



Illinois State Board of Education



PROGRESS REPORT

COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION



June 2017



James T. Meeks,
Chairman

Tony Smith, Ph.D.,
State Superintendent

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



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State Superintendent
of Education



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Illinois State Board of Education

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James T. Meeks
Chairman

Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

June 30, 2017

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 2017 Progress 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, provides a comprehensive review of how the agency concentrates its efforts and resources to fulfill our Board's mission, vision, and goals.

State Superintendent of Education Tony Smith, Ph.D., completed his second full year with the agency in April 2017. State Superintendent Smith has made building relationships with school district superintendents across the state a priority. In 2015, he specified five key areas of focus to give more strategic definition to the agency's work toward achieving its goals.

Key Areas of Focus:

- **Money** - 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

Schools and communities across the state continue to face significant funding challenges, yet ISBE has leveraged its efforts and resources to make strides in each area. The pages in the 2017 Progress Report detail new initiatives, partnerships, policies, and opportunities designed to support school districts in improving student outcomes.

The State Board welcomed five new members in the past year: Cesilie Price, Jason Barclay, Ruth Cross, Collin Hitt, and Kevin Settle. The agency enjoys a meaningful and productive relationship with the State Board, under the guidance and leadership of Chairman James T. Meeks.

The State Board's and the agency's work over the past year has centered on the development and implementation of Illinois' Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan. ISBE engaged in a 16-month collaborative process to create the plan, which sets forth a new accountability system for all Illinois

schools. The principle of equity undergirds the accountability system: Schools with lower outcomes will receive greater supports.

The plan also introduces IL-EMPOWER, Illinois' new statewide system of support. IL-EMPOWER gives schools more voice and more choice in the school improvement process. Schools identified as needing comprehensive supports will conduct an equity audit to determine the school's specific needs and choose a professional learning partner from a pre-approved and cost-controlled network. The IL-EMPOWER professional learning partner, in concert with ISBE, will work with staff and leadership at the school to effect systemic and sustainable change.

Illinois' ESSA State Plan crystalizes ISBE's focus on the "whole child" model of quality education, as cited in the State Board's vision.

Vision:

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

In the "whole child" model, the interconnected environments of a child's life create a continuum of learning. Quality education recognizes and strengthens the connections between students' cognitive, physical, social, and emotional health and their overlapping environments in the home, school, and community. ISBE believes in a holistic educational practice to help all students become empowered and contributing adults.

The IL-EMPOWER partnerships will build educators' capacity and strengthen school leadership to engage families and communities in serving each student as a whole child.

The State Board's measureable and specific goals, adopted in 2015, define specific milestones for the state's public education system to meet to demonstrate success in serving all students. ISBE included the State Board's goals as the long-term goals for the ESSA State Plan.

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.

School districts, schools, ISBE, and our stakeholders will work together to implement the ESSA State Plan over the next four years. The plan will continue to evolve as ISBE collects and analyzes new data from the accountability system and sees the first results of the new statewide system of support.

ISBE has used the transition to ESSA as an opportunity to enhance internal collaboration, communication, and efficiency at the agency. The agency converted to Office 365 to unlock a host of planning and collaboration tools. Leadership at the agency has taken on new projects to improve service and responsiveness to all stakeholders and to provide greater and more meaningful professional learning opportunities for agency staff.

ISBE also launched a redesigned agency website in December 2016. The new website features content organized and prioritized by user interest, easier readability on mobile devices, and greatly improved search functionality. ISBE has received overwhelmingly positive feedback on the new website, which has made our data, information, and resources more accessible and transparent for school districts, educators, families, and media.

ISBE hired Dr. Libia Gil in April 2017 to serve as the agency's chief education officer. Dr. Gil will lead all student support, academic program, school assistance, and district support services and play an instrumental role in the implementation of Illinois' ESSA State Plan.

All of the members of the State Board and the entire staff of the agency remain committed to ISBE's mission.

Mission:

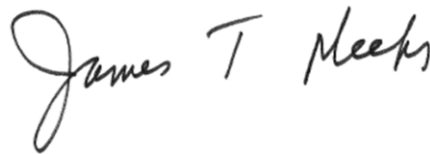
Provide leadership and resources to achieve excellence across all Illinois districts through engaging legislators, school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders in formulating and advocating for policies that enhance education, empower districts, and ensure equitable outcomes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

ISBE values your efforts over the past year to support the agency's work. The economic vitality and health of the state depends on strong public school systems. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership to create the circumstances in which all of Illinois' communities can thrive.

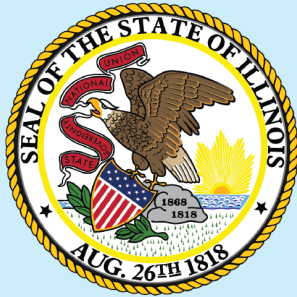
Sincerely,



Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education



James T. Meeks
Chairman



Illinois State Board of Education

Progress Report

Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Elementary and Secondary Education

June 2017

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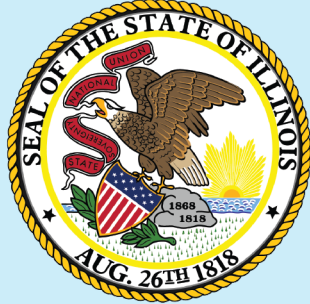
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Illinois State Board of Education

Executive Summary

2017

Executive Summary

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) develops and maintains a continuing five-year comprehensive strategic plan for elementary and secondary education in accordance with Public Act 93-1036. The first plan in 2005 focused on ISBE's three primary goals: enhancing literacy, improving educator quality for all children, and expanding data-driven management and school support practices. Agency staff members revisit the plan each year to review the agency's accomplishments and to refine the agency's strategies. The State Board amended its strategic plan in September 2015 to reflect a new vision for public education, establish a new mission, and identify refocused goals. ISBE's 2017 Comprehensive Strategic Plan Progress Report will guide the agency as it continues to build holistic and inclusive public education systems.

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.

ISBE's five key areas of focus are the strategies the agency is employing to make progress toward its goals.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

- Money: 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

Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015, reauthorizing and amending the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replacing the most recent version of the law, No Child Left Behind. The new law builds on key areas of progress, such as the disaggregation of data by race and low-income status, but gives states more flexibility and independence to decide how to support schools with lower student outcomes.

Over a 16-month period, ISBE created three drafts of the ESSA State Plan; hosted approximately 100 listening tour forums across the state; engaged hundreds of advocates and stakeholder groups representing educators, administrators, school support staff, parents, students, and concerned citizens; and considered more than 3,500 comments submitted online. In March, the State Board unanimously approved the plan, and Governor Bruce Rauner gave

the plan his signature and support. ISBE submitted the plan to the U.S. Department of Education to meet the first deadline of April 3.

Illinois' ESSA State Plan embraces the significant opportunity ESSA presents to better serve all students. The work of building Illinois' ESSA State Plan deepened ISBE's relationships with the field and crystallized ISBE's definition of quality education. The interconnected environments of a child's life create a continuum of learning. Quality education recognizes and strengthens the connections between students' cognitive, physical, social, and emotional health and between students' overlapping environments in the home, school, and community. Quality education supports the whole child as she or he develops from preschool through high school and on to college and career.

ISBE will continue to lead schools through the transition to the new accountability system. The majority of the provisions in the new law will take effect in phases over the next two school years, with the 2017-18 school year serving as a transition year. ISBE will continue to solicit feedback from the field and to refine the plan as needed.

MONEY

Illinois has the most inadequate and most inequitable school funding system in the nation. The funding formula forces Illinois school districts to rely primarily on local property taxes to fund schools. The funding formula has created vast disparities in educational resources between poor and wealthy communities, while Illinois' low-income student population has grown from 40 percent of enrollment in the 2005-06 school year to 50 percent of enrollment in the 2015-16 school year.

ISBE has provided technical and administrative support to the Illinois School Funding Reform Commission, which Governor Rauner created in July 2016 to make recommendations to the General Assembly to revise the current school funding formula.

As required by ESSA, ISBE has begun establishing data collection processes and updating the online Illinois Report Card to display every school's expenditures in total and by source: federal, state, local, and philanthropic. The new information will foster a better

understanding among families and stakeholders of the relationship between resources and student outcomes.

ISBE produces the School District Financial Profiles each year to provide school districts and their communities with information about districts' financial health and to promote sound financial management. The 2017 Annual School District Financial Profiles showed a slight increase in school districts' overall scores for financial strength – but at a significant cost to students. Schools have taken on debt to cover normal operational costs and have eliminated staff and programs. Illinois' failed school funding formula and lack of a state budget is forcing every school district in the state to make painful choices to keep their schools' doors open and to minimize the harm to students. ISBE will continue to advocate on behalf of Illinois' schools for a funding structure that ensures the whole child receives a high-quality education in a safe, secure, and supportive educational environment.

QUALITY

Students in Illinois do not all have equal access to the same quality of public education. ISBE is engaged in a collaborative process to implement a new accountability system for all schools, as required under ESSA. Illinois' new accountability system centers on equity: Schools identified as the lowest performing will receive the greatest supports.

The accountability system portrays a multidimensional picture of student learning by assessing school quality through nine dynamic measures of student success, from chronic absenteeism and fine arts to English Learner proficiency and academic attainment in science. Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, every school will receive a summative designation based on overall performance on all of the accountability indicators and any significant achievement gaps between student demographic groups. The summative designations, consisting of four tiers, will create a common understanding of where our schools are and where they need to be for all students to have fair access to quality education. IL-EMPOWER, Illinois' new statewide system of support, will help the highest-need schools make systemic and sustainable shifts in educational practice.

ISBE's steadfast commitment to high-quality assessments underpins the new accountability

system's academic indicators. All public high school juniors had the opportunity to take the SAT at no cost for the first time in 2017. The SAT aligns to the Illinois Learning Standards, satisfies state and federal accountability requirements, and serves as a college entrance exam. Illinois students also took the Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) for the second time in 2017. The ISA aligns to the Illinois Learning Standards in science, which are based on the Next Generation Science Standards. ISBE used the development of the ISA as an opportunity to innovate on the traditional assessment model from top to bottom, while maintaining quality and reducing costs.

A system founded on equity brings the needs of historically overlooked and underserved student populations to the forefront. For the first time in more than 10 years, the U.S. Department of Education in June 2016 issued Illinois the designation of "Meets Requirements" for implementing the requirements and purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Fair access to quality education includes fair access to the internet. ISBE is collaborating with Governor Rauner and EducationSuperHighway on the Classroom Connectivity Initiative to expand fiber optic installation in schools across the state by taking advantage of the Federal Communications Commission's E-rate program.

AUTONOMY

In the context of a common definition of quality, ISBE believes local school leaders and educators best understand their staffs' and students' unique needs, challenges, and strengths. IL-EMPOWER gives schools and districts both more choice and more voice in the school improvement process. Schools, districts, and their professional learning partners will work together to develop local improvement plans based on data-driven strategies. ISBE will lead school districts through the transition to IL-EMPOWER over the 2017-18 school year.

ISBE strives to collect and deliver actionable data to stakeholders to ensure education systems statewide support all students. The Illinois Data for Fiscal and Instructional Results, Study, and Transparency (Illinois Data FIRST) project encompasses interrelated and cross-agency efforts to make Illinois' longitudinal student data more accessible and actionable, while

protecting student privacy. ISBE's new Ed360 data dashboard for educators and administrators, a component of Illinois Data FIRST, will provide unprecedented access to live data visualizations of student performance to encourage data-driven instructional practices.

The acclaimed Illinois Report Card website continues to provide educators, families, and stakeholders with a comprehensive informational snapshot of public education across the state. ISBE will expand the Illinois Report Card interface to display additional data collected as part of Illinois' new accountability system, including school-level expenditures, summative designations for school quality and student growth, and students' participation in fine arts courses.



Students at Olympia High School in Stanford do the "Prosthetic Arm Design Challenge," which connects scientific concepts with a complex real-life problem. Using a family farm accident as the premise, the students design, construct, evaluate, and redesign a prosthetic arm that mimics the structure and function of a human arm. The project integrates engineering design, part of the new Illinois Learning Standards for science.

ISBE also supports district autonomy through the \$42 million federally funded Charter Schools Program. ISBE awarded grants to five entities in fiscal year 2017 to expand the number of high-quality and educationally diverse charter schools in Illinois.

COMPETENCY

ISBE actively supports the Illinois P-20 Council's goal of increasing the proportion of adults in Illinois with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025. To achieve this goal, Illinois must aggressively transform secondary education to prepare our students for the world of work through a radically different approach.

ISBE is creating a multi-initiative community of practice to reinvent high school. ISBE launched the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Program in November 2016. Competency-based learning advances students through their education based on demonstrated mastery of specific skills and knowledge rather than on a standardized amount of time in the classroom. Ten school districts are participating in the first cohort of the pilot; each district will design and implement their own competency-based learning system and will engage their communities and stakeholders in the development of the system. ISBE hopes to spur a similar shift in educators' learning from "sit-and-get" professional development to teacher-led microcredentials. ISBE is collaborating with states that are pioneering microcredentials in the hopes of designing and launching a microcredentialing pilot later in 2017.

ISBE will continue to facilitate the creation and use of an open ecosystem of digital resources that can increase equity, empower teachers, and support students through competency-based learning. ISBE played an instrumental role in Illinois joining Future Ready Schools, a project of the Alliance for Excellent Education, in October 2016. The nationwide initiative connects educators within member states with a robust framework of free research-based tools and resources promoting personalized student learning. ISBE also announced the launch of a new statewide #GoOpen initiative in June 2016, joining the inaugural cohort of 15 states promoting the use of high-quality, openly licensed educational resources in schools.

COMMUNITY

ISBE strives to position schools as resource hubs central to a network of services and opportunities for children, families, and communities. Schools do not educate children alone. ISBE draws inspiration from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model, which calls for education systems to recognize and nurture each student as a "whole child" – an individual with interconnected needs living within an ecology of overlapping learning environments. Adopting the whole child mindset empowers schools and districts to make connections in their communities with public, private, and nonprofit institutions.

ISBE received \$15 million in FY 2017 to provide grants to school districts and community organizations for after-school programming through the Healthy Community Incentive Fund. The grants improve academic outcomes for students by providing enrichment activities in a safe and healthy environment and by strengthening support services for students facing the greatest challenges.

ISBE collaborates with other agencies in implementing the whole child model. ISBE has joined with youth- and health-focused state agencies to identify the behavioral health needs of youth at risk of custody relinquishment and linking them with the most appropriate clinical services. ISBE provides technical assistance to the Department of Juvenile Justice and Local Education Agencies to help neglected or delinquent youth to re-enter school successfully and/or to find employment after they leave an institution and return to the local community. ISBE has also established procedures to ensure children experiencing homelessness have equitable opportunities to learn and succeed in school.

ISBE recognizes the integral role of families in children's success from cradle to career – and the potential of engaged and active families to bolster school improvement efforts. ISBE assists schools and districts in using Title I funding to strengthen communication with families.

ALL KINDERGARTNERS ARE ASSESSED FOR READINESS.

ISBE believes that assessing the developmental readiness of all students entering kindergarten is critical to ensuring that all children receive equitable support in their early years. Research shows that 90 percent of human brain development happens in the first five years of life.

The Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS), developed by experts, advocates, and practitioners from the community and within ISBE, guides educators as they observe young students' knowledge, skills, and behavior. KIDS focuses on the competencies that can best predict a student's long-term success. School districts statewide will implement KIDS beginning in the 2017-18 school year. Data from KIDS will help communities and legislators understand where children have and do not have access to quality preschool.

