they relate to the career pathways in each career cluster.

Since 2011, Illinois agencies and businesses have partnered to implement the Illinois Pathways Initiative, which creates complementary community- and state-level approaches to address the skills gap faced by employers. Its mission is to empower and support all Illinois learners to explore, progress through, and transition from high-quality, structured career pathway systems into rewarding careers in critical growth areas for the state’s future competitiveness.

The initiative organizes and delivers sector-based support for career pathway implementation in eight high-growth industry sectors for the Illinois economy. Illinois Pathways also includes the



Students at Wheeling High School have the option to learn manufacturing skills, often landing in-demand jobs right after graduation. (Photo Courtesy Anne Ryan for USA TODAY)

establishment of a six-agency committee by intergovernmental agreement for career pathways support. The program helps bridge gaps between secondary and postsecondary education through piloted bridge programs and assistance that reduce the need for remediation.

One of Illinois Pathways' strategies was to create and support Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Learning Exchanges. These business-led, public-private partnerships were created as part of ISBE's federal Race to the Top program to help high schools and community colleges meet the demand of high-skill STEM industries. Each of the state's eight STEM Learning Exchanges focuses on an industry sector, including manufacturing, information technology, health science, energy, and finance. The exchanges provide e-learning curriculum resources, internships, student teamwork experiences, and professional development for educators. ISBE also funded the creation of a Pathways Resource Center (PRC) at the University of Illinois. The PRC has developed a number of specific resources for developing quality, robust programs of study to put more students on career

pathways and improve their readiness to succeed in the workplace.

These programs not only provide students a way to develop a career plan, but give them the opportunity to participate in high-quality, work-based learning experiences that include, but are not limited to, job shadowing and internships in their pathway. These experiences will ensure that they graduate ready for college and careers as they transition to postsecondary opportunities.

Illinois was also the first state selected to partner with the Lead Higher Initiative in a statewide challenge to close equity gaps in high school Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. Through this partnership, ISBE will receive the tools and resources to strengthen efforts to identify students, in particular underrepresented students, who are eligible for AP and IB coursework and give them greater support. Seven Illinois school districts have already committed to close their AP and IB gaps by fall 2016, and 15 more have been selected for the 2016-17 Lead Higher district cohort.

Goal: All students are supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.

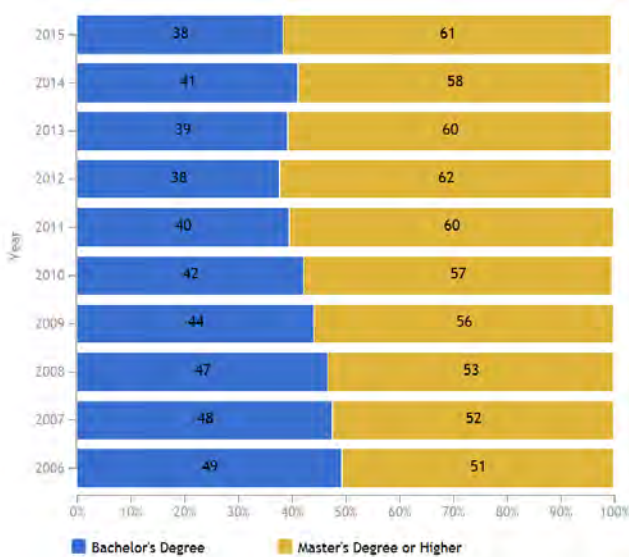
RESULTS TO DATE

State Teacher Education

The 2015 Illinois Report Card reports the percentage of teachers who hold a bachelor's degree or master's degree (Figure One: State Teacher Education). Over the past 10 years, the percentage of teachers with a graduate degree has increased more than 10 percent.

Individuals interested in becoming a teacher in Illinois must complete a teacher education program approved by ISBE. Elementary school teachers must hold a bachelor's degree in elementary education while high school teachers need a bachelor's degree in a secondary subject area such as mathematics, science, or English. Some positions require a master's degree for certain positions.

