Sept. 24, 2014  [emailed to dennis2@iupui.edu]

Sheila Dennis
Indiana University

Dear Ms. Dennis:

This letter is in response to your request for information under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. Your request was received on Sept. 19, 2014.

FOIA is a method through which individuals seek access to documents. It is not intended to serve as a way to obtain answers to questions. However, in the spirit of cooperation, we are attempting to assist you.

You have requested the following:

Request 1: "Is there an Illinois law that mandates that Illinois schools hire student service professionals? If so, what is that law?"

Response 1:

**Per 23 Ill Admin. Code 1.420 (a)**

To assure provision of School Support Personnel Services, the local district shall conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to determine the scope of the needs in the areas of:
1) Guidance and Counseling Needs;
2) Psychological Needs;
3) Social Work Needs;
4) Health Needs.

**School Code References**

Counselors (105 ILCS 5/10-22.24a) and Counseling Services (105 ILCS 5/10-22.24b)
Psychologists (105 ILCS 5/14-1.09) and Psychological Services (105 ILCS 5/14-1.09.1)
Social Worker (105 ILCS 5/14-1.09a) and Social Work Services (105 ILCS 5/14-1.09.2)
Nurses (105 ILCS 5/10-22.23)

Request 2: "Are Illinois schools required to hire school social workers? If so, must they be licensed school social workers?"

Response 2: Based on the need and scope identified in the aforementioned needs assessment, districts may staff a licensed school social worker. However, as noted in 105 ILCS 5/14-1.09.2, "[n]othing in this Section prohibits other certified professionals from
providing any of the services listed in this Section for which they are appropriately trained”. Therefore, it is conceivable that a district would hire a clinical social worker provided that the individual is operating under the scope of his/her non-school based licensure.

Request 3: “What are the graduation rates of Illinois students?”


Request 4: “What are the overall suspension and expulsion rates of Illinois schools?”

Response 4: The information you seek can be viewed via the following link: http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/soy_report.htm.

Request 5: “Does Illinois disaggregate these exclusionary discipline data by race, ethnicity, grade, and gender?”

Response 5: Please see above response.

Request 6: “What mandated positive behavioral policies and programs are in place to address high suspension and expulsion rates?”

Response 6: There are no mandates in Illinois for specific programming related to positive behavioral interventions and supports. In alignment with our State Performance Plan activities, ISBE does provide Training to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) on evidence-based practices related to discipline through our Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Collaborative (ISTAC).

Per IDEA Regulations for special education students, positive behavioral interventions and supports are to be considered in the development of a student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) if there are special factors related to behavior.

Request 7: “Is there a suspension/expulsion rate that is defined as ‘high’ for Illinois?”


Request 8: “What are your classroom size limits?”

Response 8: There is no class size limit for general education. For special education, please see 23 IAC 226.730 under “Administrative Requirements” via the following link: http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/226ark.pdf.

If you have questions, please contact Megan Griffin at (217) 782-4648 or mgriffin@isbe.net.

Sincerely,
Matt Vanover
Director of Public Information