ISBE remains a key stakeholder on the Illinois Early Learning Council, a public-private partnership created by Public Act 93-380 to strengthen, coordinate, and expand programs and services for children from birth to age 5. ISBE, which is represented on the council's executive committee, works to maximize the state's ability to capture current and future federal funds for early learning services and infrastructure.

ISBE administers a number of state and federally funded grants and programs to expand high-quality preschool programs, improve the quality of existing programs, and support the healthy development of young children. The Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) program provides funding to serve children from birth to age 5 through the Prevention Initiative and Preschool for All programs. The ECBG also provides support for program quality and improvement through monitoring and training. The Preschool Expansion Grant supports the state's efforts in expanding high-quality preschool to high-need 4-year-olds not yet eligible for kindergarten. ISBE also participates in the Statewide Inclusion Team, part of the Inclusion Topic National Cohort, to improve services to children with disabilities in early childhood settings.

NINETY PERCENT OR MORE THIRD-GRADE STUDENTS ARE READING AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL.

Researchers often refer to third grade as the pivotal moment when a student shifts from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." The content students encounter in science, mathematics, and social studies after third grade requires more reading and active synthesis of academic vocabulary. A student who does not meet grade-level expectations for reading by third grade is four times less likely to graduate by age 19 than a child who does read proficiently by that time, according to the American Educational Research Association.

The new Illinois Learning Standards for English language arts, implemented during the 2013-14 school year, chart a path from kindergarten through high school for students to achieve college and career readiness. ISBE measures students' learning in English language arts by administering the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam to all students in the third through eighth grades. The PARCC assessment aligns to the new Illinois Learning Standards and asks students to express their understanding in writing, in response to and with reference to authentic, real-world texts. About 36 percent of all third-grade students who took the PARCC assessment in 2016 met or exceeded grade-level standards in English language arts, approximately the same percentage as in 2015.

The new accountability system ISBE developed under ESSA includes both attainment of and growth toward mastery of grade-level standards in English language arts in the third through eighth grades and in high school as key indicators of schools' academic performance. The accountability system examines schools' effectiveness in delivering English language arts instruction as one of nine interconnected levers to improve student outcomes.

ISBE supports students' improvement in meeting the Illinois Learning Standards in English language arts through the federally funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) grants. Programs supported by this funding provide art, music, character building, physical education, and other enrichment activities to students to help them understand real-world applications of key academic concepts and engage in

their learning in new and different ways. The 21st CCLC programs also provide literacy, computer training, and other educational services for the families of participating children.

NINETY PERCENT OR MORE FIFTH-GRADE STUDENTS MEET OR EXCEED EXPECTATIONS IN MATHEMATICS.

The new Illinois Learning Standards for mathematics emphasize deep conceptual understanding of key ideas and encourage the development of critical reasoning and problem-solving skills. The standards promote a culture of professional learning as educators develop their own abilities to help students meet these higher expectations for learning.

Graduating from high school appropriately proficient in mathematics not only keeps both college and career doors open but also empowers individuals with skills and knowledge necessary to successfully navigate life. Gaining mathematical proficiency delivers a key piece of the puzzle to create a fulfilling life of one's choosing.

Schools statewide utilized the PARCC exam for the second time in the spring of 2016 to assess students on the new Illinois Learning Standards for mathematics. The PARCC assessment challenges students to solve multi-step math problems that require reasoning and address real-world situations. About 32 percent of all fifth-grade students who took the PARCC assessment in 2016 met or exceeded grade-level expectations, an increase of approximately 5 percent over 2015.

The new accountability system ISBE developed under ESSA includes both attainment of and growth toward mastery of grade-level standards in mathematics in the third through eighth grades and in high school as key indicators of schools' academic performance. The accountability system examines schools' effectiveness at delivering math instruction as one of nine interconnected levers to improve student outcomes.

ISBE administers the federally funded Math and Science Partnership (MSP) Grant specifically to improve educators' instructional practice in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects. The MSP Grant cultivates partnerships between high-need school districts and the STEM

departments at higher education institutions. The MSP Grant provides 120 hours of research-based and standards-aligned professional learning for educators in STEM subjects and fields. The 750 educators who cultivated their practice through the MSP Grant in FY 2017 provided enhanced STEM instruction to 42,702 students.

NINETY PERCENT OR MORE OF NINTH-GRADERS ARE ON TRACK TO GRADUATE WITH THEIR COHORT.

The first year of high school poses a critical transition period for students. Students who finish the ninth grade "on track" are almost four times as likely to graduate from high school in four years as those students who do not.

The new accountability system ISBE developed under ESSA includes ninth-grade on track as an indicator of school quality and student success for high schools, spurring heightened awareness of and attention to students' first year of high school as a decisive moment in their academic trajectory. The indicator will help reveal opportunities to strengthen the resources and interventions for students struggling with the transition to high school.

The accountability system also includes chronic absenteeism as a key indicator of school quality and student success for all schools. The Illinois Attendance Commission, created by Public Act 99-0432 and for which ISBE provides administrative support, acknowledged that key transitions in a child's academic life, such as from middle to high school, "trigger school attendance difficulties." The level of chronic absenteeism and the number of ninth-graders on track can help tell us whether students feel engaged in their learning, well known, and well cared for in Illinois' schools. ISBE will help schools understand these accountability indicators and leverage the data to improve student outcomes.

NINETY PERCENT OR MORE STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL READY FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER.

Illinois' four-year graduation rate increased from 82 percent in 2012 to 86 percent in 2014 and held

steady over the past two years, despite severe and compounding funding challenges. Disaggregating Illinois' graduation rate by demographic groups reveals the inequity that perpetuates income and achievement gaps as students move into adulthood. For instance, our public schools graduated 90 percent of White students in 2016, but only 75 percent of Black students.

Illinois has taken strides to eliminate access and achievement gaps for low-income students and students of color in the most rigorous high school courses. Illinois became the first state in the nation to partner with the Lead Higher Initiative, committing to a statewide challenge to close equity gaps for low-income students and students of color in AP, IB, and dual enrollment courses. Illinois ranks fourth in the nation for increasing the percentage of graduates earning a 3 or higher on an AP exam during high school. The State Board at its December 2016 meeting approved an agreement with the College Board to maintain the cost of taking AP tests at \$15 per exam for low-income students, compared to the normal test fee of \$93, for the May 2017 test administration.

Illinois is among the first states in the country to empower school districts to award a State Seal of Biliteracy to students who demonstrate a high level of proficiency in English and in reading, writing, listening, and speaking another language. The optional State Seal of Biliteracy program has grown substantially since becoming law in 2013. A single district piloted the program in the 2013-14 school year; and 72 school districts indicated their intention to participate in the 2016-17 school year.

The Postsecondary Workforce Readiness Act, signed into law in 2016, requires ISBE to work with stakeholders and other state agencies to create specific industry-aligned college and career pathway endorsements on high school diplomas. As part of the "Workforce Readiness through Career Pathways and Apprenticeships" initiative launched by Governor Rauner's Children's Cabinet, cross-agency efforts will help to articulate postsecondary and career expectations, drive expanded opportunities to learn outside of the traditional classroom, and align plans for college and career pathways with Illinois' new accountability system indicators.

ISBE strives to improve technical, STEM, and agricultural programs to prepare more students for success in high-demand industries. The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Improvement Act of 2006 delivers federal funding to prepare students for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations through educational activities outside of the typical academic subjects.

Additional grants, including the Agricultural Education Programs' Incentive Funding Grant and the Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education Grant, support agricultural education programs and skill development opportunities for agricultural education teachers. School districts have established an average of seven new agricultural education programs per year in each of the last five years. Student net earnings have totaled more than \$11.67 million from work-based learning projects connected to their classroom training.

ALL STUDENTS ARE SUPPORTED BY HIGHLY PREPARED AND EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS.

All students need effective teachers from their first day in the classroom. The data shows that teachers applying for licensure are surpassing the standards for classroom readiness. However, Illinois needs many more candidates to enter and remain in the profession in order to reach its goal that all students are being supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders every day.

As of October 1, 2016, 1,005.8 or .77 percent of the 129,860.2 total public school teaching positions in Illinois are unfilled. The open positions are concentrated in particular fields, such as bilingual and special education, and frequently in rural or low-income regions of the state. ISBE worked with the Illinois General Assembly to pass SB 2912, signed into law by Governor Rauner on Jan. 6, 2017. The new law makes several changes to streamline the process for licensed educators in other states to obtain an Illinois license, reduces financial and other barriers to substitute teaching, and creates alternative routes for teachers to seek the teacher leader license endorsement.

ISBE works closely with the Partnership for Educator Preparation Steering Committee to ensure

educator preparation programs receive the data they need to improve. ISBE has acted on the committee's recommendations for increased transparency and accountability and designed the voluntary Teacher Preparation Data System Pilot program. The resulting data will empower teacher preparation institutions statewide to engage in continuous program improvement.

ISBE believes in expanding opportunities for teacher leadership and meaningful professional learning experiences in order to improve satisfaction and retention among educators and to harness the teaching corps' deep talent and knowledge to improve Illinois' education systems. Illinois' ESSA State Plan includes competitive grant programs to support practice-focused research projects and innovative fieldwork partnerships between districts and higher education institutions. ISBE will continue promoting the Ed Leaders Network, an online, on-demand, professional learning community, to connect teacher leaders across districts. IL-EMPOWER leverages teacher leadership and educators' own growth and expertise as the critical drivers of school improvement.

EVERY SCHOOL OFFERS A SAFE AND HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS.

Learning happens best when students feel safe and healthy. ISBE believes schools have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe, caring, inclusive, and responsive school climate.

The 5Essentials Survey, which was administered statewide for the fifth consecutive year during the 2016-17 school year, continues to provide valuable feedback about individual schools' climate and culture. The Illinois Learning Standards for social/emotional learning continue to guide schools and districts in developing curricula and programming to help students develop and utilize self-awareness, interpersonal, and decision-making skills.

ISBE received a \$1.9 million federal Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education) cooperative grant in 2014 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to support its efforts to help schools detect and respond to

mental health issues among youth. The funds assist three districts in working with community partners to develop and implement comprehensive plans to identify and address students' mental health needs.

ISBE's Trauma-informed Practices Pilot, most recently funded by the state in FY 2015 through the Illinois Children's Mental Health line, fosters a statewide understanding of trauma and its impact and builds capacity for identifying and implementing appropriate interventions. The Special Education Association of Peoria County, the Regional Offices of Education, and ISBE partnered in FY 2017 to provide trainings and book studies for approximately 500 educators and administrators.

ISBE also recognizes the critical importance of physical health to students' capacities to learn. ISBE proudly administers nutritious food programs, including the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, Special Milk Program, and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, all funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Illinois Learning Standards for enhanced physical education aim to foster physical and mental receptiveness to learning and to promote healthy decision-making and teamwork skills.



Members of the Illinois State Board of Education's 2016-17 Student Advisory Council deliver their final presentation to the board on awareness of mental health issues in Illinois public schools.

Section One:

Key Areas of Focus

Money:

Establish an adequate and equitable education finance system.

Illinois has the most inadequate and the most inequitable school funding system in the nation.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the State of Illinois contributes the smallest percentage to school funding of any state: 26.1 percent in fiscal year 2013. As a result, Illinois school districts rely primarily on taxing local property wealth to fund schools, leading to vast disparities in educational resources between poor and wealthy communities. A 2015 report from The Education Trust shows that because Illinois' school funding formula "does not distribute state funds progressively enough to counteract disparities in local dollars, the highest poverty districts receive 19 percent less in overall funding than the lowest poverty districts" – the biggest funding gap in the country.

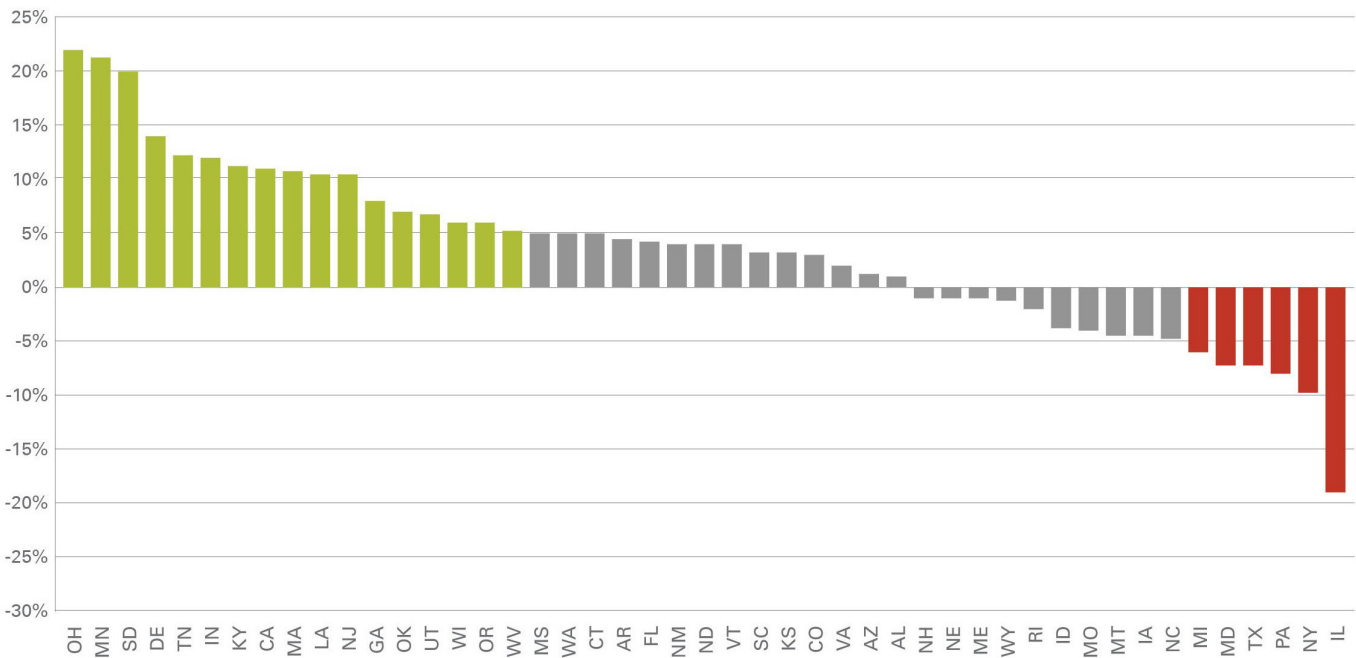
State and federal statutes require Illinois to start collecting data on expenditures at the school level. ISBE has begun establishing data collection processes

and updating the online Illinois Report Card to display every school's expenditures in total and by source: federal, state, local, and philanthropic. The new information will foster a better understanding among families and stakeholders of the relationship between resources and student outcomes.

Illinois continues to experience significant growth in our low-income student population, defined as students who are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, live in substitute care, or whose families receive public aid. The number of low-income students increased from 40 percent of enrollment in the 2005-06 school year to 50 percent of enrollment in the 2015-16 school year. The Foundation Level of \$6,119 per student, which sets the mandated minimum level of funding per student in Illinois' public schools, has not increased since FY 2010.

