

Draft – For Discussion Purposes Only

Illinois State Board of Education



Race to the Top Briefing Book

Prepared for the Illinois State Board of Education Retreat

August 18 – 20, 2009

Please Note: The strategies and initiatives outlined in this document remain a work in progress. ISBE will continue to develop these initiatives and explore others as the State's Race to the Top application is developed.

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RACE TO THE TOP BRIEFING BOOK

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ILLINOIS' STATUS FOR RACE TO THE TOP

What is “Race to the Top”?

Race to the Top is a \$4.35 billion competitive fund available from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) for a handful of states prepared to take dramatic steps to improve public education. Per ED guidelines, proposals for Race to the Top funds are to be submitted by the governor of each state. Accordingly, Gov. Pat Quinn is ultimately responsible for what will be included in Illinois’ proposal.

Beyond certain threshold criteria, in evaluating applications ED will focus on state performance and plans within four “assurance areas”:

- 1) College and career-ready Standards and Assessments;
- 2) Longitudinal Data Systems to support instruction;
- 3) Great teachers and leaders, equitably distributed; and
- 4) Interventions in low-performing schools.

ED has proposed two phases of funding: (1) Phase 1 applications are due in December 2009, with awards made in Spring 2010, and (2) Phase 2 applications will be due in late Spring 2010, with awards made in the fall. States that apply in Phase 1 but are not successful may reapply in Phase 2. Most grants will be awarded in Phase 2.

Where does Illinois stand in its “Race to the Top” application?

The State of Illinois, under the leadership of Gov. Pat Quinn and State Superintendent Chris Koch, intends to submit a highly competitive application in Phase 1.

The State must meet two eligibility requirements: (1) it must have an approved application for Phase II stabilization funds, and (2) it must have no legal barriers to linking student performance data to teachers and principals.

Illinois will meet both of these criteria. The State is working diligently on its Phase II stabilization fund application, and recently passed legislation establishing a longitudinal data system that requires the linkage of student to teacher and principal data.

Assurance Area 1:

What is Illinois doing to satisfy the criteria for “Standards and Assessments”?

Illinois is well positioned to satisfy criteria in this area, including:

- Joining the America Diploma Project last year, and having been a leader in a multi-state consortium to create common internationally-benchmarked standards and assessments;
- Signing on to develop standards and assessments for 21st Century Skills;
- Creating a plan to make it easier for districts to implement new standards by (1) identifying quality formative assessments and curriculum connected to state standards, (2) developing a platform for sharing best practices, and (3) ensuring affordable contracts for local districts to implement high quality assessments.



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Assurance Area 2:

What is Illinois doing to satisfy the criteria for “Data Systems to Support Instruction”?

Illinois is well positioned to satisfy the criteria in this area, including:

- Enacting comprehensive longitudinal data legislation which calls for the implementation of all elements in America COMPETES Act. Illinois appropriated state funds for this initiative, and also garnered a \$9 million federal IES grant;
- Undertaking various steps to ensure data are usable and accessible by all stakeholders;
- Releasing a Request for Information to identify vendors who can help the state build innovative data solutions to support strong instructional and performance management strategies.

Assurance Area 3:

What is Illinois doing to satisfy the criteria for “Great Teachers and Leaders”?

Illinois will need a significant push to be a leader in this area. Existing efforts include:

- Enacting and implementing legislation calling for evaluation of principals and developing rigorous new standards for principal preparation programs. **NOTE:** Existing programs must all re-apply for accreditation under these new standards. This is an unusual and significant move.
- Developing new standards for mentoring and induction in partnership with the New Teacher Center (one of the nation’s leaders in new teacher mentoring);
- Establishing a process to approach teacher preparation redesign and partnering with the National Council for Teacher Quality to evaluate teacher preparation programs across the state.

These are important elements, but additional effort is necessary to tie evaluations to student growth data, ensure the equitable distribution of effective teachers, and provide mechanisms for alternative certification. **ISBE is pursuing comprehensive legislation in these areas, but action in this area is essential to a successful proposal.**

Assurance Area 4:

What is Illinois doing to satisfy the criteria for “Intervention in Low-Performing Schools”?

Illinois has started to show progress in its ability to intervene in failing schools, but again significantly more is necessary to demonstrate leadership. Current efforts include:

- Support for struggling schools to undertake comprehensive school improvement planning;
- A doubling of the charter cap and demonstrated leadership in charter authorizing and accountability;
- Recently enacted legislation calling for the convening of a “Turnaround Taskforce”; and
- Extensive state planning around a comprehensive intervention strategy, including aggressive outreach to strong external partners.

ISBE has legal authority to intervene in failing schools and districts, and the State is home to some of the nation’s leading turnaround organizations. However, this is largely new work for Illinois, and will require new infrastructure, funding, and external partners to do well. In addition, new regulatory and statutory authorities can strengthen the State’s efforts. Focused leadership at ISBE and a number of qualified external organizations give us a leg up on building this capacity.



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What else does Illinois have to do for the application beyond the 4 "assurance areas?"

The "Race to the Top" application has additional overall criteria: a commitment to education funding, sound achievement measures, strategies to narrow achievement gaps and raise graduation rates, and a commitment from diverse stakeholders. Illinois was able to maintain education funding from FY08 to FY09 (though there may be a small drop in funding in FY10) and is involving local districts, foundations, unions and others. A Dropout Summit this November and coordination with the Illinois Math and Science Academy around math and science programs demonstrate additional progress, as does the expected convening of a P-20 Council to help coordinate state efforts across the educational continuum.

What do we need to do next?

As Secretary Duncan noted in a recent visit, Illinois is making great strides towards being competitive for Race to the Top, but more needs to be done. In sum, Illinois must:

- Implement the longitudinal data system, focusing on data quality and stakeholder cooperation;
- Establish a plan for further data innovations that support district instructional and performance management;
- Achieve comprehensive human capital reform;
- Improve the capacity of the State to intervene in persistently low-performing schools and districts;
- Develop a powerful, comprehensive Race to the Top application.

How to Use and Interpret This Document

The remainder of this document includes a preliminary Working Plan for the State of Illinois to address the selection criteria established by the U.S. Department of Education in the Race to the Top Fund Notice of Proposed Priorities, Requirements, Definitions, and Selection Criteria. The Working Plan describes a number of initiatives to address both the "State Reform Conditions Criteria" and the "Reform Plan Criteria" proposed by the U.S. Department of Education for each of the four reform "assurance areas." The 17 initiatives listed in the Working Plan Overview that follows are described in more detail in the remainder of the document. Some of the initiatives have been recently undertaken or are well underway – others are proposals that are in the process of being developed. Certainly, other ideas and initiatives will be added and woven into the State's plan over the coming months, and ISBE welcomes continued input from various stakeholders on these and other strategies. Ultimately, the State's application will need to have comprehensive strategies within each of the four assurance areas and coherence across the plan. However, at this early stage in the process, this document helps to identify the status of the State's planning and major reform initiatives that are under development.

WORKING PLAN OVERVIEW
RACE TO THE TOP SELECTION CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS

STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

Selection Criteria ¹	Race to the Top Requirements	Initiative <i>(see numbered descriptions that follow)</i>	Aligned Federal Funding Opportunities/Allocations
C: Developing and adopting common standards	For Phase I applications: Join a consortium of states to jointly develop and adopt, by June 2010, a common set of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards. For Phase II applications: Adopting a common set of K-12 standards.	1. Common State Standards Initiative	Race to the Top: Standards and Assessments Funding
C: Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments	Participate in a consortium of states that is working toward jointly developing and implementing high quality assessments aligned to standards (no timeframe indicated).	1. Common State Standards Initiative	Race to the Top: Standards and Assessments Funding
P: Supporting transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, has a high quality plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of new standards and assessments (e.g., aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements, developing and implementing curricular frameworks and materials, formative and interim assessments, professional development, and through other strategies).	1. Common State Standards Initiative 2. Assessments for Learning 3. Early Learning to K-3 Transitions 4. College- and Career-Ready High School Supports 5. System of Support Redesign	Race to the Top: Standards and Assessments Funding NCLB 1003(a) funding for System of Support

¹ The U.S. Department of Education distinguishes between "State Reform Conditions Criteria" (designated with a "C" on the table) and "Reform Plan Criteria" (designated with a "P"). State Reform Conditions Criteria will be used as evidence of a State's past progress and creation of conditions for reform in specific areas related to the four ARRA reform areas. The Reform Plan Criteria will be used to assess States' plans for future efforts in the four ARRA reform areas.

WORKING PLAN OVERVIEW
RACE TO THE TOP SELECTION CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS

DATA SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT INSTRUCTION

Selection Criteria	Race to the Top Requirements	Initiative (see numbered descriptions that follow)	Aligned Federal Funding Opportunities/Allocations
C: Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system	The extent to which the State has a longitudinal data system that includes all 12 elements specified in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act.	6. P-20 Longitudinal Data System 7. P-20 Data Sharing Agreement	IES Statewide Longitudinal Data System Funding
P: Accessing and using State data	The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan to ensure: - that data from the State's longitudinal data system are accessible to, and are used to inform and engage, key stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers and policymakers); - that the data support decision-makers in the continuous improvement of instruction, operations, management and resource allocation; and - that they comply with FERPA.	6. P-20 Longitudinal Data System 7. P-20 Data Sharing Agreement 8. Learning and Performance Management System	IES Statewide Longitudinal Data System Funding NCLB 1003(a) funding for System of Support redesign
P: Using data to improve instruction	The extent to which the State, in collaboration with participating LEAs, has a high-quality plan to: (i) increase the use of instructional improvement systems that provides teachers, principals, and administrators with the information they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness; and (ii) make these data, together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers so they have information needed to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for different types of students.	2. Assessments for Learning 6. P-20 Longitudinal Data System 7. P-20 Data Sharing Agreement 8. Learning and Performance Management System 9. Education Research Consortium	IES Statewide Longitudinal Data System Funding NCLB 1003(a) funding for System of Support redesign