Figure One: State Teacher Education

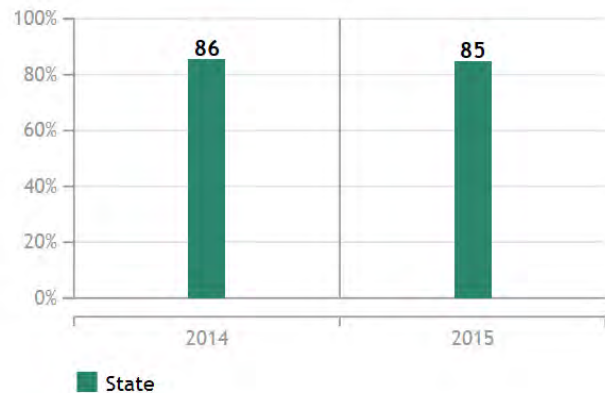


Source: 2015 Illinois Report Card (www.illinoisreportcard.com)

Teacher Retention

The 2015 Report Card shows the three-year average percentage of teachers retained in a district (Figure Two: Teacher Retention). Stability in the teaching staff often helps to foster a collaborative environment in which teachers work together to advance student achievement. However, some movement of teachers in and out of schools is normal.

Figure Two: Teacher Retention



Source: 2015 Illinois Report Card (www.illinoisreportcard.com)

PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES

ISBE's Center for Educator Effectiveness continues its work to strengthen educator preparation programs in Illinois. To improve the quality of educator preparation programs, the Educator Licensure division has proposed rules that include new accountability components for program reporting. Evidence of outcome measures (such as program completion rate, graduation rate, and employment rate in the licensure area) and impact measures (such as employer satisfaction,

program completion satisfaction, student learning and development, and observations of teaching effectiveness) will be required of each preparation program if the rules pass with no changes.

Educator Licensure is also working with Advance Illinois, Teacher Preparation Analytics, and Education First to develop a data collection system and an accountability system for educator preparation programs in Illinois. The Illinois team has formed a steering committee consisting of higher education and preK-12 education representatives as well as relevant organizations to build upon the data component in ISBE's proposed rules.

The division also continues to revise standards for educator preparation programs. Content tests for licensure candidates are continuously reviewed via standard-setting meetings to ensure preparation tests are accurately addressing the components candidates need to know in order to be excellent teachers. Principal tests, elementary education, and middle grades tests are currently being developed.

Illinois districts also continue to implement new comprehensive educator evaluation systems that incorporate student growth and professional practice. These new evaluation systems are required under the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA), which was signed into law in 2010. Local districts also have the flexibility to design their own systems that meet state rules and the needs and culture of their schools and community.

While PERA requires that – for the first time – principal and teacher evaluations will be tied to indicators of student growth as a “significant factor,” it does not make educators’ jobs dependent on standardized test results. Rather, student growth is just one portion of a teacher’s

performance evaluation rating; specifically, at least 25 percent in the first and second years of implementation. From the third year on, student growth must make up at least 30 percent of the rating.

Implementation has been staggered with all school districts to incorporate student growth into their educator evaluation ratings no later than the 2016-2017 school year. PERA also emphasizes the local control of districts throughout the development process. For teacher evaluation, a Joint Committee composed of equal representation selected by the district and its teachers or, where applicable, the teachers’ exclusive bargaining representatives, designs its own evaluation system that meets minimum state rules. Districts could choose assessments from a pool of national, state, or locally developed tests to measure student growth. For those aspects of the evaluation plan that cannot be agreed upon, a district defaults to the state model regarding the use of data and indicators of student growth.

The new federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) will allow the state to support teachers to be more effective instructors by focusing on student access. The law provides greater flexibility for alternative approaches to the preparation of effective teachers. ISBE will also be able to develop alternative pathways for educator preparation, such as a teacher, principal, or other school leader preparation academy that utilizes Regional Offices of Education and school partners.

Under ESSA, foundational and other support services – from general to more intensive – will remain available to school districts via the State-wide System of Support from ISBE, their Regional Offices of Education/Intermediate Service Centers, and the Illinois Center for School Improvement.

Goal: Every school offers a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.

RESULTS TO DATE

Social and Emotional Learning

Illinois was among the first states to set standards for social and emotional learning (SEL). As a result of the children’s Mental Health Act of 2003, ISBE adopted the Illinois SEL Standards, which describe the content and skills for students in grades K-12 for social and emotional learning. Each standard includes five benchmark levels that describe what students should know and be able to do in early elementary (grades K-3), late elementary (grades 4-5), middle/junior high (grades 6-8), early high school (grades 9-10), and late high school (grades 11-12).

Physical Development and Health Standards

Illinois also continues to be a leader in valuing student health and the positive effects it has on learning and development. Full implementation of the revised Illinois Learning Standards for physical development and health took place over the 2015-16 school year. These updated standards are based on the recommendations of the Enhance Physical Education Task Force, which was created in 2012 to increase physical education’s return on investment for learning and health.