The Education Funding Advisory Board (EFAB), for whom ISBE provides administrative and technical

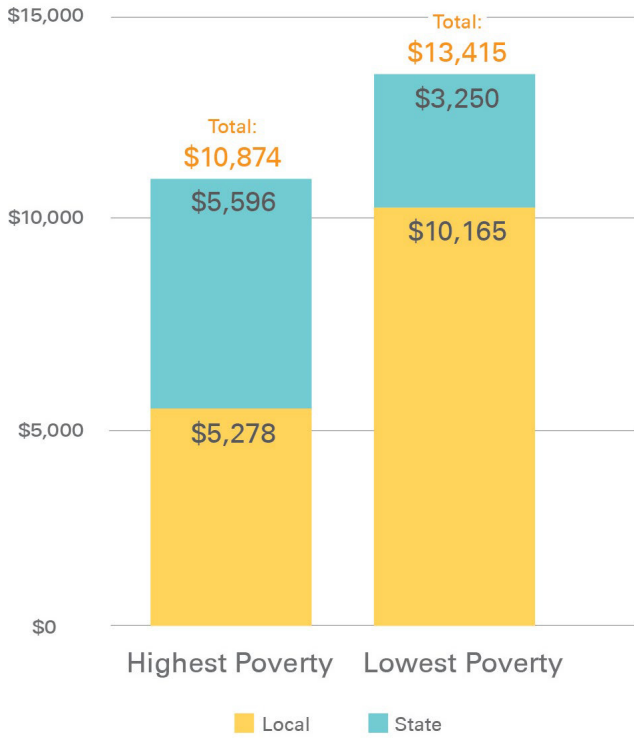
Figure One: Gaps in State and Local Revenues per Student Between Districts Serving the Most and the Fewest Students in Poverty



Reading this figure: A 2015 report from The Education Trust shows that because Illinois' school funding formula "does not distribute state funds progressively enough to counteract disparities in local dollars, the highest poverty districts receive 19 percent less in overall funding than the lowest poverty districts" – the biggest funding gap in the country.

Source: The Education Trust. Funding Gaps 2015.

Figure Two: State and Local Funding for the Highest and Lowest Poverty Districts



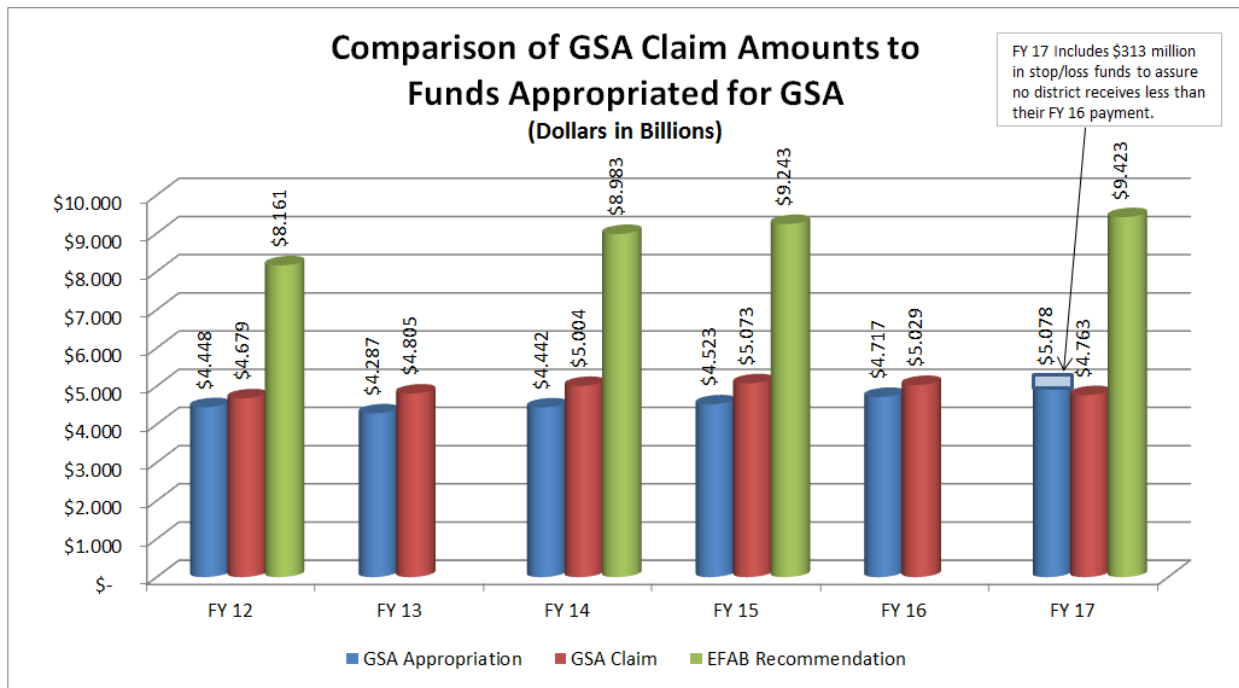
Source: The Education Trust. Funding Gaps 2015.

support, recommended increasing the Foundation Level to \$9,204 in FY 2018. The members of EFAB implore the General Assembly and the Governor to “work together to increase the resources available for public education, offering our children the tools they deserve and need to compete in a global economy.”

School districts received their FY 2017 General State Aid (GSA) funding in full and uninterrupted due to Public Act 99-524, but students have suffered due to the proration of and delay in mandated categorical (MCAT) payments. Quarterly MCAT payments reimburse schools for programs such as transportation, special education, and the free and reduced-price meal program. School districts received both their fourth-quarter FY 2016 and their first-quarter FY 2017 MCAT payments at least six months late and are likely to continue experiencing significant delays.

Although the MCAT cluster does not include bilingual education, insufficient appropriations from the General Assembly have resulted in proration for bilingual education reimbursements as well. The number of students identified as English Learners increased by nearly 40,000 students between the 2005-06 and 2015-16 school years to approximately 11 percent of the total student population. However, appropriations for bilingual education have

Figure Three



Source: Education Funding Advisory Board. January 2017 Report.

not increased since FY 2011. The cost standard used to calculate bilingual education reimbursements and the Foundation Level dates back to 1999. Recent estimates project that districts will receive only 63 percent of their final expenditures submitted for FY 2017.

Overall, students’ academic achievement has held steady over the past school year – a testament to the commitment and resourcefulness of educators and administrators across the state who deeply felt our state’s education funding challenges.

ISBE produces the School District Financial Profiles each year to provide school districts and their communities with information about districts’ financial health and to promote sound financial management. ISBE provides tools and guidance on financial management to all school districts seeking assistance and particularly to school districts designated in the lowest of the four categories of financial strength, Financial Watch.

The 2017 Annual School District Financial Profiles showed a slight increase in school districts’ overall scores for financial strength – but at a significant cost to students. School districts have managed the impact of the state’s budget crisis and broken school funding formula by taking on debt to cover normal operational

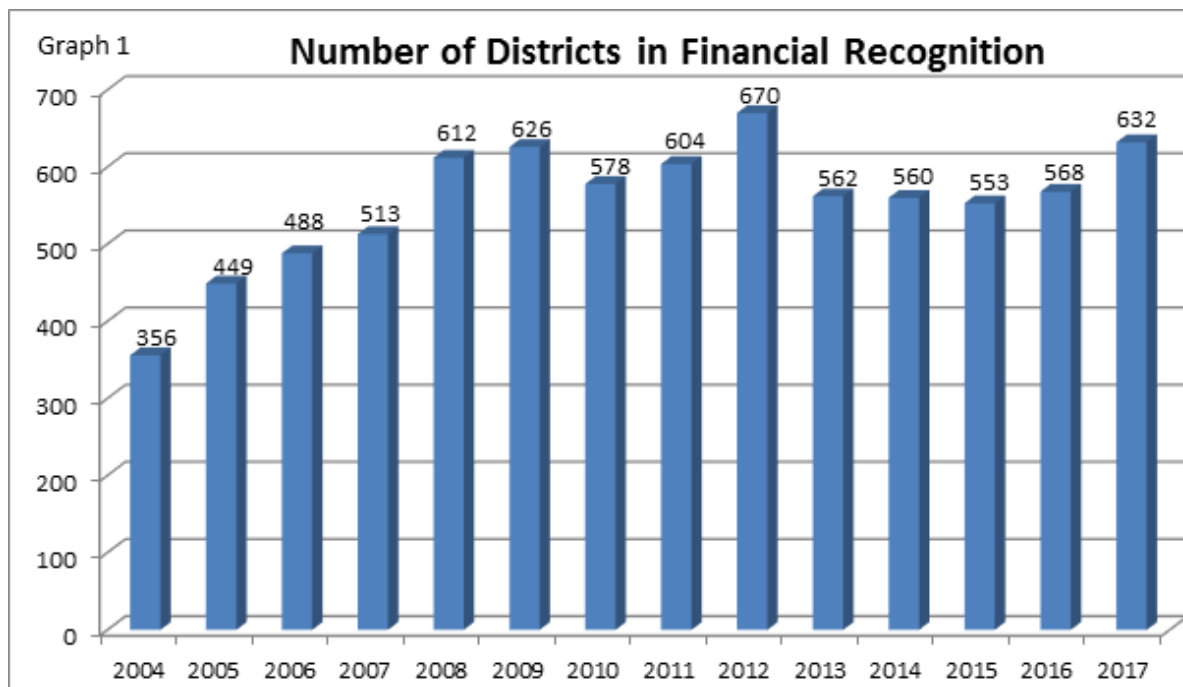
costs and by eliminating staff and programs. More than a fourth of all Illinois school districts in FY 2016 issued short- or long-term debt to sustain normal operations. School districts pay interest on outstanding debt, which decreases the funds available for education services in the future.

Illinois’ failed school funding formula and lack of a state budget is forcing every school district in the state to make painful choices to keep their schools’ doors open and to minimize the harm to students. Communities will continue to suffer unless and until the state implements an adequate and equitable school funding formula.

ISBE has provided technical and administrative support to the Illinois School Funding Reform Commission, which Governor Bruce Rauner created in July 2016 to make recommendations to the General Assembly to revise the current school funding formula.

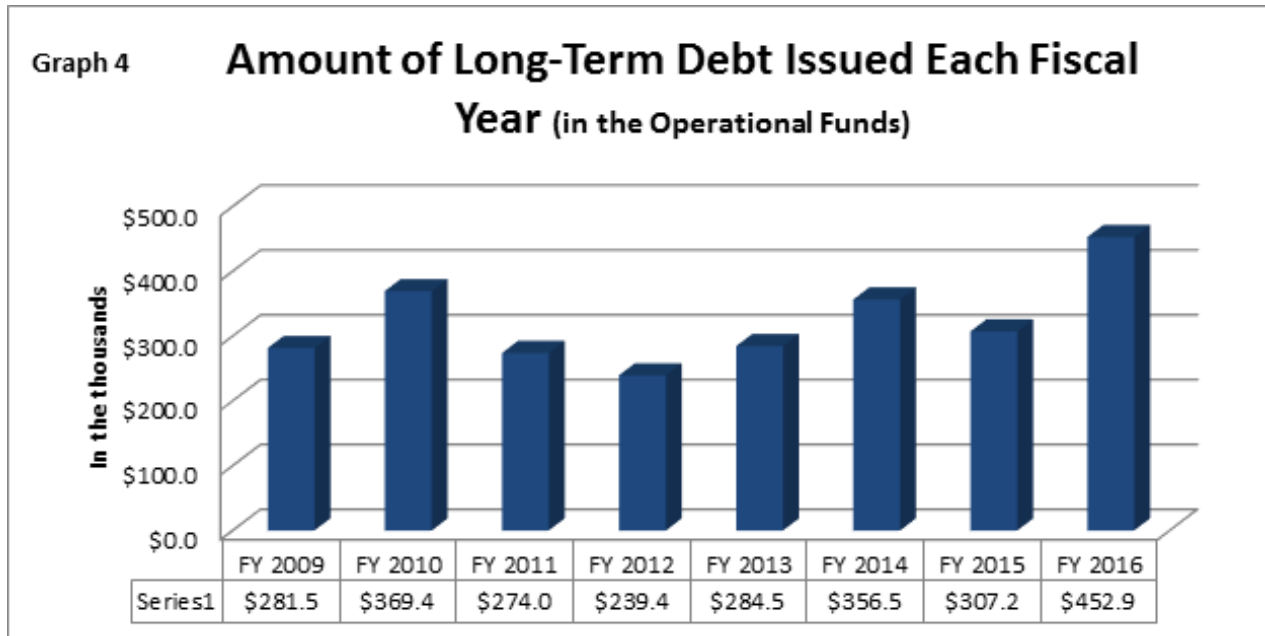
In addition, ISBE finalized a settlement agreement in February 2017 in the matter of *Chicago Urban League, et al. v. Illinois State Board of Education*. The settlement agreement resolved longstanding litigation by establishing how ISBE will proceed when the General Assembly fails to enact an appropriation sufficient to pay for all GSA claims submitted by school districts.

Figure Four



Source: Education Funding Advisory Board. January 2017 Report.

Figure Five



Source: Education Funding Advisory Board. January 2017 Report.

ISBE submitted its budget recommendations for FY 2018 to the General Assembly in January 2017. ISBE’s total recommendations amounted to \$7.727 billion, an increase of \$266.4 million (3.45 percent) over FY 2017 levels.

ISBE will continue to advocate on behalf of Illinois’ schools for a funding structure that ensures every child receives a high-quality education in a safe, secure, and supportive environment.

Quality:

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

ISBE engaged in a 16-month collaborative process to develop a new accountability system for all schools. The accountability system centers on equity: Schools identified as the lowest performing will receive the greatest supports.

ISBE created the accountability system to meet federal requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ISBE created three drafts of the ESSA State Plan; hosted approximately 100 listening tour forums across the state; engaged hundreds of advocates and stakeholder groups representing educators, administrators, school support staff, parents, students, and concerned citizens; and received and considered more than 3,500 comments online. The State Board unanimously approved the plan, and Governor Bruce Rauner gave the plan his signature and support in March 2017.

Throughout the drafting and feedback process, stakeholders consistently voiced that the accountability system should portray a multidimensional picture of student learning. The resulting accountability system assesses school quality through nine dynamic measures of student success, from chronic absenteeism and fine arts to English Learner proficiency and academic attainment in science.

Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, every school will receive a summative designation based on overall performance on all of the accountability indicators, as well as any achievement gaps between student demographic groups:

- Tier 1: Exemplary
- Tier 2: Commendable
- Tier 3: Underperforming
- Tier 4: Lowest Performing

The summative designations will create a common understanding of where our schools are and where they need to be for all students to have fair access to quality education. Growth comprises a full 50 percent of the accountability system. Beginning with the 2019-20 school year, schools will receive an additional designation for student growth. ISBE will conduct an

annual comparison of like schools' and all schools' growth toward proficiency and assign growth designations on an A through F scale. The accountability system focuses on growth and student outcomes to examine what's working and what's not, especially between schools serving communities with similar levels of resources and need.

The work of building Illinois' ESSA State Plan deepened ISBE's relationships with the field and crystallized ISBE's definition of quality education. The interconnected environments of a child's life create a continuum of learning. Quality education recognizes and strengthens the connections between students' cognitive, physical, social, and emotional health and between students' overlapping environments in the home, school, and community. Quality education supports the whole child as she or he develops from preschool through high school and on to college and career.

Figure Six: Progress on K-12 Connectivity

180,264
MORE STUDENTS CONNECTED IN 2016
now have the minimum connectivity they need

820,565
STUDENTS NEED MORE BANDWIDTH
to meet the minimum connectivity goal



CONNECTIVITY

83% of school districts representing **1,099,120 students** meet the minimum connectivity goal of 100 kbps per student. This is **up from 71%** in 2015.



UPGRADES

191 school districts upgraded their Internet access in 2016 leading to **715,946 students** getting more bandwidth.

Source: EducationSuperHighway. 2016 State of the States.

Illinois' new statewide system of support, IL-EMPOWER, will help schools shift toward a more holistic educational practice. Schools identified in the accountability system as Tier 4: Lowest Performing will receive comprehensive support services from the IL-EMPOWER network of professional learning partners. An equity assessment in three areas (Governance and Management, Curriculum and Instruction, and Climate and Culture) will assist schools and their professional learning partners in creating a plan to improve student outcomes, strengthen the school's leadership structure, and build sustainable growth.