WORKING PLAN OVERVIEW
RACE TO THE TOP SELECTION CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS

GREAT TEACHERS AND LEADERS

Selection Criteria	Race to the Top Requirements	Initiative <i>(see numbered descriptions that follow)</i>	Aligned Federal Funding Opportunities/Allocations
C. Providing alternative pathways for aspiring teachers and principals	The extent to which the State has in place the legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to IHEs.	10. Human Capital Reform	Teacher Quality Partnership Grants
P: Differentiating teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance	The extent to which the State, in collaboration with participating LEAs, has a high quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to: (a) determine a plan for measuring student growth; (b) employ rigorous, transparent, and equitable processes for differentiating the effectiveness of teachers and principals using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as significant factor; (c) provide to each teacher and principal his or her own data and rating; and (d) use this information when making decisions to: (1) evaluate and develop teachers and principals; (2) compensate and promote teachers and principals; and (3) tenure and dismiss teachers/principals.	6. P-20 Longitudinal Data System 8. Learning and Performance Management System 10. Human Capital Reform 11. Illinois Growth Model Implementation 12. Illinois Partnership Zone	Teacher Incentive Fund IES Statewide Longitudinal Data System Funding 1003(g) School Improvement Funds

GREAT TEACHERS AND LEADERS (CONT'D)			
Selection Criteria	Race to the Top Requirements	Initiative (see numbered descriptions that follow)	Aligned Federal Funding Opportunities/Allocations
P: Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals	The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number and percentage of highly effective teachers and principals in high poverty schools and to increase the number of percentage of effective teachers who teach hard-to-staff subjects.	10. Human Capital Reform 12. Illinois Partnership Zone 13. Teacher Preparation Redesign 14. Administrator Preparation Redesign	Teacher Quality Partnership Grants 1003(g) School Improvement Funds
P: Reporting the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs.	The extent to which the State has a high quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to link a student's achievement data to the student's teachers and principals, to link this information to the programs where each of those teachers and principals was prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the findings for each credentialing program that has twenty or more graduates annually.	6. P-20 Longitudinal Data System 11. Illinois Growth Model Implementation 13. Teacher Preparation Redesign 14. Administrator Preparation Redesign	IES Statewide Longitudinal Data System Funding Teacher Quality Partnership Grants
P: Providing effective support to teachers and principals	The extent to which the State, in collaboration with participating LEAs, has a high-quality plan to use rapid-time student data to inform and guide the support provided to teachers and principals.	5. System of Support Redesign 8. Learning and Performance Management System 10. Human Capital Reform 11. Illinois Growth Model Implementation 12. Illinois Partnership Zone	IES Statewide Longitudinal Data System Funding NCLB 1003(a) funding for System of Support 1003(g) School Improvement Funds

WORKING PLAN OVERVIEW
RACE TO THE TOP SELECTION CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS

TURNING AROUND STRUGGLING SCHOOLS

Selection Criteria	Race to the Top Requirements	Initiative <i>(see numbered descriptions that follow)</i>	Aligned Federal Funding Opportunities/Allocations
C: Intervening in the lowest-performing schools and LEAs	Whether the State has the legal, statutory or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-performing schools and in LEAs that are in corrective action.	15. District and School Innovations and Interventions <i>[The State has existing intervention authority under Section 2-3.25f of the School Code.]</i>	N/A
C: Increasing the supply of high-quality charter schools	(i) The extent to which the State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of charter schools in the State or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools.	16. Charter School Expansion, Authorization, and Accountability	N/A
	(ii) The extent to which the State has statutes and guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools, including the extent to which the statutes or guidelines require that student academic achievement be a factor, and the extent to which charter school authorizers have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools.	16. Charter School Expansion, Authorization, and Accountability <i>[Article 27A of the School Code addresses the mechanical aspects of how authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools.]</i>	N/A
	(iii) The extent to which the State's charter schools receive equitable funding, compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal program and revenue sources.	16. Charter School Expansion, Authorization, and Accountability <i>[Section 27A-11 of the School Code requires local funding not less than 75% or more than 125% of school district's per capita student tuition. Section 27A-11.5 provides for start-up grants and a revolving loan fund, and ensures charter schools can receive any grant administered by ISBE available for districts.]</i>	N/A
	(iv) The extent to which the State provides charter schools with equitable access to facilities by providing them with facilities funding, assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, and/or other supports.	16. Charter School Expansion, Authorization, and Accountability	N/A

TURNING AROUND STRUGGLING SCHOOLS (CONT'D)			
Selection Criteria	Race to the Top Requirements	Initiative (see numbered descriptions that follow)	Aligned Federal Funding Opportunities/Allocations
P: Turning Around Struggling Schools	<p>The extent to which the State has a high quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to identify at least the lowest-performing five percent of the persistently lowest-performing schools and support its LEAs in turning around these schools by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new leadership and a majority of new staff, new governance, and improved instructional programs - converting to charter schools or contracting with an education management organization - closing and serving students by placing them in high-performing schools - to the extent the above is not feasible, implementing a school transformation model that includes a new principal, measuring teacher and principal effectiveness and rewarding effective teachers, an improved instructional program, extended learning time and community oriented support 	<p>12. Illinois Partnership Zone 15. District and School Innovations and Interventions 17. District Reorganizations to Improve Student Outcomes</p>	<p>1003(g) School Improvement Funds</p> <p>Teacher Quality Partnership Grants</p> <p>Teacher Incentive Funds</p>

**WORKING PLAN OVERVIEW
RACE TO THE TOP PRIORITIES**

Priority Area	Race to the Top Requirements	Illinois Status/Initiatives
<i>Absolute Priority:</i> Comprehensive Approach to the four education reform areas	The State's application must comprehensively address each of the four education reform areas specified in ARRA to demonstrate that the State and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform.	The application will demonstrate a comprehensive approach to the four reform areas.
<i>Competitive Preference Priority:</i> Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)	To meet this priority, the State's application must describe plans to address the need to (i) offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, sciences, technology, and engineering; (ii) cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, or other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM across grades and disciplines; and (iii) prepare more students for advanced study and careers in STEM fields, including addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls.	4. College- and Career-Ready High School Supports [Need to further develop STEM components]
<i>Invitational Priority:</i> Expansion and Adoption of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems	The Secretary is interested in applications in which the State plans to expand statewide longitudinal data systems to include or integrate data from special education programs, early childhood programs, human resources, finance, health, postsecondary, and other relevant areas, with the purpose of allowing important questions to be asked and answered. The Secretary is also particularly interested in applications in which States propose working together to adapt one State's longitudinal data systems so that it may be used, in whole or in part, by other State(s).	6. P-20 Longitudinal Data System 7. P-20 Data Sharing Agreement 8. Learning and Performance Management System
<i>Invitational Priority:</i> P-20 Coordination and Vertical Alignment	The Secretary is interested in applications in which the State plans to address how early childhood programs, K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, and workforce organizations will coordinate to improve all parts of the education system and create a more seamless P-20 route for students.	P-20 coordination will be addressed throughout the application.
<i>Invitational Priority:</i> School-Level Conditions for Reform and Innovation	The Secretary is interested in applications which the State's participating LEAs provide schools with flexibilities and autonomies conducive to reform and innovation, such as: i. Selecting staff; ii. Implement new structures and formats for the school day or year that expand learning time; iii. Placing budgets under the school's control; iv. Awarding credits to students based on student performance instead of instructional time; and v. Providing comprehensive services to high-need students.	12. Illinois Partnership Zone 15. District and School Innovations and Interventions

1. COMMON STATE STANDARDS INITIATIVE

Overview: Illinois will take a leadership role in the Common State Standards Initiative involving 46 states and 3 territories. The states and territories participating in this initiative will collectively develop and adopt a core set of academic standards in mathematics and English language arts. The Common State Standards Initiative will also create economies of scale around areas such as curriculum development and common assessments. The Common State Standards Initiative is being jointly led by the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers in partnership with Achieve, ACT, and the College Board.

In Illinois, this initiative will build on the State’s membership in two multi-state efforts focused on enhancing the State's learning standards:

- **American Diploma Project:** In October 2008, the State Board, in partnership with the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, Office of the Governor, and the Illinois Business Roundtable, joined 33 states in the American Diploma Project (ADP). This effort has involved both an external and internal review of the Illinois Learning Standards in English, Math and Science. Teams of secondary and postsecondary educators have convened to compare the Illinois learning standards to the ADP exemplary standards and to clarify what it means to be ready for college success. The teams have been working to revise the Illinois standards as we bring needed coherence between standards, curriculum, assessments, and college entry requirements.
- **Partnership for 21st Century Skills State Leadership Network:** ISBE joined the Partnership for 21st Century Skills State Leadership Network because of the State's commitment to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary for today’s students to be successful in tomorrow’s workplace. The State must incorporate 21st century skills and expectations into the learning opportunities of all students and infuse these attributes throughout our educational system. Learning academic content in core areas is of utmost importance, however, ISBE expects our schools to instill in students a love of knowledge and learning, the ability to think critically and employ analytical and technical skills, a sense of pride in accomplishment, the ability to interact with and within other cultures, and an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy. As the State reviews and revises the Illinois learning standards, ISBE will be intentional about examining both the depth and sequence of the content and real world applications and linkages between the subjects. ISBE will be working closely with our stakeholders, including employers to help guide and inform this work.

Timeline: Subject matter teams that have been analyzing the Illinois Learning Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics will soon release an analysis of the current standards against college and career-ready expectations. In August 2009, draft college and career ready expectations will be released by the Common State Standards Initiative. In December 2009, the draft standards for grades K-12 will be released by the Common State Standards Initiative. Beginning in January 2010, the Illinois State Board of Education will commence the process to revise the Illinois Learning Standards to adopt the Common State Standards core and incorporate the analyses performed through the American Diploma Project and Partnership for 21st Century Skills State Leadership Network. As part of this process, it will also be essential that the revised Illinois Learning Standards be properly articulated to the State's early learning content standards.

