



Finance and Audit Committee

Evidence-Based Funding 5-Year Evaluative Study
Full Presentation

Equity • Quality • Collaboration • Community



Overview



Research Goal



Research Questions



Evaluative Study Timeline



Findings



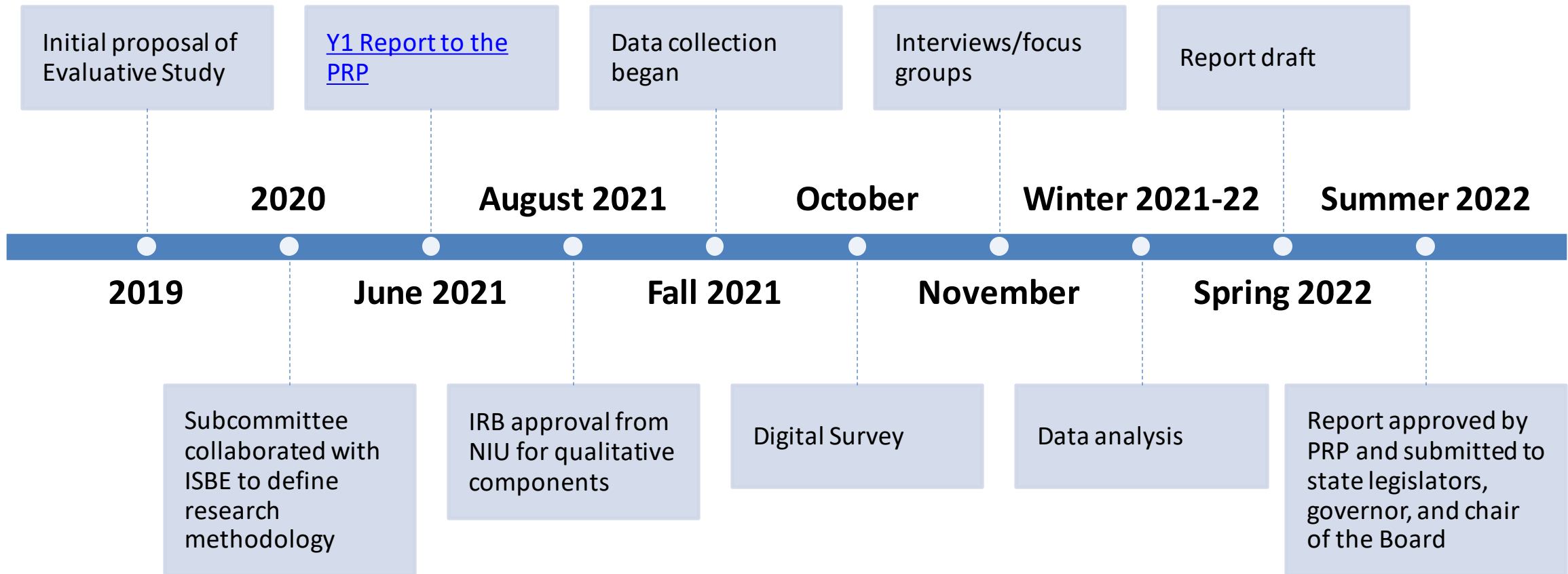
Purpose of the Evaluative Study

“Within 5 years after the implementation of this Section, the Panel shall complete an evaluative study of the entire Evidence-Based Funding model, including an assessment of whether or not the formula is achieving State goals. The Panel shall report to the State Board, the General Assembly, and the Governor on the findings of the study.”