Through the remainder of 2017, ISBE will convene working groups, engage stakeholders and the public, and work with the Technical Advisory Council to finalize outstanding details of the accountability system and develop the necessary data collection processes to bring the system to life.

ISBE's steadfast commitment to high-quality assessments underpins the new accountability system's academic indicators. ISBE believes all students deserve the opportunity to show what they know and are able to do.

All public high school juniors had the opportunity to take the SAT at no cost for the first time in 2017. The first statewide administration of the SAT overall ran smoothly, thanks in large part to the partnership with the College Board to help school districts transition to the new exam. The SAT aligns to the Illinois Learning Standards, satisfies state and federal accountability requirements, and serves as a college entrance exam. Students have access to a variety of free supplemental educational resources through Kahn Academy. The partnership with the College Board also supports schools in using the SAT data to inform instruction. ISBE will implement improvements to the SAT testing process to ensure an even more successful second administration.

Illinois students took the Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) for the second time in 2017. The ISA aligns to the Illinois Learning Standards in science, which are based on the Next Generation Science Standards. ISBE used the development of the ISA as an opportunity to innovate on the traditional assessment model from top to bottom, while maintaining quality and reducing costs. The exam supports the more engaging

and hands-on science learning and teaching taking place in schools across the state.

ISBE will continue to administer the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam to third- through eighth-graders, the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State (ACCESS) exam to English Learners, and the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) to students with the most severe cognitive disabilities.

A system founded on equity brings the needs of historically overlooked and underserved student populations to the forefront. ISBE has bolstered its efforts to ensure fair access to quality education for students with disabilities and special learning needs. The U.S. Department of Education in June 2016 issued Illinois the designation of "Meets Requirements" for implementing the requirements and purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This marked the first year in which Illinois achieved the "Meets Requirements" designation – the highest category of compliance – since the inception of the determinations more than 10 years ago.

Fair access to quality education absolutely includes fair access to the internet. Successfully transitioning to online assessment administration depends on all classrooms having reliable access to the internet. High-speed internet also opens classrooms up to the world of free online educational resources.

Fiber optic technology delivers the most affordable and fastest network speeds to schools and allows them to scale cost-effectively to meet growing bandwidth needs in the future. ISBE is collaborating with Governor Bruce Rauner and EducationSuperHighway on the Classroom Connectivity Initiative to expand fiber optic installation in schools across the state by taking advantage of the Federal Communications Commission's E-rate program. The program provides discounts ranging from 20 percent to 90 percent of the costs of eligible internet installation and access services. ISBE has requested the establishment of a \$13 million state matching fund for fiscal year 2018 and FY 2019 to reimburse districts for special construction costs related to fiber optic installation. The Classroom Connectivity Initiative so far has resulted in 180,264 more Illinois students having the minimum connectivity they need.

Autonomy:

Maximize district autonomy to provide quality education to all families.

In the context of a common definition of quality, ISBE believes local school leaders and educators best understand their staff's and students' unique needs, challenges, and strengths. Maximizing district autonomy means empowering leaders and educators to make the decisions and investments they know will have the greatest impact for their students. IL-EMPOWER, Illinois' new statewide system of support for all schools, seeks to maximize district autonomy in the school improvement process. IL-EMPOWER, which will transition into effect during the 2017-18 school year, will give schools and districts both more choice and more voice. IL-EMPOWER is grounded in the belief that sustainable transformation comes from building the capacity of schools' own teachers and staff who are connected to their communities.

Schools and districts working with IL-EMPOWER first will conduct a needs assessment and equity audit. They then will choose a professional learning partner from the pre-approved IL-EMPOWER network. All partners in the IL-EMPOWER network will have demonstrated past success in driving school improvement through differentiated profession learning, specifically in 1) Governance and

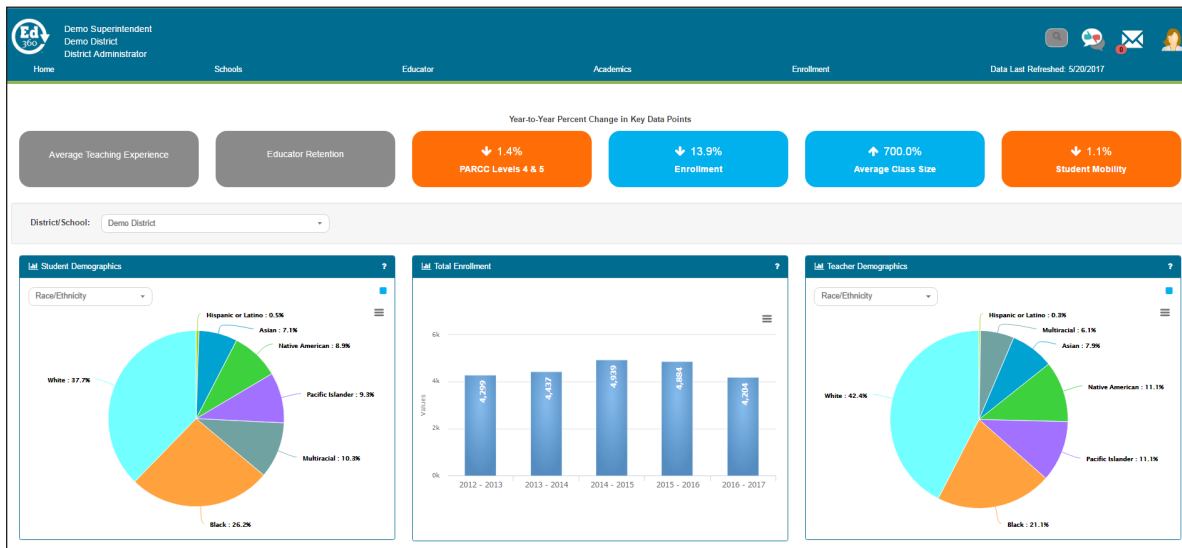
Management, 2) Curriculum and Instruction, and/or 3) Climate and Culture.

Schools, districts, and their professional learning partners will work together to develop a local improvement plan based on data-driven strategies. The goal is to promote shifts in pedagogy to meet the needs of the whole child through an equity lens.

ISBE recognizes the power and promise of data to help illuminate the origins of existing significant achievement gaps. ISBE strives to collect and deliver actionable data to stakeholders to ensure education systems statewide support all students.

Better decisions require better information. ISBE is using \$7 million in federal Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant funds to incubate the next generation of Illinois' student data system. The Illinois Data for Fiscal and Instructional Results, Study, and Transparency (Illinois Data FIRST) project encompasses interrelated and cross-agency efforts to make Illinois' longitudinal student data more accessible and actionable, while protecting student privacy. The results of Illinois Data FIRST will support and improve state and local resource allocations, instruction, and learner outcomes.

Figure Seven: Sample Ed360 Administrator Dashboard



Source: Illinois State Board of Education

ISBE developed the new Ed360 data dashboard for educators and administrators as one component of Illinois Data FIRST. Ed360 provides unprecedented access to live data visualizations of student performance to encourage data-driven instructional practices. The platform will also integrate with Kahn Academy, Plickers, and the Ed Leaders Network Learning Management System to connect educators and administrators to tools and instructional resources to address the student needs revealed by the data.

ISBE launched an Ed360 pilot with 30 school districts. Feedback from the pilot districts and other stakeholders will inform the evolving vision and uses of Ed360 as ISBE progresses toward a statewide rollout during the 2017-18 school year.

ISBE releases the Illinois Report Card online every October. Lauded for its transparency and user-friendliness, the Illinois Report Card provides educators, families, and stakeholders with a comprehensive informational snapshot of public education across the state. The data allows schools and districts to examine their own performance across multiple measures and from year to year. Districts and schools use the Illinois Report Card data to ignite and inform conversations about collaboration, equity, and growth.

The 2016 Illinois Report presented three data points for the first time: teacher attendance; 6- and 7-year graduation cohorts; and the Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual credit courses schools offer to students. The award-winning Illinois Report Card also features a mobile-friendly format; “How To” videos to guide users through the website; and improved tools for reviewing assessment data by grades, student groups, and subject areas.

The Illinois Report Card pulls the majority of its data from data systems that school districts update throughout the year, such as the Employee Information System (EIS). ISBE added new fields to EIS in 2016 and 2017, including educators’ years of experience, evaluations, email addresses, and reason for leaving a position.

ISBE will expand the Illinois Report Card interface to display additional data collected as part of Illinois’ new accountability system, including school-level expenditures, summative designations for school quality and student growth, and students’ participation in fine arts courses.



Students at Gallatin Community Unit School District 7 celebrate “DUDE BE NICE” week, handing out red roses from the Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America.

ISBE also supports district autonomy through the \$42 million federally funded Charter Schools Program (CSP) grants. The CSP grants help to expand the number of high-quality and educationally diverse charter schools in Illinois and to evaluate the effects of charter schools on student academic achievement, staff, and parents. Illinois’ charter school law empowers innovative school leaders and educators to approach closing opportunity and achievement in new ways.

ISBE awarded grants to five entities in fiscal year 2017. ISBE believes high-quality school options allow families to find the best learning environment for their children’s unique interests and learning needs.

Competency:

Encourage competency-based learning.

Every student deserves to graduate from high school holding the keys to a successful future. ISBE is a member of the Illinois P-20 Council – a collaborative focused on developing a seamless and sustainable continuum of education and support from birth through adulthood. ISBE actively supports the council’s goal of increasing the proportion of adults in Illinois with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.

Reaching the P-20 Council’s goal requires us to rethink how we prepare students for meaningful careers. We know students enter high school with unique assets, experiences, and interests. ISBE believes our schools should meet students where they are, help them share and build upon their strengths, and give them specific support where needed. ISBE is creating a community of practice around reinventing high school. Multiple initiatives spearheaded by ISBE – described here and in the section on ISBE’s goal that 90 percent or more of students graduate from high school ready for college and career – aim to disrupt barriers to all students succeeding in Illinois’ high schools.

ISBE believes high school should present all students with exciting and meaningful opportunities to develop

a sense of competency and confidence. High school should provide each and every child with differentiated supports to facilitate exploration of unique interests in authentic environments. Any model to transform high school must include mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards as the foundation from which personalized opportunities spring. ISBE proposes that Illinois aggressively transform secondary education to prepare our students for the world of work through a radically different approach.

Competency-based learning advances students through their education based on demonstrated mastery of specific skills and knowledge rather than on a standardized amount of time in the classroom. ISBE hopes to spur innovation in the high school experience through personalized, competency-based learning so every student reaches their maximum potential in high school and beyond.

ISBE launched the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Program in November 2016. ISBE developed the pilot in consultation with the Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Board of Higher Education, representatives from higher education, and national experts as a result of Illinois Public Act 99-0674 (the Postsecondary and Workforce



Participating school and district leaders celebrate the kickoff of the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot with Superintendent Tony Smith, Ph.D., held April 3, 2017, at Manual Academy in Peoria.

Readiness Act), which was passed unanimously by the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Bruce Rauner on July 29, 2016.

Ten school districts are participating in the first cohort of the pilot, even without an appropriation for state funding. Each district will design and implement their own competency-based learning system and will engage their communities and stakeholders in the development of the system. ISBE will foster an open learning community and provide an online library of research, technical assistance, and models to support the first cohort and to share with districts statewide. ISBE has requested \$1 million in fiscal year 2018 to help support the pilot and will open the application for the next cohort of districts later in 2017.

The 10 school districts leading the way in competency-based learning and participating in the first cohort of the pilot are:

- Six schools in City of Chicago Public School District 299
- East St. Louis School District 189
- Huntley Community School District
- Kankakee School District 111
- Peoria District 150
- Proviso Township High School District 209
- Rantoul Township High School District 193
- Ridgewood High School District 234
- Round Lake Community Unit School District 116
- Williamsfield Community Unit School District 210

Competency-based learning reshapes the educational experience in a number of ways, including through deeper integration of technology and better utilization of teacher talent. ISBE is committed to expanding access to free digital tools to help school districts thoughtfully transition to a new model of learning.

ISBE led Illinois to join Future Ready Schools, a project of the Alliance for Excellent Education, in October 2016. The nationwide initiative connects educators within member states with a robust framework of free research-based tools and resources promoting personalized student learning.

Districts gain access to Future Ready Schools' professional development opportunities by taking the Future Ready District Pledge. As of April 2017, 226 Illinois superintendents signed the pledge, affirming their commitment to work with students, educators,

families, and members of their community to build a culture and practice of personalized learning, enhanced by digital tools.

ISBE also announced the launch of a new statewide #GoOpen initiative in June 2016, joining the inaugural cohort of 15 states promoting the use of high-quality, openly licensed educational resources in schools. Openly licensed education resources are teaching, learning, and research resources that are in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by others.

Four Illinois school districts – DeKalb Community Unit School District 428, Illini Bluffs Community Unit School District 327, Macomb Community Unit School District 185, and Urbana School District 116 –stepped forward at the time of the #GoOpen launch to implement a systematic approach to incorporating openly licensed educational resources into their curricula by becoming #GoOpen Districts. The U.S. Department of Education recognized Illinois for its leadership at the #GoOpen Exchange, a knowledge-sharing gathering of state and district leaders, education technology platform providers, and nonprofit organizations.

ISBE will continue to facilitate the creation and use of an open ecosystem of digital resources that can increase equity, empower teachers, and support students through competency-based learning.

The potential of competency-based learning to transform education does not end with students. ISBE hopes to spur a similar shift in educators' learning from "sit-and-get" professional development to teacher-led microcredentials.

Microcredentialing creates opportunities for educators to document their formal and informal learning and capacities. Teachers and administrators use work samples, videos, and other artifacts to showcase their learning against established rubrics and earn "badges" for skills and competencies. Microcredentialing allows educators to access professional learning on demand according to their own interests and schedules.

ISBE is collaborating with states that are pioneering microcredentials in the hopes of designing and launching a microcredentialing pilot later in 2017.

Community:

Districts and schools as centers of healthy communities.

ISBE envisions Illinois as a state of whole, healthy children nested in whole, healthy systems supporting communities wherein all members are socially and economically secure.

ISBE draws its inspiration from the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The WSCC model “acknowledges learning, health, and the school as being a part and reflection of the local community” and recognizes the link between student health and academic achievement.

Figure Eight: Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The WSCC model calls for education systems to recognize and nurture each student as a “whole child” – an individual with interconnected needs living within an ecology of overlapping environments. Adopting the whole child mindset empowers schools and districts to make connections in their communities with public, private, and nonprofit institutions so together they can build more holistic and inclusive systems.

ISBE strives to position schools as resource hubs central to a network of services and opportunities for children, their families, and communities. Research

shows that children learn best when they feel safe and healthy.

ISBE received \$15 million in fiscal year 2017 to provide grants to school districts and community organizations for after-school programming through the Healthy Community Incentive Fund. The grant aims to improve academic outcomes for students by providing enrichment activities in a safe and healthy environment and by strengthening support services for students facing the greatest challenges. Grantees have the opportunity to participate in the National School Lunch Afterschool Snack Program and At-Risk Afterschool Meals component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program. ISBE requested an additional \$15 million for the Healthy Community Incentive Fund in fiscal year 2018.

ISBE collaborates with other agencies in implementing the whole child model. ISBE partners with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services to coordinate Medicaid dollars and the availability of health services at school sites for children lacking access to health care.