2. ASSESSMENTS FOR LEARNING

School districts must have access to a broad range of assessment tools to diagnose student learning needs and improve instruction. To that end, ISBE's Race to the Top strategies will provide all districts in the State with access to high quality "Assessments for Learning." As contemplated by ISBE, Assessments for Learning include:

- Universal screening/benchmark assessment data collected periodically (e.g., quarterly) indicating whether most students are meeting benchmarks in a particular academic area, measuring student learning during the previous period of instruction that can help determine student progress toward year-end objectives and identifying areas requiring greater focus;
- formative assessments that are more diagnostic in nature and provide teachers with information on how to teach specific curricular areas to address student learning needs; and
- other assessments that yield descriptive data that can be used to improve instruction throughout the school year.

ISBE is actively working to include Assessments for Learning within the statewide education purchasing program, and is seeking to cooperate with school districts that are procuring or considering procuring such assessments. Through the statewide education purchasing program, ISBE has the authority to "certify" an education purchasing contract as a statewide purchasing contract provided the contract was entered into according to procedures and conditions that conform to applicable State purchasing laws and applicable administrative rules. Participation by Illinois school districts in certified education purchasing contracts meets the bidding and advertising requirements in Section 10-20.21 of the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-20.21(d)). The statewide contract will ensure best available pricing and a simplified procurement/contracting process. Contingent upon the availability of state or federal funding, the State may be able to buy-down the implementation costs for participating districts.

When including these assessments in the education purchasing program, ISBE can also establish a statewide system for:

- measuring student achievement gains in a manner aligned to the standards (and future revisions to standards); and
- integrating data from these assessments on the State's standardized tests and the ACT "EPAS" assessments in order to measure student growth.

3. EARLY LEARNING TO K-3 TRANSITIONS

The State's plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of new standards and assessments should have a strong focus on student transitions from early learning programs into kindergarten. One opportunity is to create joint and integrated professional development for early learning and teachers in K-3. Cross-sector discussions can improve teaching practices in both areas, while also improving the transition from early learning to kindergarten.

The State can also explore the development and implementation of a kindergarten readiness measure. Having a robust and reliable snapshot of where students are developmentally as they begin kindergarten gives parents and educators a head start in identifying issues and directing resources where they are needed most. Given Illinois' considerable investment in pre-kindergarten access and expansion, such a measure allows the State to better understand the impact of early childhood education programs.

4. COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY HIGH SCHOOL SUPPORTS

Illinois' plan for supporting implementation of rigorous standards and high quality assessments in high schools will build off of current assessment strategies and emerging partnerships among high schools, community colleges, and 4-year institutions to increase access to postsecondary opportunities. Internationally benchmarked standards and new high quality assessments developed through the Common Core Standards initiative will likely align to the types of metrics currently measured through the State's high school assessment programs, which allow schools to determine whether students are on track to achieve the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and work-ready expectations. In addition, partnerships formed between high schools and community colleges under Illinois' College and Career Readiness Act and emerging partnerships between high schools and four-year institutions provide further opportunities for aligning high school curriculum to college entrance requirements and providing student supports to increase postsecondary opportunities.

A. High School Assessment Strategies

ISBE's high school assessment strategies will seek to continue to make available and expand the use of assessments that measure college- and work-readiness and are used by postsecondary institutions and employers for placement decisions. The Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) administered to 11th graders as part of the State's high school accountability system incorporates both the ACT and two WorkKeys assessments. In addition, since the 2007 - 08 school year, the State has funded the cost for school districts to implement the EXPLORE and PLAN system in 9th and 10th grades. Both the EXPLORE and PLAN assessments provide student-level reports, item analyses, and tools such as "early intervention rosters" to determine individual student deficiencies in specific subject areas, aligned with ACT scores. Therefore, beginning in 9th grade (and even 8th grade, if middle schools administer the EXPLORE assessment), districts can determine whether students are on-track to achieve the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and provide appropriate student-level interventions at the earliest possible point in a student's high school career.

B. Comprehensive LEA/Community Colleges/Institution of Higher Education Partnerships

In 2007, the State of Illinois passed the College and Career Readiness Act, PA 95-0694, to fund pilot projects consisting of a partnership between a community college and partner high need schools to support the alignment of K-12 curriculum with college level coursework, as well as better prepare students to be successful in transitioning from high school to college. The Act has five main purposes: (1) align ACT scores to community college courses to diagnose college readiness; (2) reduce remediation through college prep courses, college readiness skills, and successful transitions; (3) align high school and college curricula; (4) provide resources and academic support to students; and (5) develop an evaluation process to measure the effectiveness of readiness programs. The legislation has resulted in the establishment of five comprehensive partnerships between community colleges and high schools throughout the State, with support provided by the Illinois Community College Board.

The State of Illinois can build on these efforts to establish authentic partnerships among high-need LEAs, community colleges, and institutions of higher education (IHEs) to achieve common goals of college- and work-readiness. The State of Illinois can establish a unique system of support

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for high schools within high-need LEAs that draws upon the expertise of ISBE, ICCB, IBHE, and supporting organizations. The State can develop and support partnerships that:

- Align high school and postsecondary expectations and requirements;
- Develop rigorous courses of study in mathematics, sciences, technology, and engineering;
- Implement high school assessment and data systems that diagnose whether students are on-track to college and work readiness;
- Support appropriate student-level interventions at the earliest possible point in a student's high school career;
- Increase access to advanced coursework through strategies such as on-line courses and dual credit programs; and
- Establish programs to provide LEA teachers with professional development and enhanced credentials necessary to deliver strong content and teach advanced courses, including the integration of math and science content across grades and disciplines.

5. SYSTEM OF SUPPORT REDESIGN

ISBE created the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) to provide assistance to schools and districts that fail to meet the State’s academic performance expectations. The system currently consists of a network of 10 entities spanning 10 regions in the State, and also includes the Illinois Association of School Administrators, the Illinois Principals Association, and the Illinois Association of School Boards. Through the SSOS ISBE assists schools and districts in their efforts to increase student achievement and ensure that all students graduate with the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to be successful in college and careers.

Over the course of the next school year, ISBE will engaging in an extensive process to redesign the State's system of support, consisting of both RESPRO services and ISBE programs, to address four tiers of needs. This redesign effort will also align supports and interventions to address "focused" or "comprehensive" needs of schools and districts, consistent with the State's federally approved differentiated accountability model. The redesigned system of support will also support all schools as they transition to and implement new internationally benchmarked standards and high-quality assessments tied to these standards.

6. P-20 LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

Overview: Public Act 96-0107 (SB 1828) establishes the requirements and framework for the development of the State’s longitudinal data system. The legislation requires the State to implement all ten of the Data Quality Campaign's "Essential Elements," requires the longitudinal data system to support a broad array of state and school district educational functions, ensures the necessary authority to collect postsecondary data (including data from private postsecondary institutions), and establishes a framework for data sharing with outside entities to support research and evaluation consistent with privacy protection laws. The legislation also requires connections to early learning data, and Illinois is already actively working to design a comprehensive early learning data system that will be incorporated into the longitudinal data system. In addition, the State of Illinois recently received a \$9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, (“IES Grant”) for implementation of a longitudinal data system.

Pursuant to the IES Grant and P.A. 96-0107, Illinois will be undertaking a number of related initiatives in the coming years, including:

- Establishing a State Education Data Advisory Group
- Developing an enterprise-wide data architecture
- Improving data quality through a system of data stewards and enhanced data audit procedures
- Developing an education enterprise data warehouse
- Linking ISBE data with postsecondary and employment data
- Collecting transcript data
- Establishing teacher/student and administrator/student linkages

Timeline: The IES Grant proposes a four-year timeline for the build-out of the State’s longitudinal data system. Similarly, P.A. 96-0107 requires the complete development of the longitudinal data system and data warehouse by June 30, 2013. However, to meet the requirements established by the U.S. Department of Education, certain elements (including transcript data collection and establishing teacher/student linkages) must be in place by no later than September 30, 2011.

7. P-20 DATA SHARING AGREEMENT

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and Illinois Shared Enrollment & Graduation File, housed at SIU Carbondale, (ISEG) recently executed an intergovernmental data sharing agreement that accomplishes a number of critical objectives for the State:

1. Establishes the data sharing mechanisms necessary to provide an enhanced high school feedback report that will better inform high school educators, education policymakers, and members of the public about students' performance during their first year of postsecondary education.
2. Establishes data sharing mechanisms to provide ISBE's Unique Student Identifier to postsecondary data systems. The data transfers established by this Agreement will supplement ISBE's recent rulemaking to add the Unique Student Identifier to high school transcripts, thereby providing multiple mechanisms to ensure this identifier can be used across the P-20 spectrum.
3. Establishes a framework and streamlined process to allow P-20 data to be made available to outside researchers in a manner consistent with privacy protection laws.

This critical agreement establishes the legal and procedural framework necessary to support the build-out of the State's P-20 Longitudinal Data System, described under Initiative 6.

8. LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

As contemplated by the agency, a learning and performance management system ("System") would integrate data from a multitude of systems into a single system for district use. This data could potentially be sourced from one or more State systems and/or directly from district systems. This data would be accessible using a robust web-based interface that defines access by role and the relationships between different users (teacher-student, administrator-teacher, etc.), allowing users to quickly obtain education data relevant to their role and needs. A district could elect to use the System to perform some or all of the functionality of a local student information system. The System would be centrally hosted, and accessed via a secure web interface. The system itself would host all of the software needed for full functionality, so that districts would not need to load or manage software or hardware locally. Districts must be able to easily modify and customize the way information is reported, and the System must be able to serve as a platform for a variety of applications addressing school district and classroom functions.