105 ILCS 5/18-8.15(i)

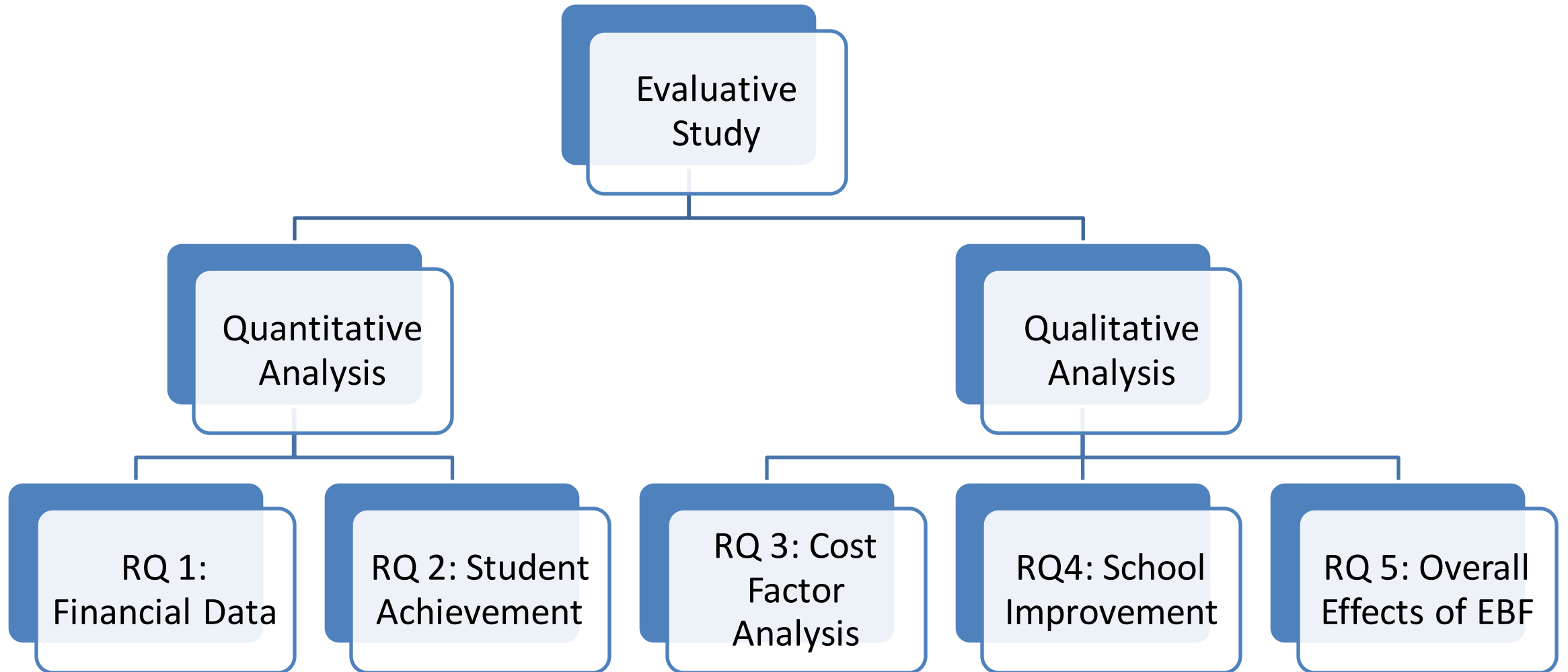


Evaluative Study Timeline





Evaluative Study Components





Final 5-Year Evaluative Study Research Questions

1. To what extent did the Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) formula distribute new state funds equitably to school districts each year?

2. Did growth in student achievement and other student outcome measures occur from the baseline 2017-18 school year through the 2020-21 school year in Illinois public schools?

3. To what extent were the EBF cost factors reflected in district expenditures from SY 2017-18 to SY 2018-19?

4. Among schools that improved, what systemic and organizational change elements were used to improve student performance and close opportunity gaps?

5. How do changes in funding and circumstances influence the implementation of EBF from year to year? What was the overall effect of EBF on districts?



Data Limitations

Money was not distributed until April-June of 2018.

SY 2017-18

COVID-19 pandemic, no assessment data.

SY 2019-20

Data was not yet available to include in this report.

Tier funding was distributed normally.

SY 2021-22

SY 2018-19

No major limitations with funding or assessment data.

- Data collection and formula was adjusted from school-level data to student-level data for student attendance, chronic truancy, and chronic absenteeism.
- First year of data for site-based expenditure data available.

SY 2020-21

Limited assessment data.
Districts did not receive new tier funds.

August 2017:
EBF signed into law.

Present



Evidence-Based Funding Formula 5-Year Evaluation

Quantitative Analysis: RQs 1 and 2

1. To what extent did the Evidence-Based Funding formula distribute new state funds equitably to school districts each year?
2. Did growth in student achievement and other student outcome measures occur from the baseline 2017-18 school year through the 2020-21 school year in Illinois public schools?

Qualitative Analysis: RQs 3, 4, and 5

3. To what extent were the EBF cost factors reflected in district expenditures from SY 2017-18 to SY 2018-19?
4. Among schools that improved, which systemic and organizational change elements were used to improve student performance and close opportunity gaps?
5. How do changes in funding and circumstances influence the implementation of EBF from year to year? What was the overall effect of EBF on districts?



RQ 0: Pre-EBF Conditions

Findings

- Analyses of interview and focus group transcripts revealed patterns regarding conditions that existed prior to EBF that impacted the implementation of EBF at the district level.
- District and school leaders generally discussed **struggling financially prior to the implementation of EBF.**
- **Years of proration and underfunding led to unfilled staff positions, out-of-date instructional materials, and being forced to cut programming.**

We were struggling dramatically financially before EBF. And this was a combination not only of the former **General State Aid (GSA) formula and the proration** that was costing us up to \$600,000 in those GSA dollars. But in addition, **our EAV had been just crashing** and... there was nothing left to cut on the periphery, other than teachers, when the EBF formula kicked in and brought a **substantial number of dollars to us.**

– District Administrator



RQ 1: To what extent did the Evidence-Based Funding formula distribute new state funds equitably to school districts each year?