The Specialized Family Support Program (SFSP), created in response to the Custody Relinquishment Prevention Act, unites six youth- and health-focused state agencies in identifying the behavioral health needs of youth at risk of custody relinquishment and linking them with the most appropriate clinical services. Custody relinquishment occurs when parents or guardians refuse to take a youth home from a hospital or similar treatment facility out of a reasonable belief that the youth will harm someone upon their return home, and no evidence of abuse or neglect exists. The SFSP provides 90 days of crisis stabilization services to youth at risk of custody relinquishment and their families.

ISBE provides technical assistance to the Department of Juvenile Justice, a member of the SFSP, and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to help neglected or delinquent youth to re-enter school successfully and/or to find employment after they leave an institution and return to the local community.



Children enjoy free snacks and meals at the Summer Meals kickoff event in Harrison Park in Chicago in June 2016.

Every Illinois community hosts Continuum of Care programs funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The programs promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness and seek to minimize the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals. ISBE established procedures to ensure children experiencing homelessness have equitable opportunities to learn and succeed in school. LEA homeless education liaisons educate and work closely with all personnel in the school district as well as with community social service agencies and Continuum of Care programs to identify all children experiencing homelessness. LEAs use the Common Form created by ISBE to enroll children experiencing homelessness.

The majority of schools' and school districts' family and community engagement funding comes from federal sources. Expansion of specific family and community engagement programs will depend heavily on the amount of federal Title IV allocations for federal fiscal year 2018.

The State Board approved Illinois' Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan in March 2017. In the plan, ISBE commits to using Title IV, Part A (Student

Support and Academic Enrichment Grants), Part B (21st Century Community Learning Centers), and Part F (Promise Neighborhoods and Full-Service Community School Programs) funds to coordinate state-level strategies in order to reduce exclusionary discipline, implement evidence-based behavioral health awareness training programs, expand access for school-based counseling and behavioral health programs, and improve the outcomes of children living in the most distressed communities.

Under ESSA, nonpublic schools participate equitably in state services. ISBE held the first-ever nonpublic and public school conference on April 5, 2017, to educate stakeholders and practitioners about ESSA and Title I funding. ISBE staff developed an informal newsletter to increase the nonpublic community's engagement with ISBE's work.

ISBE recognizes the integral role of families in children's success from cradle to career – and the potential of engaged and active families to bolster school improvement efforts. Effective family engagement requires accessible, diverse, and ongoing communication. ISBE remains dedicated to assisting schools and districts in using Title I funding to

strengthen communication with families. Over the past two years, Title I Foundational Services funds have delivered professional learning opportunities to approximately 4,040 school and district personnel to enhance their ability to communicate with and engage students' families in meaningful ways.

The ISBE Family Engagement Framework serves as a guide for the professional learning opportunities and for schools' and districts' use of family engagement as a strategy to improve student outcomes. The evidence-based framework includes four principles designed to support schools and districts in building a systemic approach to engagement, developing trusting relationships with families and community stakeholders, engaging families in ongoing two-way communication, and including families in decision-making processes.

When schools and districts have the capacity and evidence-based supports to engage families in meaningful ways, they can leverage Title I funds in

impactful ways. For example, Peoria Public Schools District 150 implemented a new approach to its Parent University program during the 2016–17 school year and boosted participation rates from 10-20 participants to 1200 participants city-wide. The Peoria Public Schools District 150 district staff broke down barriers to engagement by organizing evening activities at local businesses and public facilities, sending buses to transport people to and from the events, and by providing food and supervised child care activities

Community High School District 218 created parent-led family resource centers at the four high schools in the district to better serve the growing English Learner population and help new families learn to navigate the educational system. The district invested time to build the capacity of school leaders, funds to hire parent liaisons on a part-time basis, and physical space to house the centers. As a result, *U.S News & World Report* recognized three of the four high schools as top schools in supporting students in meeting college and career goals.



Parents learn nurturing skills by “Making LEMONADE” at an event funded by 21st Century Community Learning Center grants at Dunbar Elementary School in East St. Louis School District 189. Parents use LEMONADE as a mnemonic device for healthy attitudes and approaches to parenting.

Section Two:

Progress on Agency Goals

Goal: Kindergartners are assessed for readiness.

RESULTS TO DATE

Children enter kindergarten with a variety of early childhood experiences. Research shows that 90 percent of human brain development happens in the first five years of life.

ISBE believes that assessing the developmental readiness of all students entering kindergarten is critical to ensuring that all children receive equitable support in their early years.

A planning committee of experts, advocates, and practitioners, from the community and within ISBE partnered in 2010 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 the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS). KIDS guides educators as they observe young students' knowledge, skills, and behavior. KIDS, which is validated, informed by research, and aligned with state standards, focuses on the competencies that can best predict a student's long-term success. Data from KIDS will help communities and legislators understand where children have and do not have access to quality preschool.

KIDS will be implemented statewide beginning in the 2017-18 school year, when kindergarten teachers will observe students on 14 key measures across four learning domains. KIDS will help ISBE identify districts in which children are showing high levels of kindergarten readiness, pinpoint what is working and why, and share those successes with communities across the state.

ISBE has piloted KIDS across the state since 2012, engaging more than 50,000 children. Three-hundred and eighty unique districts have entered KIDS data into KIDStech in the last five years. The pilot has informed updates and adjustments to improve the observational tool in advance of statewide implementation.

Twenty-four of the 762 districts that provide kindergarten classes still need to have teachers attend a KIDS training.

ONGOING EFFORTS

Early childhood programs establish a healthy foundation for lifelong learning. The path toward college and career readiness starts with the path toward kindergarten readiness.



A kindergarten teacher in West Chicago Elementary School District 33 collects KIDS observations on her iPad while interacting with children during independent play.



Children enjoy free food and activities at the Summer Meals kickoff event in Harrison Park in Chicago in June 2016.

KIDS will help ISBE evaluate families' access to and the effectiveness of preschool programs statewide. KIDS also will help inform best practices in the early elementary grades. The new accountability framework ISBE developed under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and approved by the State Board in March 2016 includes a preschool to second grade (P-2) indicator of school quality and student success. ISBE collected feedback throughout the drafting of the ESSA State Plan. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of connecting early child education all the way through to postsecondary attainment. The P-2 indicator aligns with the college and career readiness indicator at the high school level and the parallel indicator for elementary and middle grades, creating a continuum of accountability and support throughout a student's academic life. ISBE will work with stakeholders and the Technical Advisory Council to develop the P-2 indicator by December 31.

The State Board's fiscal year 2018 budget request included a \$50 million increase in funding for Early Childhood Education to fulfill the third year of a five-year federal grant agreement to increase state funding by that much annually.

ISBE administers a number of state and federally funded grants and programs to expand high-quality preschool programs, improve the quality of existing programs, and support the healthy development of young children.

The Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) program provides funding to serve children from birth to age 5 through the Prevention Initiative (PI) and Preschool for All (PFA) programs. The ECBG also provides support for program quality and improvement through monitoring and training, as well as resources for program/district staff through the Illinois Early Learning Project and the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map.

During the 2016-17 school year:

- 148 PI programs provided 13,330 children, prenatal to age 3, and their families with intensive, research-based, and comprehensive child development and family support services in home visiting, center-based, and family literacy programs.
- 455 PFA programs provided 73,118 children, ages 3 to 5, with at least 2.5 hours of high-quality preschool, including comprehensive

developmental screening, bachelor’s-level early childhood licensed teachers, and standards-aligned and research-based curriculum.

- More than 2,100 PFA personnel received professional development and coaching to enhance their skills in working with young children.

Specific additional efforts focus on enhancing equity for high-need preschool-aged children.

The Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG) supports the state’s efforts in expanding high-quality preschool to high-need 4-year-olds not yet eligible for kindergarten. Programs funded through PEG offer more than full-day instruction. They also support families through connections to health, mental health, dental, and social services; intensive family engagement services; universal and targeted supports for positive behavioral and social emotional development; and at least 60 minutes per day of physical activity. Twenty-five PEG programs provided services during the 2016-17 school year to 3,110 4-year-olds in families at or below 200 percent of the poverty level.

A representative from ISBE’s Division of Early Childhood works on the Statewide Inclusion Team, part of the Inclusion Topic National Cohort. The cohort has three goals:

- 1) To use data to identify strengths and challenges to providing services to children with disabilities in early childhood settings;
- 2) To design and implement strategies and activities based on data analyses to increase high-quality inclusive opportunities for young children and their families; and
- 3) To improve capacity to promote and support practitioner use of high-quality inclusive practices by assessing and making changes to their infrastructure.

The percentage of students with disabilities ages 3 to 5 receiving the majority of special education and related services in a regular early childhood program increased statewide from 35.41 percent in federal fiscal year 2014 to 37.98 percent in FFY 2015 as a result of working with the cohort. The percentage of students with disabilities ages 3 to 5 in a separate special education class, school, or residential facility decreased from 29.15 percent in FFY 2014 to 28.21 percent in FFY 2015. Both measures surpassed the initial objectives set for the cohort.

ISBE remains a key stakeholder on the Illinois Early Learning Council, a public-private partnership created by Public Act 93-380 to strengthen, coordinate, and expand programs and services for children from birth to age 5. As a member of the executive committee, ISBE works to maximize the state’s ability to capture current and future federal funds for early learning services and infrastructure. The Early Learning Council helped to identify the policy priorities for the fiscal year 2019 ECBG re-compete. The funding priorities included:

1. High need communities
2. Serving more children from priority populations
3. Increasing the number of preschool slots that provide full-day, comprehensive services
4. Encouraging and supporting community collaborations
5. Building a birth to third grade continuum of high quality services



Two kindergarten students in West Chicago Elementary School District 33 mimic their teacher’s whiteboard drawings. Even short, small exchanges between children can yield multiple KIDS observations for teachers.

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

RESULTS TO DATE

The new Illinois Learning Standards for English language arts, implemented during the 2013-14 school year, chart a path from kindergarten through high school for students to achieve college and career readiness. Students who are college and career ready can comprehend as well as critique the message of a speaker or an author. These students build strong content knowledge and come to understand other perspectives and cultures by engaging with a wide range of works of quality and substance. College and career ready students are able to cite evidence; respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline; and strategically and capably use technology and digital media.

One of ISBE's goals is that 90 percent or more of third-grade students are reading at or above third grade level by the end of third grade. Researchers often refer to third grade as the pivotal moment when a student shifts from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." The content students encounter in science, mathematics, and social studies after third grade requires more reading and active synthesis of academic vocabulary. A student who does not meet grade-level expectations for reading by third grade is four times less likely to graduate by age 19 than a child who does read proficiently by that time, according to the American Educational Research Association.

ISBE measures students' learning in English language arts by administering the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam to all students in the third through eighth grades. Illinois students took the PARCC assessment for the second time in spring 2016. The PARCC assessment aligns to the new Illinois Learning Standards and not only asks students what they know but also to demonstrate their understanding in a different way than did the previous state assessment. The PARCC assessment asks students to express their understanding in writing, in response to and with reference to authentic, real-world texts.



A fourth-grade student learns about geography at the Richland County Elementary School's educational afterschool program, the Tiger Zone, funded through 21st Century Community Learning Center grants.

Of all third-grade students who took the PARCC assessment in 2016, 35.5 percent met or exceeded grade-level standards in English language arts, approximately the same percentage as in 2015.

The PARCC assessment reflects student performance across five levels. Students scoring a 4 or 5 demonstrate a thorough understanding of grade-level standards, meaning they are on track to being ready to enter college or the workforce by the end of high school. Students scoring a 3 are approaching expectations for their grade level, but need additional assistance to master some aspects of the content. Students scoring a 1 or 2 need the greatest supports to master the content and get on track to achieve college and career readiness.

ONGOING EFFORTS

Schools need data and resources to evaluate students' progress in reading and to support each student's development as a whole child. The whole child model of education recognizes and strengthens the connections between students' cognitive, physical,



Kindergarten students follow directions and play together at the Richland County Elementary School's educational afterschool program, the Tiger Zone, funded through 21st Century Community Learning Center grants.

social, and emotional health and between students' overlapping environments in the home, school, and community.

The federally funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) grants that ISBE administers embody the whole child model. Illinois' 398 21st CCLC programs provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for more than 47,000 students. The broad array of 21st CCLC programs help students meet state and local learning standards through extended learning opportunities in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; art, music, character building, physical education, and other enrichment activities; and literacy, computer training, and other educational services for the families of participating children. The 21st CCLC also act as a magnet for other philanthropic and social service programs and funds to support students' social, emotional, cognitive, and physical health and remove barriers to learning.

For instance, in East Richland Community School District 1, students at three 21st CCLC sites select homework or tutoring activities to support their academic success. Students also select enrichment activities that align with the Illinois Learning Standards and illustrate real-world applications of English language arts and math content. Students at East Richland Middle School's "Block" program performed High School Musical Jr, strengthening their fluency and comprehension through reading scripts, memorizing lines, and seeing the words come to

life on stage. Students also visit the school and community libraries, participate in book clubs, and write to their favorite authors. The district's 21st CCLC grant embeds goals in English language arts and other core subjects to keep the program focused on academic achievement.

Teachers report improvement in the behavior and motivation to learn at school and in the academic performance of students who participate in 21st CCLC programs. Sixty-three percent of elementary school students participating in 21st CCLC programs improved in behavior and motivation to learn and 30.7 percent improved in reading ability, according to teachers surveyed for the 21st CCLC Annual Performance Report for the 2013 cohort of grants.

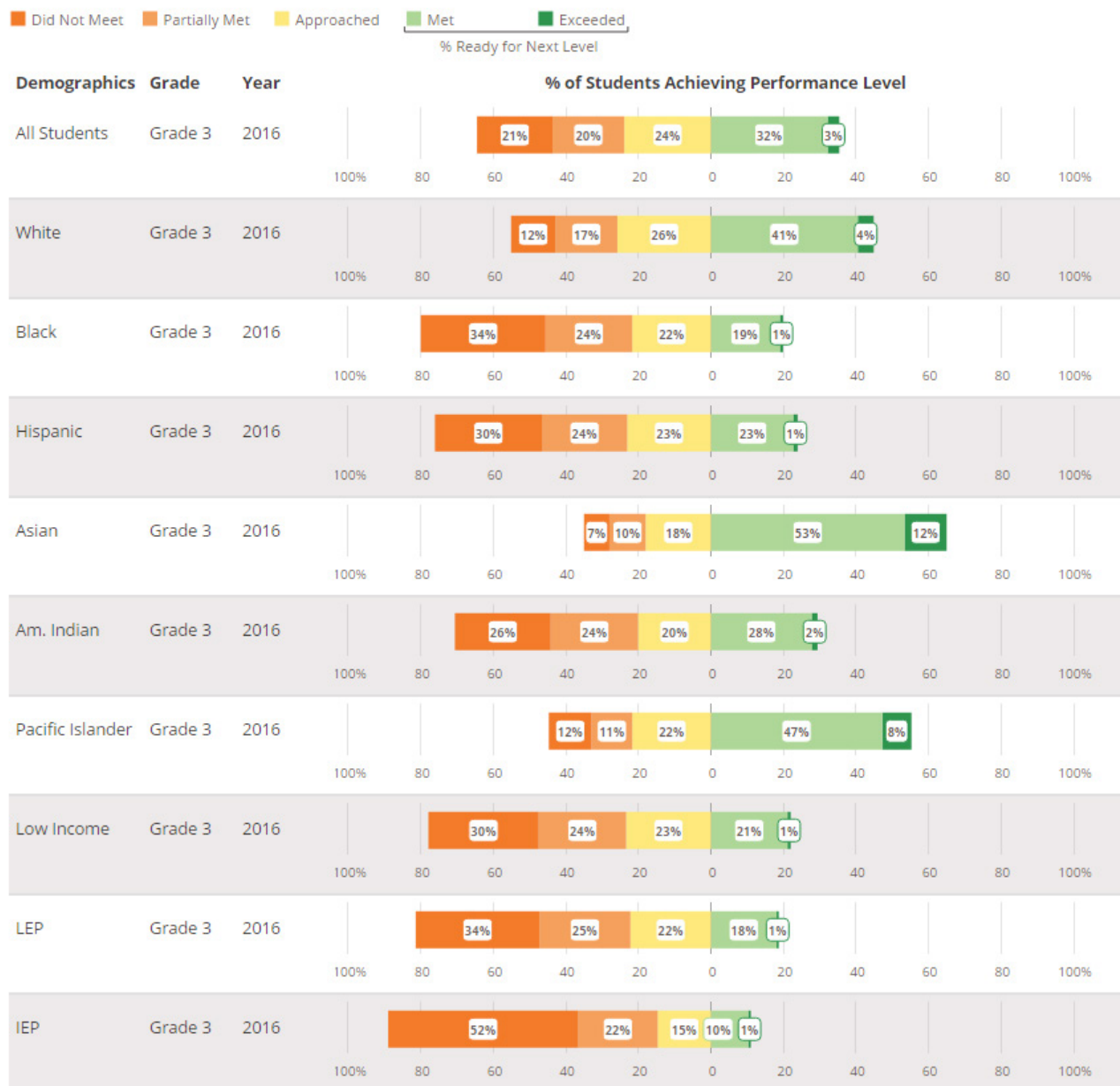
School year 2016-17 marked the first year of full implementation for the six schools that received federal School Improvement Grant 1003(g) awards in 2015-16. At one elementary school, changes to curriculum and instructional practice supported by the grant resulted in an improvement from 29.5% of third graders reading at or above grade level to 74.4% at the end of the third quarter. ISBE is studying School Improvement Grant 1003(g) successes and schools to inform the final design and implementation of the new IL-EMPOWER statewide system of support.