ISBE would work in partnership with participating school districts to define the requirements of the System. Potential users and functionality include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **State Education Agencies** will have access to necessary data to support a wide variety of reporting, program audit and evaluation, and support functions. The System could be designed to have uploads to the State's Student Information System (SIS)/Data Warehouse at pre-determined times, so that districts have a clear understanding of when and how data within the System will be used for regulatory compliance or accountability purposes.
- **Students** will have access to their own academic and performance history, and data linked to college and career planning portals.
- **Parents** will have access to their own student's data, including summative and formative data, information on how it is used, and ideas for outside of school activities.
- **Teachers** will receive timely, structured, and relevant access to student data to inform instruction. By providing teachers with access to their own students' information, the system can also provide a self-cleansing mechanism to ensure accurate, updated data maintained by the State. Data may include:
 - View of classroom data showing current and historical high-stakes assessment scores alongside predictive formative assessments
 - Access to detailed student reports on academic performance, attendance history, services provided, and formative and diagnostic data
 - Early warning system reports
- **Administrators** will have the same access as teachers, and also be able to create goal-oriented reports focused on school and district improvement (with direct connection to school and district improvement plans). In addition, the system will provide data reporting, analysis, and planning tools that assist with financial oversight, human resource management, and other education support functions.
- **School board members** will have access to school and district improvement planning functions, as well as other analysis tools to assist with district oversight and management.
- **The public** will have a web interface that provides non-confidential data reports and permits queries so that parents, media, and other members of the public can more easily access information. The system can also be integrated with "traditional" report card data currently provided by the State.

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The System may also serve as a depository for its users to post curriculum tools and instructional strategies. In addition, it may also utilize social networking technologies to establish on-line learning communities for multiple users across the State to collaborate around data-driven instructional activities.

ISBE has issued a "Request for Information" to obtain information from a wide variety of vendors on the types learning and performance management systems available in the marketplace. A working group established by the State Superintendent will review these responses and develop systems requirements that will be incorporated into the State's Race to the Top plan.

9. EDUCATION RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

The agency seeks to collaborate with the other State education agencies and the education research community to establish a focused and purposeful education research agenda for the State of Illinois. The agency seeks to define a collaborative framework for the State education agencies to work with a number of participating institutions to pursue education research supporting a data- and research-driven policy environment. This framework would involve a variety of institutions, each bringing its own institutional expertise and resources, working collaboratively to improve State educational policy. In some cases, the institutions will use data made available by the State to "push" the State in important policy directions. In other instances, the State education agencies will seek to utilize the expertise and research capabilities of the participating institutions to help evaluate the effectiveness of existing or emerging state programs and policies.

In particular, the agency is interested in engaging the research community to help develop a research-based framework for driving school and district improvement. The research community should provide critical direction to reform efforts and provide constructive feedback in collaboration with state agencies, school districts, and other actors in school reform.

10. HUMAN CAPITAL REFORM

The attached tables include a number of proposed legislative reforms in the areas of:

- Evaluation requirements and processes;
- Administrator training and evaluations;
- Impact of evaluations on tenure and employment decisions;
- State data collection and support for performance evaluation requirements;
- The State's teacher licensure system;
- Alternative certification programs; and
- Incentives for hard-to-staff schools.

While the proposed reforms are ambitious, the agency believes they are necessary to ensure the State has meaningful processes to differentiate teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, ensure all schools have access to effective teachers and principals, and meet the Department of Education's expectations for accessing Race to the Top funding.

Please note that the proposed reforms are only draft recommendations that are being discussed and vetted with a number of stakeholder groups, including the teacher unions and school district management representatives. We anticipate a number of modifications through this process. However, the issues and proposed reforms on the attached tables help to demonstrate the areas under discussion, and possible substantive directions for reform.

EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS		
Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
1. Consideration of student achievement outcomes	Article 24A does not encourage or preclude consideration of student achievement outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beginning with the 12-13 school year, the plan must describe objective student achievement outcomes based on student growth and a method for determining outcomes. - The State will establish growth methodologies and formulae that districts may incorporate into their evaluation plans. For example, the State may establish a growth methodology and formula using student achievement on the State's standardized tests, other high school assessments offered statewide, and interim assessments that are part of a statewide purchasing program (see "Assessments for Learning," Initiative 2).
		<p><i>Proposed Requirements for Districts Participating in Race to the Top:</i>*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For tested grades and subjects, student achievement outcomes must take into account data on student growth as a significant factor. "Student growth" means the change in achievement data for an individual student between successive points in time, corrected for measurement error. Growth must be measured by a statistically rigorous approach based on student achievement on the State's standardized test, and may also include other measures of student learning in order to increase the construct validity and generalizability of the information. - For non-tested grades and subjects, student achievement outcomes will be determined by alternative measures of a student's performance set forth in the evaluation plan. - Race to the Top funding will be structured to incentivize early adoption of evaluation plans incorporating student growth meeting the above requirements.
2. Weight assigned to student achievement outcomes	Not addressed by Article 24A	<p><i>Proposed Requirements for Districts Participating in Race to the Top:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 50% of the rating must be derived from consideration of student achievement outcomes, but only commencing with the second school year after implementation of each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State has implemented assessments aligned to a multi-state consortium's common college- and career-ready internationally benchmarked standards, and • The State and/or district has established a secure data interface system that allows teachers to view student data and confirm classroom information. - Race to the Top funding will be structured to incentivize early adoption of evaluation plans that derive at least 50% of the rating from consideration of student achievement outcomes.

* In many areas, the proposed Race to the Top criteria refer to the State establishing a plan in collaboration with its "participating LEAs." Although the U.S. Department of Education needs to further clarify what is meant by "participating LEAs," the agency's current understanding is that the State can establish criteria that have to be met by those districts agreeing to implement the State's Race to the Top plan and therefore receive their share of funding, but not by those districts that elect to forego the Race to the Top allocation available to the district. Where an item is not indicated as a proposed Race to the Top Requirement, the reform will be proposed as a legislative requirement for all districts.

EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS (CONT'D)		
Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
3. Frequency of teacher evaluations	Non-tenured teachers must be evaluated every year. Tenured teachers must be evaluated at least once every 2 school years. 105 ILCS 24A-4; 24A-8.	- Require annual evaluation of any teacher rated in the bottom two rating categories (based upon a four category system – see Issue 4 below). - Principals must have the opportunity to evaluate all teachers in any year in which the school principal changes.
4. Rating categories	Each teacher's performance must be rated as "excellent", "satisfactory", or "unsatisfactory". 105 ILCS 24A-5.	- Establish a fourth rating category ("needs improvement") to allow for an identification of professional growth needs, without requiring a full remediation plan. - Change the "satisfactory" rating category to "proficient."
5. Waivers of statutory evaluation requirements	Under Section 2-3.25g of the School Code, districts can seek to waive the requirements of Article 24A (relating to performance evaluations). 64 districts currently have waivers, mostly to implement a two category rating system.	Eliminate the ability of districts to obtain waivers of Article 24A. Existing waivers would be allowed to continue until their expiration or through the end of the 11-12 school year, whichever is earlier.
6. ISBE review of plans	ISBE currently must review and make comments on all evaluation plans and amendments to plans. 105 ILCS 24A-4.	Delete requirement for ISBE review and comments. Focus ISBE efforts on technical assistance as the plan is being developed and analysis of student achievement outcomes in relationship to evaluation determinations.

ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING AND EVALUATIONS

Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
7. Evaluation training	Administrators must participate at least once every two years in an inservice workshop on either school improvement or the evaluation of certified personnel. 105 ILCS 24A-3.	<p><i>[Need to consider frequency of in-service training for administrators evaluating other certified personnel.]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure adequate training on evaluations as part of administrator preparation programs. - Ensure rigorous training is completed prior to an administrator participating in evaluations. - The State and each school district must ensure that each administrator has the opportunity to participate in an annual inservice workshop on evaluations. - The State must provide a training program for effective use of the State's model evaluation plan template. <p><i>Proposed requirement for Districts Participating in Race to the Top:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require certification of administrators prior to administering a new district evaluation framework. The certification would include a process that involves rigorous training and an independent observer's determination that the administrator's ratings properly align to the evaluation plan framework. Administrators must only obtain the certification once.
8. Principal evaluations	<p>Each school district must establish a principal evaluation plan and ensure an evaluation as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For a principal on a single-year contract, the evaluation must take place by February 1 of each year. 2. For a principal on a multi-year contract, the evaluation must take place by the final year. <p>105 ILCS 5/24A-15.</p> <p><i>[Notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Under the School Code, multi-year principal contracts must be performance based and linked to student achievement and academic improvement.</i> - <i>CPS principal evaluation requirements are addressed in Article 34 of the School Code.]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New principals must be evaluated at the end of their first year. <i>[Need to consider required frequency of evaluation for principals on multi-year contracts following the first year.]</i> - Beginning with the 12-13 school year, principal evaluations must consider, in addition to existing requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student achievement and academic improvement outcomes, 2. The effectiveness of the school's teacher evaluation system, 3. The administrator's retention of effective teachers, 4. The improvement or exit of ineffective teachers, and 5. School climate, as informed by a survey of staff, using a survey tool approved by ISBE.

PAY INCENTIVES TIED TO EXCELLENT EVALUATIONS

Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
9. Teacher and Principal Excellence Bonus Program	No state incentive program based on classroom outcomes	<p>- Establish a State teacher and principal bonus program to reward excellence in teaching/instructional leadership, based upon a certain number of the highest ratings in the district's teacher or principal evaluation system.</p> <p>- Districts are only eligible for the bonus program if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISBE has determined, based on data in tested grades/subjects, that the district's performance evaluation ratings for teachers and principals substantially align with student growth determinations. • The district structures a program to reward excellence for teachers and principals aligned with, but extending beyond, the state program. • The district annually evaluates all teachers and principals.

