2009 Condition of Education

Over the past five years the growth in Illinois’ Foundation Level of General State Aid has increased by nearly $1,000 to more than $6,000 for the first time in Fiscal Year 2010. The Foundation Level increased from $5,164 in Fiscal Year 2006 to $6,119 in Fiscal Year 2010, capping a streak of increases dating back to FY 2003. Fiscal Year 2011 presents districts with a grim uncertainty as federal stimulus funding disappears and schools look to find $1 billion in additional revenues just to maintain the status quo. Despite these uncertainties, education in Illinois continues to move forward and make gains for students.

Learning Outcomes

The 2009 Report Card shows that 39 schools and three districts have been removed from improvement status by making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years by meeting the standards of No Child Left Behind. In addition, the data also shows that 53 schools and nine districts in improvement status will not advance to further sanctions because they made AYP this year.

The tests were given in March and April. Students in third through eighth grades took the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) in reading and mathematics while students in fourth and seventh grades were also tested in science and third, fifth, sixth and eighth grade students were also tested in writing. Students in 11th grade take the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE), which tests students in math, reading, science and writing. Only reading and mathematics results are used in calculating AYP.

Overall results show the number of schools and districts that made Adequate Yearly Progress decreased under NCLB performance targets. During 2009, the target for student achievement increased from 62.5 percent meeting and exceeding state standards to 70 percent, and the graduation rate increased from 75 percent to 78 percent. Attendance rates remained the same as last year, at 90 percent. Results from 2009 show that 2,253 of the schools that were tested made AYP under the increasing performance criteria while 1,553 or 40 percent failed to make AYP in 2009, an increase from 31 percent in 2008. In addition, 440 districts made AYP in 2009 while 429 or 49 percent failed to make AYP, an increase from 39 percent in 2008. In addition to overall student academic performance, the 2009 School Report Card provides additional information for students, schools and districts, as well as parents and community members including the shifting of student demographics.

Student Demographics

- The number of operating school districts declined from 894 in 2000 to 869 in 2009. In 2009, there were 379 elementary districts, 100 high school districts and 390 unit districts.
- Student enrollment in regular Illinois public schools increased steadily from 1,983,991 in 2000 to 2,077,856 in 2007, then declined to 2,070,125 in 2009. (Enrollment reported here includes only students in regular public schools.)
- Students who are Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, or Multiracial/Ethnic, made up 46.7 percent of the enrollment in 2009, up from 39 percent in
2000. The increase in minority percentage is attributed primarily to a rise in the Hispanic student population.

- Low-income students increased from 36.7 percent of the enrollment in 2000 to 42.9 percent in 2009. Pupils are considered low-income if they are from families receiving public aid, are living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, are being supported in foster homes with public funds, or are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

**Student Performance and Achievement**

- Between 2005 and 2009, ISAT reading and math performance increased at grades 3, 5 and 8 and ISAT science performance increased at grades 4 and 7.
- The ACT Composite Score for Illinois public school students (report card schools) increased steadily from 19.9 in 2002 to 20.6 in 2009.
- The graduation rate increased from 85.9 percent in 2007 to 87.1 percent in 2009. Over the most recent 10-year period, the rate increased from 82.6 percent to 87.1 percent.
- The dropout rate declined from 5.8 percent in 2000 to 3.5 percent in 2009. Dropouts include students in grades 9-12 whose names have been removed from the district roster for any reason other than death, extended illness, graduation/completion of a program of studies, transfer to another school or expulsion.