The new accountability system ISBE developed under the Every Student Succeeds Act includes both attainment of and growth toward mastery of grade-level standards in English language arts for the

third through eighth grades and in high school as key indicators of schools' academic performance. ISBE will collect data from schools during the 2017-18 school year and issue every school a summative school quality designation aligning with the new accountability system in the spring of 2018. Schools in the lowest tier (out of four tiers) will receive comprehensive professional learning services through IL-EMPOWER to improve school leadership and build staff capacity to serve the needs of the whole child. Ensuring every child can read at or above grade level by the end of third grade protects their ability to

access greater and greater learning opportunities as they mature through school and life. The new accountability system also includes a preschool to second grade (P-2) indicator of school quality and student success to align with the college and career readiness indicator at the high school level. The P-2 indicator will help schools assess how well they are preparing students for the third grade and will help prompt shifts in pedagogy to ensure all students stay on track to college and career readiness. ISBE will work with stakeholders and the Technical Advisory Council to develop the P-2 indicator by December 31, 2017.

Figure Nine: Statewide Third-Grade Student Performance on the PARCC Assessment in English Language Arts



LEP = Limited English Proficient; IEP = Individualized Education Program (Students with Disabilities)

Source: Illinois State Board of Education. Illinois Report Card.

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

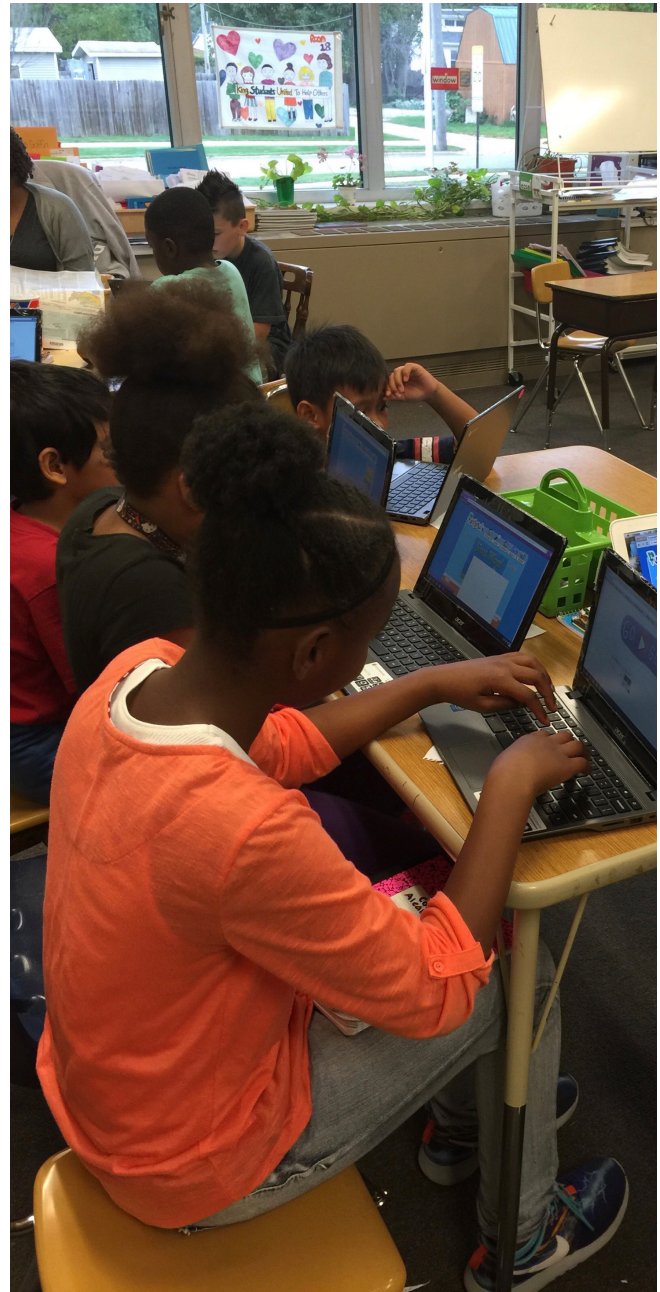
RESULTS TO DATE

The new Illinois Learning Standards for mathematics have generated major shifts in instruction. The standards emphasize deep conceptual understanding of key ideas and encourage the development of critical reasoning and problem-solving skills. The sequencing of the standards from grade to grade supports a more fluent understanding of the most critical mathematical concepts. The standards promote a culture of professional learning as educators develop their own abilities to help students meet these higher expectations for learning.

Many high-wage and high-demand careers require a solid foundation in math. One of ISBE's goals is that 90 percent or more of fifth-grade students meet or exceed expectations in mathematics, laying the foundation for more advanced learning opportunities in middle and high school. Graduating high school appropriately proficient in mathematics not only keeps both college and career doors open but also empowers individuals with skills and knowledge necessary to navigate life freely. Gaining mathematical proficiency delivers a key piece of the puzzle to create a fulfilling life of one's choosing.

Schools statewide assessed students on the new Illinois Learning Standards for mathematics for the second time in the spring of 2016. Students in the third through eighth grades took the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). The PARCC assessment asks students to demonstrate their understanding in a different way than did the previous state assessment. Students solve multi-step math problems that require reasoning and address real-world situations. Students taking advanced math courses in elementary and middle school also have the option to take the mathematics assessment that most closely aligns with their instruction.

Of all fifth grade students who took the PARCC assessment in 2016, 31.7 percent met or exceeded



Students from Urbana School District 116, a leading participant in the #GoOpen initiative, use open educational resources like Funbrain, a provider of free educational games for reading and math, to drive learning digitally.

grade-level expectations – an increase of approximately 5 percent over 2015.

The PARCC assessment reflects student performance across five levels. Students scoring a 4 or 5 demonstrate a thorough understanding of grade-level standards, meaning they are on track to being ready to enter college or the workforce by the end of high school. Students scoring a 3 are approaching expectations for their grade level, but need additional assistance to master some aspects of the content. Students scoring a 1 or 2 need the greatest supports to master the content and get on track to achieve college and career readiness.

ONGOING EFFORTS

ISBE strives to empower educators and administrators to use data to understand each student’s learning needs and provide specific and differentiated supports and resources for all students to fulfill their fullest potential.

The new accountability system ISBE developed under the Every Student Succeeds Act includes both attainment of and growth toward mastery of grade-level standards in mathematics in third through eighth grades and in high school as key indicators of schools’ academic performance. The accountability system examines schools’ effectiveness at delivering math instruction as one of nine interconnected levers to improve student outcomes.

The accountability system also includes an elementary and middle grades indicator of school quality and student success to align with the college and career readiness indicator at the high school level. The elementary and middle grades indicator will measure students’ access to and participation in the opportunities that build a well-rounded educational experience. The indicator will help schools appraise how opportunities and barriers outside of the math classroom can impact students’ success in math. ISBE will work with stakeholders and the Technical Advisory Council to develop the elementary and middle grades indicator and the academic growth indicator by December 31.

The data collected from schools according to the new accountability system indicators will inform each school’s annual summative school quality designation,

beginning in the spring of 2018. Schools in the lowest tier (out of four tiers) will receive comprehensive professional learning services through the new statewide system of support, IL-EMPOWER.

ISBE believes in teacher leadership as a critical lever to improving student outcomes. The IL-EMPOWER network of professional learning partners will work with schools to improve leadership structures and build educators’ capacity to identify and serve the needs of the whole child. The whole child model recognizes and strengthens the connections between students’ cognitive, physical, social, and emotional health and between students’ overlapping environments in the home, school, and community.

ISBE also administers the federally funded Math and Science Partnership (MSP) Grant specifically to improve educators’ instructional practice in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects. The MSP grant cultivates partnerships between high-need school districts and the STEM departments at higher education institutions. The MSP Grant provides 120 hours of research-based and standards-aligned professional learning for educators in STEM subjects and fields. The 750 educators who cultivated their practice through the MSP Grant in fiscal year 2017 provided enhanced STEM instruction to 42,702 students.

The federally funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) programs support students’ academic success through enrichment activities that align with the Illinois Learning Standards and illustrate real-world applications of core subjects, including mathematics. Students learn fractions and chemical reactions through cooking and use technology and computer games to build math skills. Many 21st CCLC programs integrate family engagement as an integral part of students’ success.

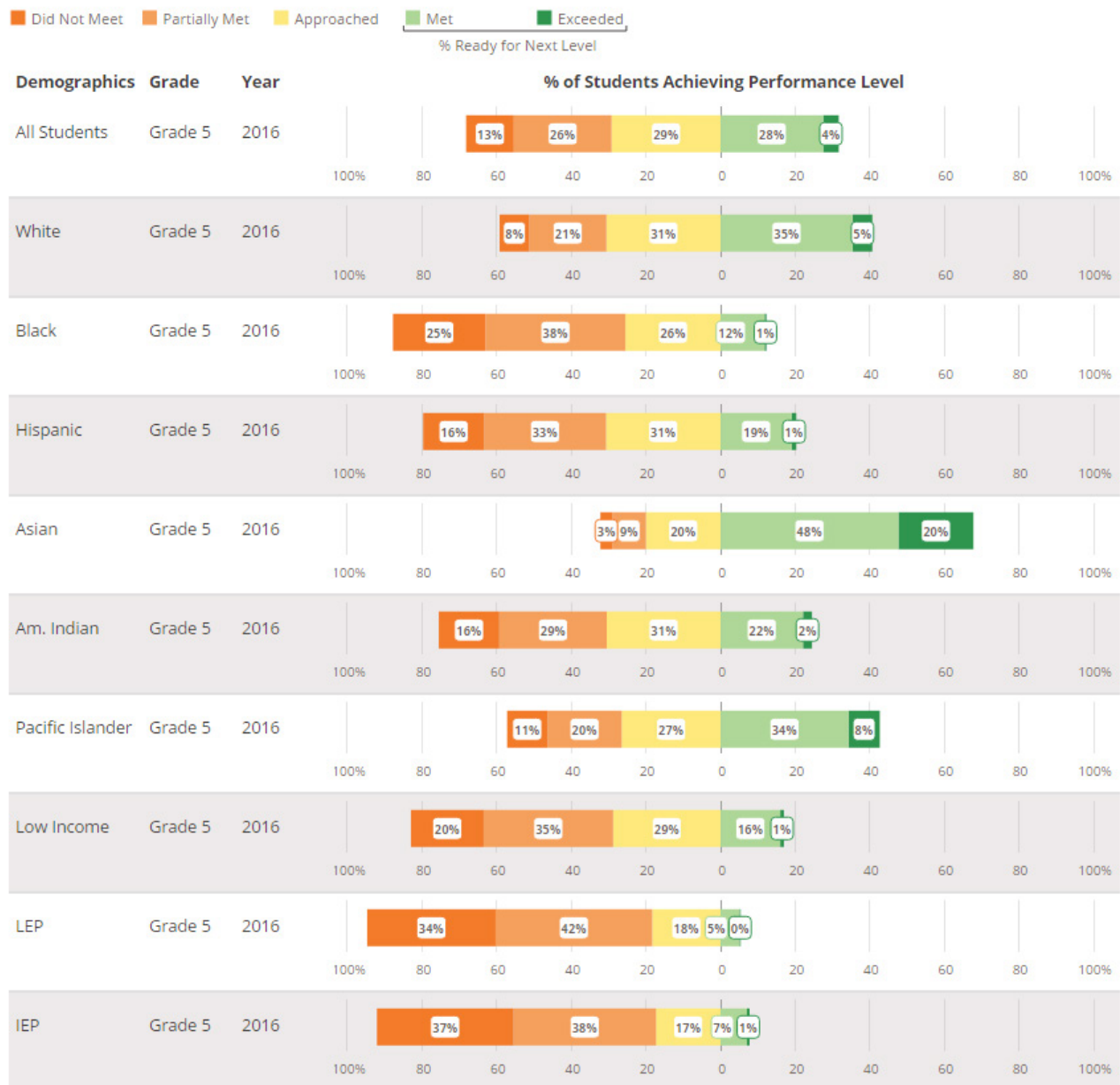
For instance, the Giving Our Achievers Lifelong Success (GOALS) program serves approximately 300 students at five different sites in East St. Louis and focuses on STEM academic enrichment. Staff at GOALS engage families through workshops on topics of interest, such as nutrition and wellness and how to help students with homework. GOALS collaborates with the Academic Development Institute (ADI) on activities such as home visits, the development of parent information centers, arranging mentoring with

community organizations, and distributing “family packs”—literacy activities that students can complete with their families at home. GOALS makes sure family members feel welcome at events and assign family engagement activities to objectives with measurable outcomes.

programs. Sixty-three percent of elementary school students participating in 21st CCLC programs improved in behavior and motivation to learn and 26.2 percent improved in mathematics ability, according to teachers surveyed for the 21st CCLC Annual Performance Report for the 2013 cohort of grants.

Teachers report improvement in the behavior and motivation to learn at school and in the academic performance of students who participate in 21st CCLC

Figure 10: Statewide Fifth-Grade Student Performance on the PARCC Assessment in Mathematics



LEP = Limited English Proficient; IEP = Individualized Education Program (Students with Disabilities)

Source: Illinois State Board of Education. Illinois Report Card.

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

RESULTS TO DATE

The first year of high school poses a critical transition period for students, according to research from the Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago. The transition to high school challenges students academically, socially, and behaviorally. Finishing the first year of high school “on track” to graduate sets students on a path for success in the following years.

The ninth-grade on-track indicator developed by the consortium and first adopted by ISBE in the 2013-14 school year combines two separate but related factors: the number of credits earned and the number of failing grades in core subjects (English language arts, mathematics, science, and social science). 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. Students with too few credits and too many failed courses at the end of ninth grade face difficulties and delays in taking more advanced courses required for graduation, which often require success in a prerequisite class.