TRAINING AND EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
10. Superintendent training and evaluations		<i>[Need to incorporate into framework.]</i>
11. School board training and evaluations		<i>[Need to incorporate into framework.]</i>

IMPACT ON TENURE AND EMPLOYMENT DECISIONS [Note: See Issues 19 – 22 for discussion of licensure]		
Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
12. Tenure	State law does not prescribe the factors districts must consider when granting tenure. 105 ILCS 5/24-11; 105 ILCS 5/34-84	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tenure may only be granted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • after a teacher has accumulated four ratings of "proficient" or better; or • after a teacher has accumulated a rating of "excellent" in two out of his or her first three years of teaching, with a rating of "proficient" or "excellent" in the other year. - In all cases, the teacher must achieve a rating of "proficient" or better in the last evaluation prior to granting tenure.
13. Use of teacher evaluations for reduction in force decisions	In all cases, non-tenured teachers must be removed before tenured teachers. Among tenured teachers, teachers with the shorter term of continuing service must be removed first. 105 ILCS 5/24-12.	<p><i>Proposed Requirements for Districts Participating in Race to the Top:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allow districts to dismiss low-performing tenured teachers before dismissing high-performing non-tenured teachers. - Among tenured teachers, priority for dismissal must be based on teacher evaluation ratings, with seniority considered only for teachers within the same performance rating category.
14. Suspension or revocation of certificate	State Superintendent may suspend a teaching certificate for up to 5 years or revoke a certificate based upon evidence of "incompetence." 105 ILCS 5/21-23.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further define "incompetence" to address a "pattern of ineffective teaching." A pattern of ineffective teaching could consist of two years of an unsatisfactory evaluation rating or three years of a combination of unsatisfactory/needs improvement, coupled with low student achievement outcomes. - State Superintendent, district, and teacher may agree to "lower stakes" settlements other than 5-year suspension or revocation (e.g., multi-year unpaid sabbaticals, non-teaching positions in districts without salary increases, etc.).
15. Statutory dismissal process	Section 24-12 of the School Code establishes the notice, hearing, and appeals process relating to teacher dismissals. Teachers in Illinois are rarely dismissed because of student performance.	<p>Revise Section 24-12 of the School Code to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require hearing officers to have participated in the past 2 years in a training program provided or approved by ISBE so that they are familiar with issues generally involved in evaluative and non-evaluative dismissals; • Require that the hearing commence within 90 days and conclude within 120 days of selection of the hearing officer; • Require that the hearing officer issue a decision within 60 days from the conclusion of the hearing or closure of the record.

STATE DATA COLLECTION AND SUPPORT

Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
16. State data collection	State law does not specify any data collection requirements relating to evaluations.	- Require ISBE to annually collect and publish data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number and percentage of teachers and administrators rated at each performance level; and • the retention rates of teachers at each performance level. - Require ISBE to provide data in tested grades/subjects in a manner that can be used by districts to "validate" performance evaluation ratings against student growth measures.
17. State model evaluation plan template	State law does not require a model evaluation plan template.	Require ISBE to develop a model evaluation plan template, in cooperation with teacher unions and school district representatives. The template must be accessible through a secure web-based portal, use pre-populated teacher and student data from state and district sources, and permit district customization.
18. State technical assistance and support	State law does not require state technical assistance or support relating to evaluations (except for the assignment of "consulting teachers" in certain situations).	- Require ISBE to incorporate into the State System of Support assistance for districts to develop and implement evaluation plans. - Include within the system of support independent expert observers that can help validate and improve local performance evaluation determinations, either through in-classroom observations or through video-taped observations.

TEACHER LICENSURE		
Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
19. Role/Constitution of State Teacher Certification Board	Membership consists of: - State Superintendent or designee - 5 IHE faculty members - 3 administrators - 10 teachers - 1 regional superintendent 105 ILCS 5/21-13.	<i>[Need to consider roles and responsibilities of the State Teacher Certification Board in relation to other reforms.]</i>
20. Licensure structure and renewals	Initial and Standard teaching certificate licensure structure, with multiple types. 105 ILCS 5/21-14.	Beginning with the 12-13 school year, establish a new licensure structure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requires induction and mentoring and a certain number of proficient/excellent performance evaluation ratings to move out of a restricted license to a full professional educator license; and • bases subsequent renewals on meaningful professional development and consideration of performance evaluation ratings.
21. Teacher Leader Endorsement	Endorsement available to: (i) teachers who are certified through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and complete a specially designed strand of teacher leadership courses; (ii) teachers who have completed a master's degree program in teacher leadership; and (iii) proven teacher leaders with a master's degree who complete a specially designed strand of teacher leadership courses. 105 ILCS 5/21-7.5	To receive a teacher leader endorsement, educators must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be (i) teachers who are certified through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and complete a specially designed strand of teacher leadership courses; or (ii) complete a program in instructional leadership approved by ISBE; AND • Have a demonstrated record of improving student achievement, demonstrated by achieving an "excellent" rating in two out of the teacher's prior three years of teaching (with proficient in the other year).
22. Professional Development	Initial Certificate: 105 ILCS 5/21-2 Standard Certificate: 105 ILCS 5/21-15 - A wide range of professional development options are available under current law, with choice of the option left to discretion of the teacher.	- Each teacher must develop a professional development plan in cooperation with the teacher's evaluator and supervisor. The plan must be based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement goals set forth in the improvement plans for the school and district; and • The needs of the teacher identified through the teacher's performance evaluation. The teacher's evaluator must annually meet with the teacher to review progress in meeting the goals in the teacher's plan.

ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION		
Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
23. Available programs	Alternative math-science certification, 105 ILCS 5/21-5a. Alternative Teacher Certification Program. 105 ILCS 5/21-5b. Alternative Route to Teacher Certification. 105 ILCS 5/21-5c.	Establish one program in statute for teachers. Retain separate authority to establish superintendent programs.
24. Partnerships with school districts	None required.	All programs must develop partnerships with one or more school districts, and admit candidates based upon the needs of its partners.
25. Program structure	For the Alternative Teacher Certification Program: (a) first phase is the course of study offered on an intensive basis in education theory, instructional methods, and practice teaching; (b) the second phase is the person's assignment to a full-time teaching position for one school year; and (c) the third phase is a comprehensive assessment of the person's teaching performance by school officials and the partnership participants and recommendation by the partner IHE to ISBE. 105 ILCS 5/21-5b.	<i>[Need to further consider appropriate phases that include, at minimum, a year-long internship and induction and mentoring component.]</i>
26. Limit on participants	260 new participants during each year that the program is in effect. 105 ILCS 5/21-5b.	Eliminate limits on the number of program participants.
27. Qualifications	1. Bachelor's degree. 2. Successfully completed the first program phase. 3. Have passed the test of basic skills/subject matter. 4. Have either been employed for at least 5 years in an area requiring application of the individual's education, or have attained at least a cumulative grade average of "B" for certain school districts. 105 ILCS 5/21-5b.	<i>[Need to further consider how to strengthen requirements for alternative certification candidates.]</i>
28. Authorized Sponsors	All programs must have an institution of higher education sponsor.	Expand eligibility to programs offered by organizations that have a demonstrated record of success in recruiting and preparing top talent, even if the programs do not have an institution of higher education sponsor. All programs must follow the same approval process and meet the same accountability requirements.

INCENTIVES FOR HARD-TO-STAFF SCHOOLS		
Issue	Current Law	Proposed Reform
29. Distribution of funding	Categorical funding for each teacher/principal. 105 ILCS 5/21-29(b).	Change to a competitive grant program for districts with thoughtful plans to address demonstrated needs. The plan must include a pre-selection process based on effective performance, and incorporate incentives/requirements tied to retention and continued performance.
30. Eligibility for Incentives	All teachers and principals in the hard-to-staff school receive payment. 105 ILCS 5/21-29(b).	Only provide payment to teachers and principals that re-locate to a hard-to-staff school.
31. Barriers to participation	Current law has a number of barriers preventing teachers and principals from re-locating to a hard-to-staff school in a new district, and accepting an incentive payment for such change.	Incentivize teachers and principals to change districts to work in a hard-to-staff school through the following legislative changes (in addition to the incentive payment): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure no decrease in pay based on the new district's salary schedule; 2. Allow a teacher or principal to change districts for five years with no impact on tenure or retirement in their home district (similar to the provision in Section 27A-10(b) of the Charter Schools Law); 3. Make tenure "portable" to the new district; and 4. Create an exception to the Pension Code restriction on 6% salary increases for teachers and principals accepting teachers in hard-to-staff schools.
INDUCTION AND MENTORING		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISBE has been engaged in an extensive stakeholder process to develop recommended requirements for mentors as well as program. These recommendations will inform the Race to the Top application and human capital reform legislation. 		
NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHERS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISBE will be working with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to develop a research-based infrastructure and organizing framework to use National Board Certification for school improvement and teacher effectiveness efforts. 		

11. ILLINOIS GROWTH MODEL IMPLEMENTATION

The State of Illinois needs to move forward to identify or develop and adopt a growth model methodology and report growth model data to schools and districts. A growth model can be used for multiple purposes such as:

- Report growth data through state data systems to aid classroom instruction and school improvement;
- Use to evaluate teacher preparation programs; and
- Provide benchmark data to measure local evaluation systems.

Eventually, growth can be incorporated into the State's accountability system, although the agency recommends waiting until NCLB has been reauthorized so that the accountability system revisions can incorporate all the changes necessitated by reauthorization.

The State's growth model establishment would build off of the recommendations of the Illinois Growth Model Task Force made in January 2007. This Task Force recommended:

- Use of a state algorithm that provides schools/districts with state average growth
- Providing resources to ISBE to produce growth model reporting to schools
- Consideration of how formative assessments can be used at the state level
- Consideration of how growth can be used to recognize the progress and gains of schools in status.

The agency recently engaged the services of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment ("Center for Assessment") to assist with the State's growth model analysis. Dr. Brian Gong from the Center for Assessment consulted with the Illinois Growth Model Task Force that issued its report in January 2007, and will again work with the State to expeditiously develop a model for measuring and reporting student achievement growth over time.

12. ILLINOIS PARTNERSHIP ZONE

The following is a detailed overview of the "Illinois Partnership Zone" proposal – an initiative seeking to align human capital strategies and intensive turnaround activities in a cohort of districts throughout the State.