The standards promote healthy development and foster workplace skills, including identifying short- and long-term goals, utilizing technology, following directions, and working cooperatively with others. Problem solving, communication, responsible decision making, and team-building skills are emphasized as well. In response to legislation, rules were also finalized in 2016 for

schools to use physical fitness assessments and begin collecting and reporting aggregate fitness information during the 2016-17 school year.

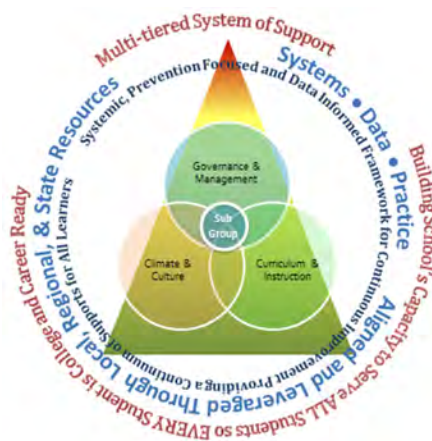
PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES

ISBE believes that the knowledge, skills, and attitudes addressed in social and emotional learning are essential to success in school and life overall. Illinois’ SEL standards and grade-level performance descriptors explain the process through which children develop awareness and management of their emotions, set and achieve important personal and academic goals, use social-awareness and interpersonal skills, and demonstrate decision making and responsible behaviors. ISBE’s Comprehensive System of Learning Supports website (www.isbe.net/learningsupports/) provides information for implementing the SEL standards as well as resources on school climate, bullying prevention, and new research-based resources on childhood trauma. ISBE encourages school districts to utilize these tools to help build healthy school climates.

To further achieve this goal, ISBE believes in using a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to train and support districts on evidence-based practices that

“ISBE believes that the knowledge, skills, and attitudes addressed in social and emotional learning are essential to success in school and life overall.”

best serve students' needs. In Illinois, MTSS is defined as a framework for continuous improvement that is systemic, prevention-focused, and data-informed, providing a coherent continuum of supports responsive to meet the needs of all learners. An appropriate analogy is to picture the MTSS framework as a bookshelf on which books, or evidence-based practices to support students, are located. There are promotion/prevention practices for all students, early intervention practices for some students, and intensive individualized practices for a few students. Access to the resources on any shelf is not determined solely by categories such as disability, poverty, or English Learner, but rather the individual needs of each student. This distinction is key as a student within any category of need may require very different supports from his or her peers and these same supports may also be necessary for a student not identified in one of these categories.



To support MTSS in school districts, ISBE has developed the new Illinois Multi-Tiered System of Supports Network (IL MTSS-N). IL MTSS-N supports districts by addressing students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs in a holistic manner to help school districts improve student outcomes. It is funded through a combination of State Personnel Development Grant Part D funds and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B Discretionary funds. IL MTSS-N provides a technical assistance arm that can provide coherent improvement strategies to school districts and help them meet federal special education requirements. In order to build districts' capacity to implement a multi-tiered system of support, IL MTSS-N addresses the need to align the systems of governance and management,

climate and culture, and curriculum and instruction in a district. This work is further supported by aligning and leveraging local, regional, and state resources to build the capacity of schools to serve all students. Schools will receive professional learning services that will focus on improving student performance in grades K-12 through the

implementation of an MTSS for learning supports, instruction, intervention, and assessment, including Response to Intervention, with an emphasis on district and school leadership teams; scientific, research-based reading, math, social emotional, and behavioral curricula and instruction at grades K-12; data-based decision making; universal screening and progress monitoring; and family/ caretaker involvement.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) also presents an opportunity to increase and improve support for schools and foster the development of healthy communities. The law will help Illinois increase support for its most at-risk and vulnerable students and ensure schools are adequately meeting their unique needs. ESSA puts a stronger focus on homeless students, with an emphasis on identifying homeless youth and continuing to remove the barriers that these students face in our schools. Homeless children and youth must be enrolled in school immediately, even if the student has missed the application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness. ISBE and local school districts will also have to develop, review, and revise policies to address existing obstacles in identifying, enrolling, and retaining homeless students in school, including those related to fees, fines, and absences.



Illinois State Board of Education

2016 **PROGRESS REPORT**

COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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