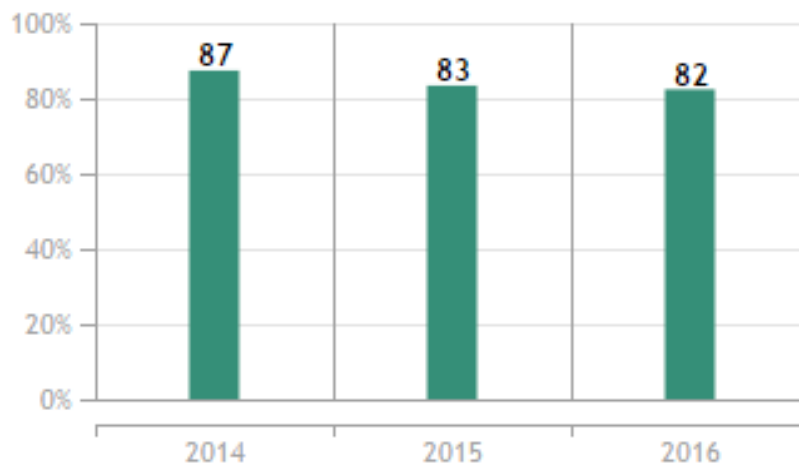
Students who finish the ninth grade on track are almost four times as likely to graduate from high school in four years as those students who do not. In fact, the consortium’s research shows that the ninth-grade on-track indicator predicts high school graduation better than eighth-grade test scores or students’ background characteristics.

One of ISBE’s goals is to see 90 percent or more of ninth-graders are on track to graduate with their cohort because all students can succeed in high school.

Statewide for the 2015-16 school year, 82.4 percent of ninth-grade students finished the year on track, which means nearly one in five students did not.

Research shows that the numbers of students on track and graduating rise when schools identify and actively intervene with students veering off track. Effective interventions provide specific academic supports in a safe environment and help off-track students build the skills necessary to overcome obstacles.

Figure 11: Statewide Rate of Ninth Grade Students On Track: Three-Year Trend



Source: Illinois State Board of Education. Illinois Report Card.

ONGOING EFFORTS

The new accountability system ISBE developed under the Every Student Succeeds Act includes ninth-grade on track as an indicator of school quality and student success for high schools.

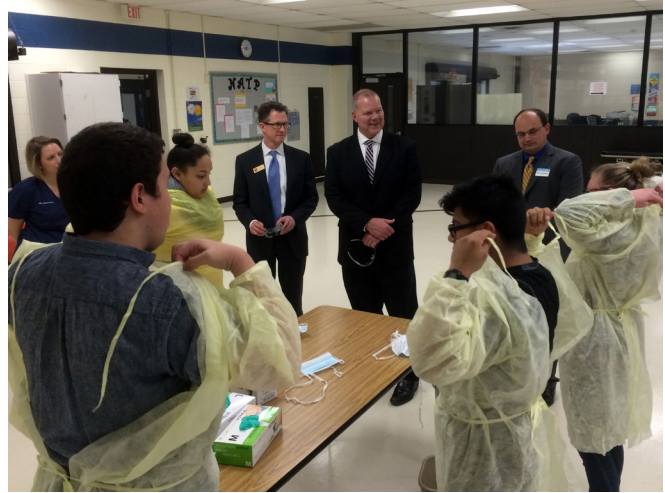
Including ninth-grade on track as an accountability indicator spurs heightened awareness of and attention to students' first year of high school as a decisive moment in their academic trajectory.

ISBE will collect data from schools during the 2017-18 school year and issue every school a summative school quality designation aligning with the new accountability framework in the spring of 2018. Schools in the lowest tier (out of four tiers) will receive comprehensive professional learning services to improve leadership structures, build staff capacity, and improve student outcomes. The professional learning services will focus on identifying and addressing equity gaps – areas where students with greater needs need to receive greater supports. The ninth grade on track indicator will help reveal opportunities to strengthen the resources and interventions for students struggling with the transition to high school.

The accountability system also includes chronic absenteeism as a key indicator of school quality and student success for all schools. Students need to be in school to succeed in school. Numerous studies, both national and local, show a strong link between attendance and academic success.

The Illinois Attendance Commission, created by Public Act 99-0432, acknowledged that key transitions in a child's academic life, such as from middle to high school, "trigger school attendance difficulties." The report expressed the need for schools, parents, and communities to recognize the difficulty of transitions and to "strategize solutions to keep students engaged at these critical junctures."

Illinois already is working to develop solutions to address chronic absenteeism. Including chronic absenteeism as an indicator in the accountability system will help promote implementation of effective solutions in schools and communities across the state.



State Superintendent of Education Tony Smith, Ph.D., visits the Nursing Assistant Training Program at the Technology Center Of DuPage in February 2017.

The Attendance Commission submitted its second annual report to the General Assembly and ISBE in December 2016. The commission will "develop informed recommendations concerning data sharing structures, systems for identifying absenteeism patterns early and creating intervention plans, and ways to engage families using clear, actionable data." ISBE will continue to provide administrative support and information to the Attendance Commission to support their development of recommendations to eliminate chronic absenteeism.

The level of chronic absenteeism and the number of ninth graders on track in Illinois schools can help tell us whether students feel engaged in their learning, well known, and well cared for at school. ISBE will help schools understand these accountability indicators and leverage the data to improve student outcomes. Success in high school sets the foundation for students to mature into thriving adults who contribute to safe, healthy, and economically secure communities.

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

RESULTS TO DATE

Every student deserves to graduate from high school holding the keys to multiple doors, all of which lead to a successful future. Illinois must continue to invest in high-yield opportunities for high school students in order to achieve its goal that 90 percent or more of students graduate ready for college and career.

Illinois' four-year graduation rate increased from 82 percent in 2012 to 86 percent in 2014 and held steady over the past two years, despite severe and compounding funding challenges that have constricted opportunities for students in low-income communities.

Disaggregating Illinois' graduation rate by demographic groups reveals the inequity that perpetuates income and achievement gaps as

students move into adulthood. Our public schools graduated 94 percent of Asian students and 90 percent of White students in 2016, but only 85 percent of Pacific Islander students, 81 percent of Hispanic students, 79 percent of American Indian students, 75 percent of Black students, 72 percent of English Learners, and 71 percent of students with Individualized Education Programs.

Only 25 percent of graduating seniors in 2016 demonstrated college readiness in all four core subjects on the ACT: English, mathematics, reading, and science. Seventy-one percent of Illinois' 2014 high school graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 16 months; however, 49 percent of the 2014 graduating class that enrolled in Illinois' community colleges had to take remedial courses. Taking remedial courses makes graduating from college take longer, cost more, and ultimately less likely.



Students from Leyden Township High School District 212 showcase coasters made from computer numerical control milling machines, as part of their Career and Technical Education.



Joliet Township High School District 204 celebrates being named the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) District of Year among all small-sized districts for their achievements expanding access to and success in AP classes and exams.

Illinois has taken strides to eliminate access and achievement gaps for low-income students and students of color in the most rigorous high school courses. Students often earn college credit for Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and dual enrollment courses, securing a leg up in college costs and completion time before even enrolling.

Illinois ranks fourth in the nation for increasing the percentage of graduates earning a 3 or higher on an AP exam during high school. Illinois ranks 10th for the overall percentage of the graduating class of 2016 scoring a 3 or higher on an AP exam during high school. The College Board named Joliet Township High School District 204 the Advanced Placement District of the Year among small-sized school districts based on an analysis of three academic years of AP data.

Illinois became the first state in the nation to partner with the Lead Higher Initiative, committing to a statewide challenge to close equity gaps for low-in-

come students and students of color in AP, IB, and dual enrollment courses. The Lead Higher Initiative chose Illinois due to the engagement of our superintendents on the issue and our statewide vision. Business and philanthropy groups nationally have pledged more than \$100 million to identify and enroll 100,000 low-income students and students of color over the next three years.

The State Board at its December 2016 meeting approved an agreement with the College Board to maintain the cost of taking AP tests at \$15 per exam for low-income students, compared to the normal test fee of \$93, for the May 2017 test administration.

ISBE continues to provide all high school juniors with free access to a college entrance exam. High schools administered the SAT for the first time statewide in 2017. The College Board helped school districts transition to the new exam. All students received free preparation tools and materials through Kahn Academy.

ONGOING EFFORTS

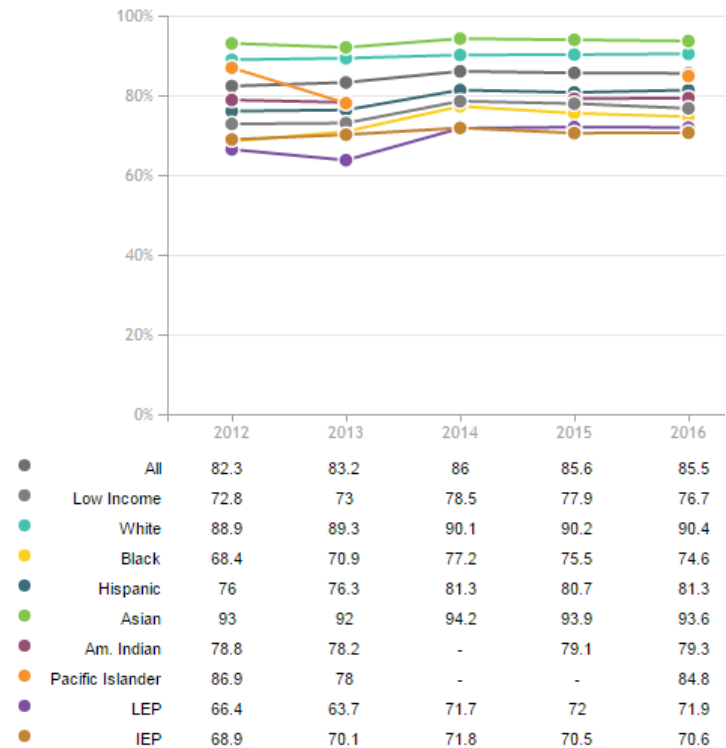
The new accountability framework that ISBE developed under the Every Student Succeeds Act includes college and career readiness as an indicator of school quality and student success for high schools. The indicator outlines criteria for students to achieve either Distinguished Scholar or College and Career Ready status.

ISBE developed the indicator after consultation with educators; representatives from school and district leadership, higher education, and the business sector; and Governor Bruce Rauner. ISBE will work with stakeholders and the Technical Advisory Council to develop data collection processes for the college and career readiness indicator by December 31.

The Postsecondary Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act requires ISBE to work with stakeholders and other state agencies to create specific industry-aligned college and career pathway endorsements on high school diplomas. Beginning with the class of 2020, high school graduates will be able to earn endorsements after completing career-focused instructional sequences equivalent to two years of coursework within fields such as marketing, architecture and construction, health sciences, and energy.

The PWR Act also requires ISBE, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission to jointly adopt and publicize model postsecondary and career expectations for public school students in the eighth through twelfth grades. The Postsecondary and Career Expectations framework (Illinois PaCE) will provide guidance to students, families, educators, administrators, and community-based organizations on what types of experiences and information a student should have in order to make an informed decision about college and career plans after high school. As part of the “Workforce Readiness through Career Pathways and Apprenticeships” initiative launched by Governor Rauner’s Children’s Cabinet, cross-agency efforts will help to articulate postsecondary and career expectations, drive expanded opportunities to learn outside of the traditional classroom, and align plans for college and career pathways with Illinois’ new accountability system indicators.

Figure 12: Statewide Four-Year Graduation Rate: Five Year Trend



Source: Illinois State Board of Education. Illinois Report Card.

The ability to speak multiple languages equips students with an additional asset for success in college and careers. A \$75,222 Arts and Foreign Language Implementation Assistance grant in fiscal year 2017 will afford approximately 3,000 high school students the opportunity to learn a different world language. The Illinois Virtual Schools also helps a large number of students graduate either on time or ahead of the curve by providing credit recovery options and courses, including world languages and AP, not offered by their home school.

Illinois is among the first states in the country to empower school districts to award a State Seal of Biliteracy to students who demonstrate a high level of proficiency in English and in reading, writing, listening, and speaking another language. The optional State Seal of Biliteracy program has grown substantially since becoming law in 2013. A single district piloted the program in the 2013-14 school year; and 72 school districts indicated their intention to participate in the 2016-17 school year. Under a new law that took effect January 1, 2017, state universities and community

colleges must accept the State Seal of Biliteracy as equivalent to two years of foreign language courses taken during high school.

School districts also can award a State Commendation toward Biliteracy to students who demonstrate significant progress toward earning the Seal. Districts recognize students who earn the Seal or the Commendation on their high school diplomas and transcripts. The recognition demonstrates students' valuable language skills to prospective employers and college admissions officers. The Seal of Biliteracy validates the linguistic assets that many students bring to Illinois classrooms and motivates all students to work toward an important skill set for college and career readiness.

Technical; science, technology, engineering and math (STEM); and agricultural programs also prepare students for success in high-demand industries. Hundreds of thousands of jobs in manufacturing and technology go unfilled nationwide because of a lack of qualified candidates. ISBE strives to make high-quality technical, STEM, and agricultural education program available to more students.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Improvement Act of 2006 provides federal funding to prepare students for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations through educational activities outside of the typical academic subjects. The foci of Illinois' CTE programs stem from labor market analyses and span five sectors: agricultural education; business, marketing, and computer education; family and consumer sciences; health science technology; and technology and engineering education. ISBE

provides leadership, technical assistance, and monitoring for CTE programs at 673 high schools. About 96 percent of students who completed CTE programs graduated from high school.

Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Engineering "empowers students to step into the role of an engineer, adopt a problem-solving mindset, and make the leap from dreamers to doers" in any career path they choose. PLTW Engineering has expanded to 153 engineering/technology secondary programs and enrolled more than 14,000 students at the high school level in Illinois since 2003. FY 2016 funding from the STEM Leadership and Technical Assistance Grant provided training and professional learning for approximately 400 Illinois high school teachers with PLTW Engineering programs in their schools.

The Agricultural Education Programs' Incentive Funding Grant provides support to more than 300 secondary and postsecondary agricultural education programs for program and curriculum improvement. The formula for the grant rewards quality: The more quality indicators a program achieves, the more funds a program receives. The Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE) grant provides a unique and specific combination of skill development opportunities, content knowledge, organizational structure, and services to all agricultural education teachers. The FCAE project and partners reach nearly 550,000 students and 38,000 teachers in prekindergarten through postsecondary settings.

Student enrollment in agricultural education secondary programs has nearly tripled since the inception of the FCAE project and Incentive Funding Grant line item. School districts have established an average of seven new agricultural education program per year in each of the last five years. Student net earnings have totaled more than \$11.67 million from work-based learning projects connected to their classroom training. Nearly 30 percent of agricultural education programs offer dual credit opportunities for students.

The FCAE project also led to the development of the Illinois Agricultural Education curriculum, which includes more than 1,000 Illinois Learning Standards-aligned lesson plans, presentations, online assessments, and e-units (online student texts) available at no cost to Illinois educators and used by approximately 24 other states.



Future Farmers of America students testify at the May 24, 2017, Illinois State Board of Education meeting on about the leadership benefits of agricultural education.

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

RESULTS TO DATE

All students need effective teachers from their first day in the classroom. Illinois recognizes the need to measure the classroom readiness of teacher candidates and collect actionable information to guide the state's efforts to improve teacher preparation programs.

ISBE requires all teacher candidates for licensure to take and pass a subject-specific edTPA – a performance-based assessment of teaching effectiveness developed by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity at Stanford University.