The Illinois Partnership Zone:
Leveraging the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
For a Human Capital/School Intervention Strategy in Illinois

I. Need and Rationale

- To receive State Fiscal Stabilization Funds, Illinois committed to ensuring that districts meet their corrective action and restructuring obligations under NCLB. In its application for Phase Two of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, Illinois will need to describe its plan for making progress in this area. To receive Race to the Top funds to support low-performing schools, Illinois will need to demonstrate significant progress in its support and intervention system.
- Secretary Duncan has called for the closure or "turnaround" of the lowest-performing 1% of the nations schools in each year (roughly 40 schools per year in Illinois). Secretary Duncan's vision for interventions in low-performing schools will be shaped by his experience in Chicago. Under his leadership, CPS gained a reputation as a national leader in school turnaround. Secretary Duncan's public comments on school turnaround have indicated that states must have a coherent approach to turnaround that leads to transformation – not tinkering – in the lowest-performing schools.
- The lowest-performing schools in Illinois are unlikely to improve with "light touch" intervention strategies. ARRA provides resources and can help drive political will to undertake an intensive intervention approach.
- In order for a school intervention effort to be successful and sustainable, high quality and appropriately trained teachers and administrators need to be attracted to turnaround schools, and comprehensive support to educators in the schools must be provided. Illinois has an opportunity to become a national leader in coupling its turnaround model with a robust human capital strategy.

II. Overview

- Illinois has the opportunity to leverage ARRA funding and a network of strong outside partner organizations to establish a human capital/turnaround partnership (the "Illinois Partnership Zone") with a limited number of districts throughout the State. Districts would be selected for the Partnership Zone based upon: (a) a need for intensive interventions in one or more schools within the district; (b) the district's willingness to commit to the human capital and school intervention components of the statewide model; and (c) the district's commitment of staff and funding resources to support the initiative, above and beyond the funding and resources provided by the State.
- Districts will be required to have at least one "Partnership Zone Eligible" school, with preference given to districts with multiple Partnership Zone Eligible Schools. Partnership Zone Eligible Schools will consist of schools that are:
 - Within the bottom 5% in each grade span (elementary, middle, and high school) based on the percentage of students in the "all students" category meeting/exceeding state standards, with separate lists for Chicago Public Schools and the remainder of the State; *and*
 - the school's recent gains on state assessments do not demonstrate adequate growth, as determined by ISBE.

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To the extent permitted by federal funding programs, eligible schools will include both Title I schools and schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I.

- Selected districts will be eligible to receive: (a) support from Lead and Supporting Partners for school- and district-level activities (see Section III of this memorandum); (b) significant funding through the State's allocation of School Improvement Funds for the district's Partnership Zone schools (see Section VII of this memorandum); (c) possible priority for additional resources through State grant programs and other federal programs; and (d) flexibility from State and federal mandates that impede Partnership Zone activities.
- In order to participate in the Partnership Zone, each district will be required to demonstrate a commitment from the school board and district superintendent. The district must also either demonstrate a commitment from union leadership, or demonstrate its efforts to meaningfully and in good faith engage union leadership and teachers and its plan for collaborating with the union throughout its participation.
- Participation by districts in the Partnership Zone would be voluntary. However, ISBE may be able to strongly incentivize participation through a targeting of its Section 1003(g) School Improvement Fund grants. Further, ISBE can leverage its regulatory authority to encourage districts in NCLB improvement or corrective action to participate in order to avoid negative sanctions.
- The Partnership Zone will not be undertaken in isolation of other reform and ARRA-related initiatives undertaken by ISBE. For example, ISBE will continue, and potentially expand, its system for intervening in school districts that have demonstrated systemic educational and operational failures. ISBE may also separately support district initiatives to close or turnaround low-performing schools outside of the Partnership Zone model. In addition, the Partnership Zone initiative will be undertaken in coordination with a variety of statewide initiatives in the ARRA reform areas of (i) college- and career-ready standards and high quality assessments, (ii) Pre-K-through college and career data systems, and (iii) educator effectiveness.

III. Partners

- For the Partnership Zone to have the desired intensity and scalability, ISBE will need to engage with external partners to provide on-the-ground support to participating districts and schools.
- The external partners will consist of "Lead Partners" who will lead and oversee the implementation of the turnaround in selected schools, and "Supporting Partners" who will help to implement the district-wide strategies and support the work of Lead Partners in participating schools.
- **Lead Partners:**
 - Lead partners would consist of entities with a demonstrated record of effective work with underperforming schools, with a preference for organizations that have a strong connection with the local community in which the schools are located (or that create partnerships with locally-based organizations). In general, the partners' duties would include working with ISBE to perform a needs assessment of the district and school, coordinating with all involved stakeholders on plan development and implementation, and implementation of a turnaround plan in partnership with the district. The "Turnaround Criteria" set forth on Attachment 2 to this memorandum (from the State's approved Differentiated Accountability Proposal) identify the types of

decision-making authority a Lead Turnaround Partner may have. The specific authorities of the Lead Partner will be negotiated with each district (with oversight by ISBE), although it will be critical for the partners to have certain autonomies to implement the turnaround plan and accountability for results. In addition, the Lead Partner will be expected to develop community partnerships and work to establish a safe, orderly environment for learning within the school.

- Districts with a demonstrated capacity to implement intensive interventions could undertake a turnaround initiative with an internal district unit serving in the "Lead Partner" role.

- **Supporting Partners:**

- Supporting Partners will help implement the district-wide Partnership Zone strategies, as well as help support the work of Lead Partners in selected schools.
- At the district-level, Supporting Partners will focus on human capital strategies that can be implemented to further the work of the Partnership Zone (see Attachment 1 to this memorandum).
- A number of organizations focused on human capital issues have expressed interest in participating in a statewide initiative of this nature. In addition to these organizations, institutions of higher education will serve as critical partners, particularly in the areas of preparation, induction and mentoring, and professional development.
- Finally, neighboring school districts may be able to serve in a supporting partner role and assist with implementing one or more Partnership Zone strategies.

- **Partner Approval and Selection:**

- ISBE will establish a process to pre-approve both lead and supporting partners seeking to work with districts within the Illinois Partnership Zone. Partners must have a sufficient record of effectiveness and be able to demonstrate their ability to implement a turnaround initiative or provide other supporting services.
- Districts will have flexibility in selecting from partners that have agreed to work in the geographic area of the district and provide a turnaround approach (for lead partners) or supporting services (for supporting partners) determined to be necessary by the district and/or ISBE. Districts could also propose to work with an external partner that has not been pre-approved by ISBE, provided the district and partner demonstrate that it meets the criteria for approval.

IV. Advisory Council

- All of the Lead Partners and Supporting Partners participating in the Partnership Zone initiative will be expected to designate a high-level individual from the organization to participate in a statewide Partnership Zone Advisory Council. The Advisory Council could also include representatives from participating districts/schools, as well as representative from various statewide organizations (School Management Alliance, teachers unions, etc.).
- The Advisory Council will be responsible for:
 - Providing advisory oversight for the statewide initiative;

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- Developing recommendations on state legislative and regulatory changes that can help support the Partnership Zone's human capital and school intervention efforts; and
- Establishing a statewide information and collaboration system for all the participants in the Partnership Zone to share challenges and strategies for success, establish learning communities with participants from various districts, and broadcast the learnings from the Partnership Zone schools with a much broader audience. This system should provide for frequent updates and feedback from all of the Partnership Zone sites and partners.

V. District-wide Partnership Zone Activities

- Supporting Partners will assist participating districts to develop district-wide human capital strategies to increase the effectiveness of their teacher and principal workforce. In addition to the human capital strategies, some districts may also need to engage in a broader range of capacity-building activities, such as improving district data use, board member training, or assistance and training on effective budgeting and fiscal management.
- All districts will be expected to implement a data and performance management system that supports the school- and district-level Partnership Zone activities, and permits necessary reporting to the State on those activities.
- The district will be required to focus on student transitions throughout the P-20 spectrum. For elementary schools, this effort must include a focus on establishing early learning programs for underserved areas and populations, based on the State's system for identifying underserved areas. Separate elementary and high school districts must align initiatives to support the Partnership Zone effort. Partnerships must also be formed with community college districts and colleges and universities to address barriers to postsecondary access.
- The district's board, superintendent, and, where appropriate, union leadership will be expected to commit to implementing certain Partnership Zone human capital strategies, with close collaboration with Lead Partners and Supporting Partners. Proposed strategies are set forth on Attachment 1 to this memorandum. While these strategies will initially be targeted to the Partnership Zone schools, the objective will be to eventually implement these strategies on a broader scale throughout the district.
- The district will also be expected to make the following commitments to support the Partnership Zone:
 1. Establish district-wide leadership for the effort reporting directly to the local superintendent.
 2. Provide maximum freedom from district-wide mandates for Partnership Zone schools, particularly those that impact curriculum/professional development, the daily schedule and calendar, budgeting processes, and improvement planning processes.
 3. Negotiate and create waivers or "MOUs" providing flexibility from the collective bargaining agreement necessary to implement the Partnership Zone.
 4. Provide funding necessary to support the Partnership Zone above and beyond the funding levels committed by the State.
 5. At least twice a year, convene the leadership of all of the Partnership Zone schools to reflect on the learnings in these schools, discuss various blockages as well as achievements, and broadcast these learnings to the entire district and community.
 6. Help support the state-wide effort through participation in the Statewide Advisory Council, provide data to evaluate the initiative, and share best practices and provide support for other districts in the statewide Partnership Zone.

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- Certain districts seeking to participate in the Partnership Zone may have a record of noncompliance or a lack of capacity at the board and/or administrative leadership levels that will necessitate greater oversight by ISBE for implementation. For such a district, ISBE may require, as a condition of participation, that the district grant ISBE the right to oversee certain district functions and/or pre-approve certain district actions critical to the success of the Partnership Zone. The district can then earn greater autonomy based upon demonstrated capacity and results.

VI. School-level Partnership Activities

- Districts will have flexibility in selecting a specific model of turnaround to be implemented in coordination with a Lead Partner. However, the district's board, superintendent, union leadership, and Lead Partner will be expected to commit to implementing a model addressing certain State-specified criteria. The turnaround criteria set forth in the State's approved Differentiated Accountability proposal is shown on Attachment 2. Also, the turnaround model must align with the options established by the U.S. Department of Education for School Improvement grants. Although the guidance on the use of these funds has not yet been released, the models will like align with the "turnaround" models set forth in the Race to the Top Notice of Proposed Priorities, Requirements, and Selection Criteria, which are described on Attachment 3.
- The district must commit to working with its Lead Partner(s) and, if appropriate, Supporting Partner(s) to establish an effective administrative leadership team at Partnership Zone schools. The Lead Partner must have the ability to either select or pre-approve the proposed leadership team. Whenever possible, the leadership team should be in place in the second semester of the school year preceding full implementation of the turnaround so that the team has the opportunity to fully evaluate existing staff.
- Consistent with Race to the Top criteria, either the Lead Partner or the principal designated by the district must have authority to put in place a majority of new staff. If this is not feasible due to the available teacher pool, the Lead Partner and/or Supporting Partner(s) will still need to attract a substantial cohort of new teachers into the Partnership Zone schools. Depending on the district and the school, new staff may be put in place through the filling of existing vacancies, the relocation of staff through voluntary transfers, or through involuntary transfers. Following the commencement of the turnaround effort, the Lead Partner or principal designated by the district must approve all new hires made for teachers and administrators. Whenever possible, these hires would be filled by graduates of a Partnership Zone training academy within the district.
- In return for this commitment, the State would make an initial 3-year commitment to each Partnership Zone school within a participating district (based upon the maximum length of School Improvement Fund grants under Section 1003(g)). Districts would be eligible for additional state/federal support beyond Year 3, contingent upon available funding, implementation of the turnaround initiative, and effort to phase-out the need for state funding.
- Partnership Zone schools should also receive (i) priority for other various federal and state funding sources; (ii) maximum flexibility in the use of federal, state, and district funds; and (iii) flexibility from other federal, state, and local restraints to implement the turnaround. The State's approved Differentiated Accountability proposal describes various types of federal flexibility that can be used for Partnership Zone schools. State legislation may be necessary to provide additional flexibility from State restraints and priority for state funding sources. State legislation may also be needed to support certain human capital strategies in Partnership Zone schools.

VII. Possible Funding and Implementation Scenario

- Using a portion of the State's allocation of School Improvement Fund grants, ISBE would seek to commence school-level interventions with a cohort of approximately 20 "Partnership Zone Eligible" schools in the 09-10 school year across 7 – 10 Partnership Zone districts.
- The State would seek to add an additional cohort of 20 schools in the 10-11 school year.
- If the State receives Race to the Top funding, this funding could be used to expand the scope of the initiative to additional schools and districts. Additionally, funding could be used to expand and scale up services offered through the statewide system of support.
- A possible annual funding and implementation scenario could include:
 - Year 1 (\$300 - \$450,000 in federal or state funds; higher funding for high schools): Year 1 activities would consist of turnaround planning, professional development for all teachers/administrators, and capacity building in preparation for the turnaround implementation.
 - Years 2 – 3 (\$500,000/per year in federal or state funds): Turnaround implementation would occur in Years 2 - 3.
 - Prior to the commencement of the first school year of turnaround implementation, the Lead Partner would engage in intensive training for all staff in the building (e.g., provide five weeks of training during the summer prior to turnaround implementation).
 - The model would focus on a phase-out of state support and services from the outset. For example, intensive coaching support would be provided in the first two years, but phase out in subsequent years. Also, targeted professional development will be most intense in the first few years.
- Possible timeline for implementation:

August/September09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene potential districts and stakeholders to discuss initiative; raise interest and concerns • Examine requirements for 1003(g) funds. Develop rules for implementation of Partnership Zone aligned with 1003(g) funding requirements. • For districts eligible for Partnership Zone, ISBE requests letter of interest demonstrating a high level of commitment to core components of the model. • ISBE issues Request for Applications for Lead and Supporting Partners
November 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISBE evaluates applications and letters of interest; selects Partnership Zone districts. • ISBE pre-approves Lead and Supporting Partners
December – February 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership Zone districts form team consisting of lead and supporting partners; develop detailed plan for Partnership Zone implementation.
March 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISBE reviews and approves or requires revisions to Partnership Zone proposals. Upon approval, full 1003(g) funding provided to all Partnership Zone schools within the district.
April – August 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turnaround planning, professional development, capacity building
September 10 - June 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First school year of turnaround implementation

VIII. Establishing Desired Outcomes and Metrics for Evaluating Success

- ISBE, working closely with the Advisory Council, will need to establish desired outcomes and metrics for evaluating success by schools, districts, and partners.
- At the district level, ISBE, the district, and supporting partners will need to establish clear metrics for evaluating the success of the initiative based on the specific human capital strategies and capacity-building activities undertaken in the district.
- At the school level, districts and Lead Partners will share accountability for obtaining significant increases in student achievement levels. Mass Insight Education & Research Institute has proposed that the objective for turnaround schools should be the elimination of the poverty achievement gap—within five years, a school should match the average achievement levels of non-poverty schools within the State. The Partnership Zone would also use a variety of indicators to monitor short-term progress and evaluate success, such as increased attendance, improved behavioral levels, decreased grade retention rates, increased retention of staff, and program coherence within the school.

Attachment 1

Possible Partnership Zone Human Capital Strategies

1. Reform district recruitment and hiring policies to support the work of the Partnership Zone.
2. Establish placement policies that support Partnership Zone schools:
 - Prioritize interview and hiring decisions for Partnership Zone schools
 - Prohibit forced placements into Partnership Zone schools
3. Establish incentives for administrators and teachers to work in Partnership Zone schools, and work with Lead and Supporting Partners to bring top talent to these schools.
4. Establish compensation systems in Partnership Zone schools that provide performance-based incentives (either individual or collective), particularly if state or federal resources are available to support such programs.
5. Establish an intensive induction and mentoring program for Partnership Zone teachers and administrators.
6. Establish meaningful performance evaluation and development systems that fairly and accurately differentiate teachers based in part on student achievement, and train administrators and other evaluators in its use.
7. Establish meaningful principal evaluation systems that incorporate considerations of school climate.
8. Establish one or more residency sites within the district where teachers and administrators can participate in an intensive residency program preparing them to serve in Partnership Zone schools.
 - ISBE may work with the districts and Lead and Supporting Partners to establish a statewide program to attract the "best of the best" from traditional undergraduate, alternative programs, and the existing educator workforce to work in low-performing schools.
 - Eventually, these residency sites will help provide a pipeline of educators to support both existing and new Partnership Zone schools.

Attachment 2

Turnaround Criteria from the Illinois Differentiated Accountability Proposal

People:

1. **School-level turnaround leader:** The turnaround plan designates a school-level leader to exercise autonomies under the plan and ensure adherence to the turnaround model. Depending on the overall turnaround approach, the leader may be a principal designated by the district or a leader working under the direction of an external partner organization.
2. **Highly capable, distributed school leadership team:** The turnaround plan must demonstrate how the school will be put on a path to distributed leadership, with a highly capable leadership team working to build a cohesive, professional teaching culture. The plan for a distributed leadership team must include the school-level turnaround leader and teachers with augmented school roles.
3. **Flexibility and control over staffing:** While distributed leadership is an essential long-term goal, in the short term, the school-level turnaround leader may need to make a host of rapid and important decisions about personnel. The school-level turnaround leader must have authority to select and assign staff to positions in the school based on qualifications, without regard to seniority, and must act decisively after receiving appropriate input from the school's leadership staff and other relevant constituencies.
4. **Performance-based expectations for adults:** Performance-based expectations must be established for all adults in the building through both evaluation processes and incentive programs. Performance-based expectations may be either individual or collective.

Program:

5. **Personalized student supports:** The turnaround plan must identify personalized academic and non-academic support services for targeted instructional interventions and to address student social and emotional needs.
6. **Aligned and data-driven instructional systems:** The turnaround plan specifically implements the following instructional systems and strategies:
 - Alignment of curricula, assessments, and professional development to state standards and expectations;
 - Development and use of frequent formative assessments permitting immediate analysis, feedback, and targeted instruction; and
 - Data-driven decision-making for all activities relating to curriculum development, instructional strategies, and student-level interventions.
7. **Integration of existing instruction and professional development activities:** The turnaround plan must identify all state, district, and school instructional and professional development programs currently impacting the school, and demonstrate how these programs will be integrated with or eliminated by the turnaround effort.

Time:

8. **Extended learning:** The school schedule for student learning must provide additional time on a daily, weekly, and/or annual basis for the delivery of instruction and provision of individualized support as needed in core academic subjects.
9. **Faculty collaboration:** The weekly and annual work schedule for teachers must provide adequate time for regular, frequent, faculty meetings to discuss individual student progress and school-wide efforts.

Money:

10. **Control over financial resources:** The school-level turnaround leader must have control over financial resources necessary to successfully implement the turnaround implementation plan.

Attachment 3

Turnaround Models - Race to the Top Notice of Proposed Priorities, Requirements, and Selection Criteria

1. Putting in place new leadership and a majority of new staff, new governance, and improved instructional programs, and providing the school with necessary flexibilities;
2. Converting the school to a charter school or contracting with an education management organization;
3. Closing the school and placing the school's students in high-performing schools; or
4. To the extent that these strategies are not possible, implementing a school transformation model that includes:
 - i. Hiring a new principal;
 - ii. Measuring teacher and principal effectiveness;
 - iii. Rewarding effective teachers and principals;
 - iv. Improving strategies for recruitment, retention, and professional development;
 - v. Implementing comprehensive instructional reform; and
 - vi. Extended learning time and community-oriented supports.

13. TEACHER PREPARATION REDESIGN

ISBE has established a working team to review possible reforms of teacher preparation programs, with the objective of making final recommendations in spring 2010. These recommendations will then be brought to the State Board to initiate a rulemaking in the summer and fall of 2010.