The edTPA uses multiple measures to evaluate a teacher candidate's readiness to lead a classroom. Similar to the National Board certification process, the edTPA asks the teacher candidate to upload a professional portfolio reflecting required competencies. The portfolio includes items such as video recordings of the teacher candidate interacting with students in the classroom, lesson plans, samples of the teacher candidate's students' work, analyses of student learning, planning and assessment documentation, and reflective commentaries.

ISBE gathered the first full year of data from edTPA in 2016. The results from each of the three different rubrics show pass rates above 95 percent, with several areas showing pass rates of 100 percent.

The data shows that teachers applying for licensure are surpassing the standards for classroom readiness. However, Illinois needs many more candidates to enter and remain in the profession in order to reach its goal that all students are being supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders every day.

As of October 1, 2016, 1,005.8 or .77 percent of the 129,860.2 total public school teaching positions in Illinois are unfilled. The open positions are concentrated in particular fields, such as bilingual and

special education, and frequently in rural or low-income regions of the state.

ISBE supports eliminating barriers that discourage qualified individuals from teaching. ISBE worked with the Illinois General Assembly to pass SB 2912, signed into law by Governor Bruce Rauner on Jan. 6, 2017. The new law makes several changes to streamline the process for licensed educators in other states to obtain an Illinois license, reduces financial and other barriers to substitute teaching, and creates alternative routes for teachers to seek the teacher leader license endorsement.

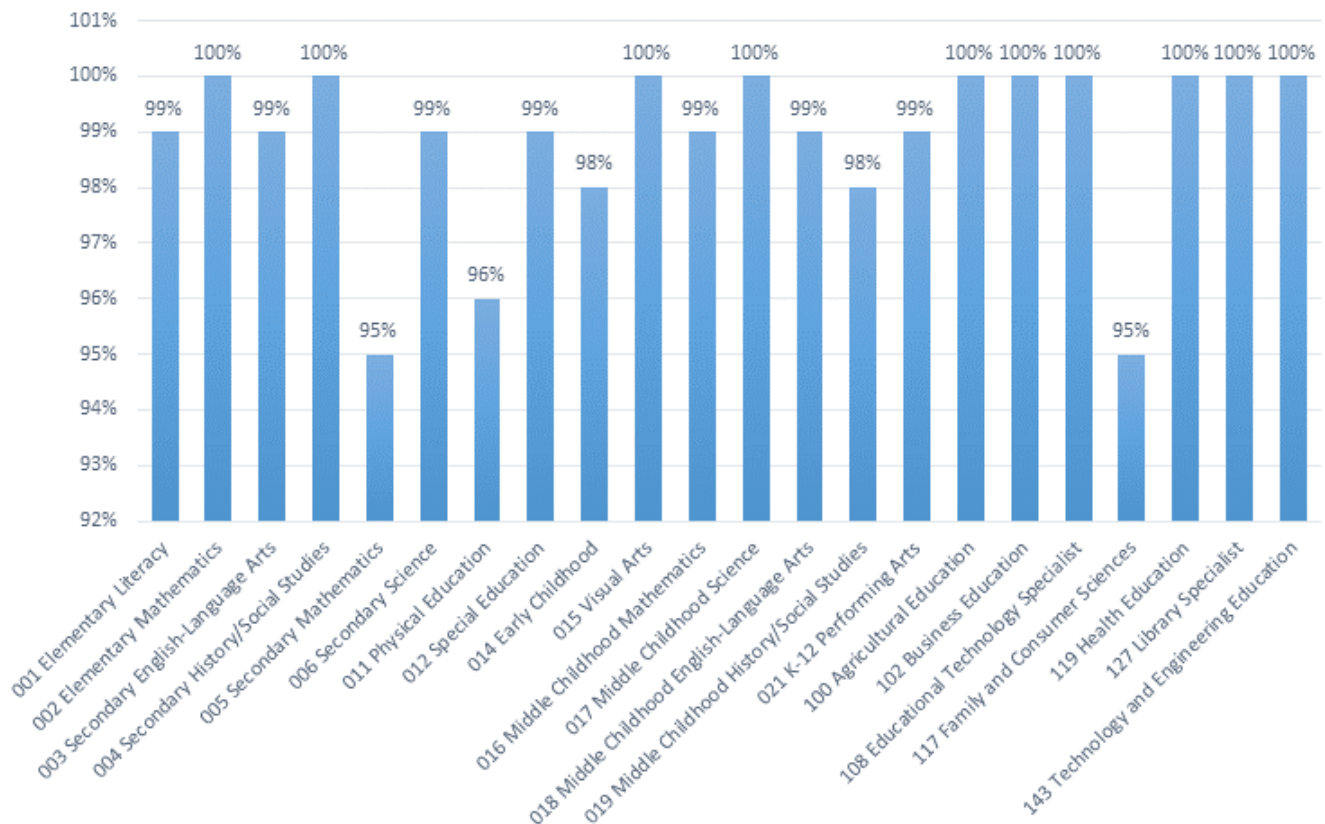
PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES

ISBE's Division of Educator Effectiveness continues its work to strengthen educator preparation programs in Illinois. ISBE works closely with a diverse group of stakeholders to ensure educator preparation programs receive the data they need to improve – not only educators' content knowledge and classroom readiness but also placement and retention in the profession. The stakeholder group, called the Partnership for Educator Preparation (PEP) Steering Committee, includes 20 leading college of education deans and hiring managers at public schools from across Illinois.

The PEP Steering Committee recommended that ISBE increase transparency, accountability, and the continuous improvement systems in teacher preparation programs. ISBE has acted on the committee's recommendation and designed the voluntary Teacher Preparation Data System Pilot program. Thirty-nine of the state's 59 approved teacher preparation institutions – representing 90 percent of the state's current teaching candidates – have opted into the pilot.

Teacher preparation institutions participating in the pilot and ISBE are submitting data across a common set of inputs and outcomes. The resulting data system will equip teacher preparation institutions with

Figure 13: 2015-16 Statewide Pass Rate in Each EdTPA Subject



Source: Illinois State Board of Education

unprecedented access to real-time placement and performance information for graduates. The candidate-level, program-level, and longitudinal data, combined with the shared set of indicators and measures of program performance, will empower teacher preparation institutions statewide to engage in continuous program improvement.

The goals of the pilot include:

- Test and gather input on ISBE’s proposed indicators and measures of program performance
- Identify and solve data collection barriers at educator preparation programs and at ISBE
- Gather data to test benchmarks and inform the appropriate weights and measures for the final performance measurement system
- Identify and address program performance trends in advance of full system implementation
- Support educator preparation programs in collaborating with one another on accountability and the development of continuous program improvement systems

ISBE expects to create a report for each pilot participant in August 2017.

ISBE continues to support programs and engage in partnerships to address the regional teacher shortage. ISBE administers the Growing Agriculture Science Teachers program to support eligible institutions in addressing the shortage of agriculture science teachers in Illinois. The grant provides incentive funding to agriculture science teacher education programs to recruit teacher candidates, to improve retention by providing support to new teachers in their first five years of service, and to enhance the field-based experiences of teacher candidates. Since the introduction of the grant in fiscal year 2009, the number of agricultural education teacher training programs in Illinois has remained steady while the number of other teacher training programs has declined.

ISBE is currently working with management organizations and teachers unions on a bill to further streamline the licensure process for all licensed

educators and staff, while maintaining high standards across the board. ISBE also is working with school district leaders and regional superintendents to explore better and more creative ways to recruit substitute teachers.

ISBE believes in expanding opportunities for teacher leadership and meaningful professional learning experiences in order to improve satisfaction and retention among educators and to harness the teaching corps' deep talent and knowledge to improve Illinois' education systems.

Illinois' Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan, developed by ISBE and approved by the State Board in March 2016, includes specific opportunities to increase teacher leadership. For instance,

competitive grant programs will allow for 30-, 60-, and 90-day teacher-led and practice-focused research projects. Competitive grant programs also will support innovative fieldwork partnerships between districts and higher education institutions to augment the range and quality of teacher candidates' experiences in the field and with seasoned educator role models. ISBE will continue supporting Ed Leaders Network, an online, on-demand, professional learning community, to connect teacher leaders across districts. The state plan also calls for the development of resources and professional learning opportunities for educators on the principles of Universal Design for Learning, differentiated instruction, balanced assessment, and data and assessment literacy. The scope of the teacher development and teacher leadership programs will depend heavily on federal funding levels for Title II.



Educators at Hope Academy in Decatur Public School District 61 celebrate Children's Mental Health Awareness, as part of their IL-AWARE programming.

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

RESULTS TO DATE

Learning happens best when students feel safe and healthy. ISBE believes schools need to create and maintain a safe, caring, inclusive, and responsive school climate so all children in the state can reach their full potential.

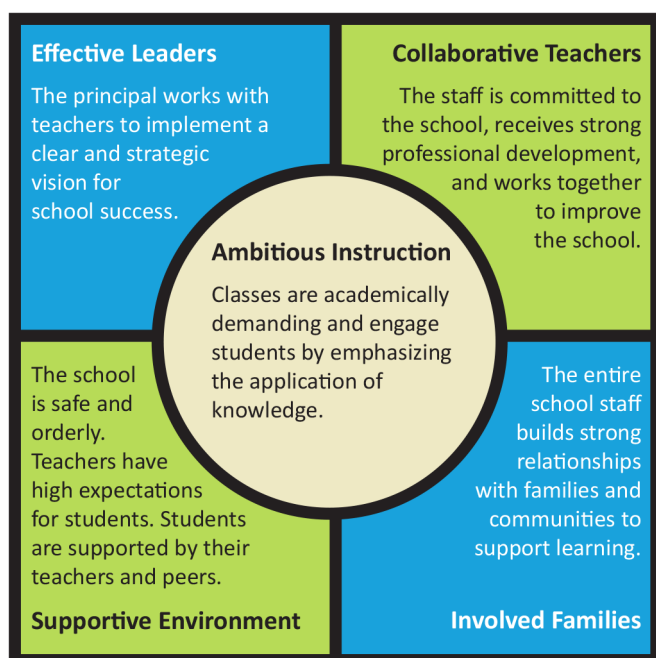
The 5Essentials Survey, which is being administered statewide for the fifth consecutive year during the 2016-17 school year, continues to provide valuable feedback about individual schools' climate and culture. The Consortium on School Research at the University of Chicago developed the 5Essentials Survey -- a comprehensive, research-based tool designed to assess components of school organization proven to connect to improved student outcomes. Practitioners use their individualized school-level 5Essentials report to better understand strengths and areas for improvement in their school culture and to turn these insights into targeted actions.

Current Illinois state statute requires all school districts to administer a climate survey at least every other year. Statute allows districts to choose between the 5Essentials or one of three approved alternative surveys. Currently, 27 school districts administer one of the alternative surveys; the other 828 districts administer the 5Essentials. Many school districts elect to administer a climate survey every year.

The Illinois Learning Standards for social/emotional learning continue to guide schools and districts in developing curricula and programming to help students achieve three specific social/emotional learning goals throughout the continuum of their academic life:

1. Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success;
2. Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships; and
3. Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

Figure 14: 5Essentials Survey Model



Research shows that schools strong on the five essentials are ten times more likely to improve student learning than schools weak on the five essentials.

ISBE also recognizes the critical importance of physical health to students' capacities to learn. Poor physical fitness; violence; lack of proper nutrition; communicable diseases; and alcohol, tobacco and other drug use pose substantial challenges to students' cognitive functions and readiness to learn in school. The Illinois Learning Standards for enhanced physical education aim to foster physical and mental receptiveness to learning and to promote healthy decision-making and teamwork skills.

ONGOING EFFORTS

Illinois' Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan, approved by the State Board in March 2017, emphasizes the vital role of state education agencies in supporting schools' efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching, such as trauma, poverty, homelessness, disengagement, absenteeism, bullying, behavioral health issues, and lack of behavioral and physical health supports in the school environment.



A student at Benavides Kindergarten Center in East Aurora School District 131 tries fresh green beans, made possible through the federally funded Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

Illinois' ESSA State Plan commits ISBE to using federal Title II dollars to enhance professional learning and resources for educators regarding social and emotional learning, cultural competence, conflict management, trauma and behavioral health issues, restorative practices, and anti-racist and anti-bias approaches. The new accountability framework in the ESSA State Plan includes annual participation in the 5Essentials Survey as a key indicator of school quality and student success for all schools. Eligible schools and districts will receive funding to connect with qualified professional learning partners to improve culture and climate through IL-EMPOWER, Illinois' new comprehensive statewide system of support for schools. In addition, the Climate and Culture pages on the ISBE website outline the Comprehensive System of Learning Supports; offer supports for children of military families, homeless youth, and youth in care; and include anti-bias and anti-hate resources.

ISBE received a \$1.9 million federal Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education) cooperative grant in 2014 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to support its efforts to help schools detect and respond to mental health issues among youth.

Three Illinois school districts -- East Aurora School District 131, Decatur Public School District 61, and Harrisburg Community Unit School District 3 -- serve diverse student populations in rural and urban settings and share the majority of the funds. The districts help students, families, educators, mental health providers, local law enforcement, juvenile justice agencies, and other community-based organizations develop and implement comprehensive plans to identify and address students' mental health needs.

The grant also supports Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training at both the state and local community levels to improve mental health literacy and capacity among adults who interact with school-aged children. Six hundred twenty-five individuals received YMHFA training from September 2014 to September 2016. YMHFA-trained adults connected 599 school-aged youth to mental health or related services.

ISBE's Trauma-informed Practices Pilot, most recently funded by the state in fiscal year 2015 through the Illinois Children's Mental Health line, fosters a statewide understanding of trauma and its impact and builds capacity for identifying and implementing appropriate interventions. The Special Education

Association of Peoria County, the Regional Offices of Education, and ISBE partnered in FY 2017 to provide trainings and book studies for approximately 500 educators and administrators.

Illinois continues to be a leader in valuing the positive impact of nutritious, regular meals on students' learning and development. ISBE proudly administers nutritious food programs, including the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, Special Milk Program, and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, all funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

For instance, funding for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) allows elementary schools serving low-income students to provide a fresh fruit or vegetable snack to students outside of the breakfast and lunch service times. The program not only provides valuable nutrients for students' minds and bodies but also exposes students to a wide variety of colorful fruits and vegetables with which they may not otherwise be familiar. ISBE received \$5.4 million in the 2016-17 school year and awarded FFVP grants to 260 schools.

ISBE's Nutrition & Wellness Division also is working diligently to create resources for the field on enhanced

physical education, including an Illinois-specific mechanism for submitting physical fitness data to ISBE. ISBE anticipates releasing aggregate physical fitness data by fall 2017.

ISBE is building and improving its coordination of wellness services and supports through internal changes. The reorganization will facilitate a more holistic approach to students' social, emotional, behavioral, and physical development. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model will guide the work of ISBE's wellness division. The WSCC model includes 10 components that contribute to critical education and health outcomes for students: health education; nutrition environment and services; employee wellness; social and emotional school climate; physical environment; health services; counseling, psychological, and social services; community involvement; family engagement; and physical education and physical activity.

ISBE's wellness division will work collaboratively with other divisions, state agencies, and partners to advance ISBE's vision of Illinois as a state of whole, healthy children nested in whole, healthy systems supporting communities wherein all citizens are socially and economically secure.



Students at Nicholas A. Hermes Elementary School in East Aurora School District 131 wear green to celebrate National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. The district uses IL-AWARE funding to put violence prevention strategies and safe school policies into practice and to develop partnerships with local behavioral health providers and children's organizations.



Illinois State Board of Education

2017 PROGRESS REPORT

COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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