The work of the agency and working team will be informed by a qualitative, comprehensive assessment of all 49 of Illinois' teacher preparation programs by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). The need for this work is critical, as previous research by NCTQ has highlighted significant deficits in preparation programs across the country. Illinois lacks an accurate picture of how well the State prepares its teachers. Historically, the State has not had the data capability to tie student achievement data to teachers and the schools from which they graduated. As a new data system looks to change this reality, it is perfect timing to develop a baseline understanding of the quality of Illinois' training programs, both by institution and in terms of understanding strengths and weaknesses within institutions. Illinois will then have the ability to identify, and subsequently replicate, the successful components of the programs that train the State's most effective teachers.

This project will be the first in the nation to go as deep and wide in its analysis of teacher preparation programs, evaluating programs on 25 criteria covering selectivity, coursework, field experiences and outcomes. NCTQ will begin the research phase of this project in September 2009 and will analyze admissions requirements, course content and rigor as determined by syllabi, faculty information, and many other factors. In Spring 2010, Advance Illinois and NCTQ will issue a public report summarizing the findings of the assessment. This new information will empower decision makers at all levels, including potential teacher candidates, districts that hire program graduates, and policymakers that accredit and fund these programs.

While a variety of potential recommendations will be analyzed by the agency, working team, and through the NCTQ analysis, possible reforms that will be considered are outlined on the following page.

Teacher Preparation Redesign – Possible Reforms

Issue	Current Law	Possible Reform
Acceptance of candidates	Candidates must pass a test of basic skills. ISBE, in consultation with the STCB, establishes the cut scores. 105 ILCS 5/21-1a.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the minimum cut scores on the basic skills test to ensure a higher caliber of candidates. - Establish stricter prerequisite requirements in literacy, math, and science. <p><i>Note:</i> ISBE may seek to raise the cut scores in fall 2009.</p>
Required areas of coursework	Pursuant to criteria established by ISBE. 105 ILCS 5/21-3; 105 ILCS 5/21-5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure programs have a stronger focus on school improvement and student learning, with a coherent approach to working with diverse learners. - Strengthen mathematics, science, and literacy content knowledge for elementary teachers. - Require that only content-endorsed teachers may teach language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies in the middle grades (even if in self-contained classrooms).
Field experience	Pursuant to criteria established by ISBE. 105 ILCS 5/21-3; 105 ILCS 5/21-5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require intensive internships and/or residencies that better prepare teachers to work in a variety of classroom settings. Clinical experiences must represent at least one full semester in duration and be designed to include placement in diverse settings, with an intensive period of time teaching. - Establish a standardized, reliable performance assessment aimed at ensuring candidates understand their learners (e.g., ELL and students with special needs), know how to teach rigorous content, and can analyze data to improve practice. - Data on teacher candidate effectiveness must be collected throughout the clinical experience, and used to strengthen candidates' knowledge and skills.
Partnerships with school districts	Not required	Require every program to establish partnerships with one or more school districts.
Evaluation	Pursuant to criteria established by ISBE. 105 ILCS 5/21-3; 105 ILCS 5/21-5.	Establish program evaluations that incorporate data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teacher effectiveness, measured by student outcomes; - teacher performance assessments; and - teacher retention.

14. ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION REDESIGN

Illinois has recently undertaken a significant overhaul of its administrator preparation program requirements. As part of this overhaul: (1) programs must have a stronger focus on instruction and school improvement; (2) programs must meet the Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium Standards; (3) the strands of Distinguished Principal must be part of each program; (3) programs must strengthen content understanding; (4) every program must include a partnership with one or more school districts; (5) candidates must meet enhanced selection requirements; and (6) programs must implement a comprehensive one-year internship requirement, that includes a 4-week full time residency. ISBE will be initiating a rulemaking in the fall of 2009, which will require all programs to be resubmitted and approved under the new standards. These efforts should continue to be supported. In addition, ISBE will be working with other partners to initiate legislation to establish a master principal designation that recognizes demonstrated leadership among principals.

As part of its Race to the Top application, Illinois will also need to establish a plan to evaluate administrative preparation programs using student outcomes as one component of the process.

15. DISTRICT AND SCHOOL INNOVATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

As a parallel effort to the Illinois Partnership Zone, Illinois will also establish systems to:

- Support local innovations with low-performing schools; and
- Undertake necessary interventions in persistently low-performing schools and districts that do not demonstrate a willingness or ability to undertake the dramatic action necessary to improve student outcomes.

Illinois will use available federal and state resources and authority to support district initiatives to shut down low-performing schools, and replace them with new high quality options. In some instances, ISBE may seek to leverage its authority under the School Code to close down low-performing schools and authorize charter school operators to re-open new schools in their place.

In several districts with systemic non-compliance issues, ISBE has engaged in intensive interventions to improve district operations, support student learning, and address areas of non-compliance. These interventions rely on a number of authorities existing under state and federal law, including the intervention authority in Section 2.3-25f of the School Code, NCLB corrective action rights, and authority to withhold funds and address noncompliance relating to specific student populations. For example:

- In Calumet School District 132, ISBE established an Oversight Panel in 2006 as the result of severe mismanagement and neglect of critical educational functions. This Oversight Panel continues in existence and has helped the district meet requirements for compliance, establish financial stability, address board training and responsibility, and undertake facility upgrades and planning. ISBE, working with the district and Oversight Panel, continues to focus on district human capital issues and instructional improvement.
- In Proviso District 209, ISBE and the local Regional System of Support Provider have worked closely with the district to improve student attendance, district leadership, and district finances. As a result, the district has established a transportation system for the first time in its history, hired a new superintendent and established new positions to provide leadership support and drive school improvement, and voluntarily agreed to a financial oversight panel that assisted the district in making significant reductions in its deficit.
- In East St. Louis District 189, ISBE and the local Regional System of Support Provider have worked closely with the district to develop a District Improvement Plan that addresses improvement activities in all schools, with a primary focus on the high school. The plan addresses the need to re-allocate internal resources and address the systemic low-performance of the high school. More work is needed to ensure the plan's successful implementation.

ISBE will continue to lead and, as appropriate, expand and enhance these current efforts. In addition, ISBE will undertake new intensive interventions in districts that continually fail to address student learning needs, and do not seek to engage in voluntary improvement efforts such as the Illinois Partnership Zone.

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In establishing the systems necessary to undertake this difficult work, Illinois will be guided by the analysis and recommendations of the Innovation, Intervention, and Restructuring Task Force, recently established under Public Act 96-0109 (SB 2119). This Task Force will make its recommendations by the end of this calendar year, and is charged with reporting on all of the following matters:

- Ways in which the State can identify schools requiring more intensive interventions;
- Strategies for strengthening leadership at struggling schools and district capacity to support continuous improvement;
- Strategies that have been involved in successful turnaround efforts and metrics for evaluating turnaround efforts;
- The autonomies, resources, and support necessary to undertake and sustain a successful turnaround;
- Mechanisms for model innovations to be captured and shared across the State;
- The amount of funding necessary to accomplish the necessary strategies; and
- The identification of any statutory or regulatory changes that would be necessary or helpful to help promote successful innovations, interventions, and restructuring.

Aligned with the Task Force's recommendations, ISBE also intends to pursue legislation that:

- Aligns state and federal accountability designations and status to address the following problems and needs:
 - Currently, the different terms used in federal and state law lead to confusion throughout the system.
 - Districts can avoid NCLB sanctions for schools through the local Title I funding allocation process. As a result, many of the State's lowest-performing high schools are not subject to interventions under federal law.
 - The State's accountability system needs to account for changes to the federal accountability system resulting from the State's approved Differentiated Accountability model.
- Targets the State's most intensive intervention authority to persistently low-performing schools and districts. Under current law, the most intensive interventions result solely from the amount of time a school or district is in status, and do not relate to the degree of low-performance.
- Ensures the State has a full arsenal of interventions in order to improve student achievement outcomes in those districts unwilling or unable to undertake voluntary improvements. Necessary interventions may include:
 - Suspending or removing the authority of local boards;
 - The ability to override any locally enacted restrictions on reform; and
 - The restructuring of districts through consolidation.
- Includes an array of incentives to attract top human capital to low-performing schools and districts, including pay incentives, protecting tenure and retirement benefits in the "home" district, making tenure portable, and creating an exception to the Pension Code restrictions on 6% salary increases for teachers and principals engaged in turnaround efforts.

16. CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION, AUTHORIZATION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Public Act 96-0105, recently signed into law by Governor Quinn, helps position the State for Race to the Top funding by increasing the total number of charter schools permitted in the State from 60 to 120: 70 in Chicago, 45 in the remainder of the State, and an additional 5 devoted exclusively to re-enrolled high school drop-outs.

In addition, P.A. 96-0105 establishes the Independent Charter School Authorizer Task Force for the purpose of studying the need, if any, for an independent charter school authorizer in Illinois. The Task Force is required to submit its finding and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on or before January 1, 2010.

As this Task Force will consist of charter school experts and representatives of a broad variety of interest groups focused on charter school policy, the State Superintendent intends to broaden the charge of this Task Force to address the following charter school issues identified in the Race to the Top criteria:

- The extent to which the State has statutes and guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools, including the extent to which the statutes or guidelines require that student academic achievement be a factor, and the extent to which charter school authorizers have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools.
- The extent to which the State's charter schools receive equitable, compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal program and revenue sources.
- The extent to which the State provides charter schools with equitable access to facilities by providing them with facilities funding, assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, and/or other supports.

17. DISTRICT REORGANIZATIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

For school districts with low student performance outcomes, ISBE will develop metrics to determine whether such districts should consider school district reorganization as a strategy to improve student achievement. School district reorganization is an umbrella term which includes consolidation, school district conversion, partial elementary unit district formation, high school deactivation, and cooperative high school attendance centers. Public Act 94-1019, enacted in 2006, created new options for school district reorganization that had not been available in the past, while retaining current existing options, and standardized the reorganization process from petition requirements to referendum vote.

For low-performing districts identified by ISBE as candidates for reorganization, the district's receipt of Race to the Top funding will be conditioned upon performing a school district reorganization study. If the study demonstrates financial and educational benefits, the district can only continue to receive Race to the Top funding if it moves forward with a reorganization option analyzed in the study.

State financial incentives will continue to be available for school district reorganization options.

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