Metrics

- Distribution of district size across tiers
- Geographical distribution of school districts in each of the four tiers
- Total student enrollment in each tier
- Funding distribution
- Districts' change in Percent of Adequacy
- Average, median, maximum, and minimum Percent of Adequacy
- Distribution and mobility of district by adequacy band
- Number of districts with less than 60% adequacy levels

Data Sources

- 2018-21 Report Card Data
- EBF Full Calculations
- EBF Quick Facts

Data Analysis

- Quantitative analysis regarding the relationship between various metrics listed was completed.

Data Limitations

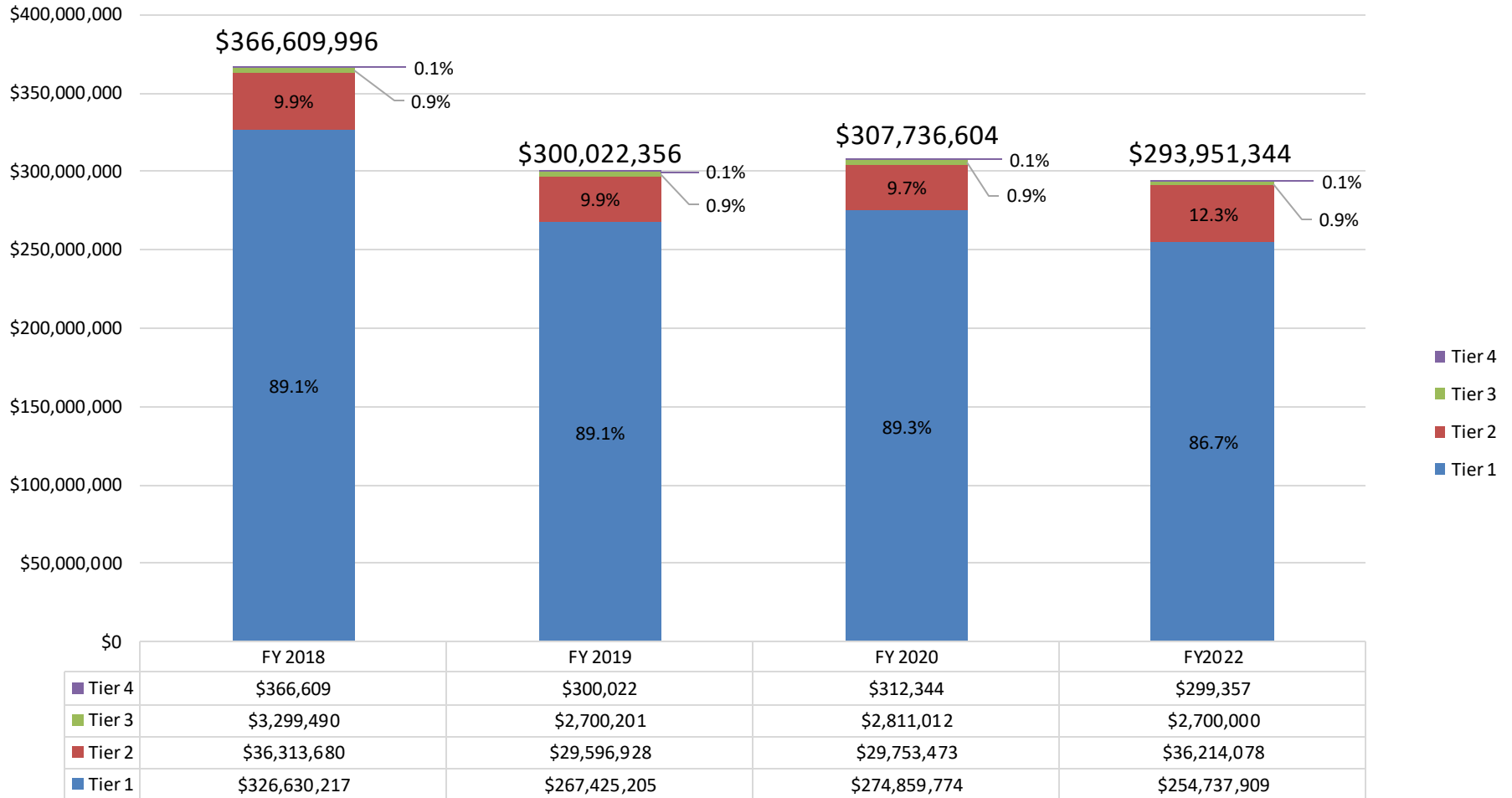
- Many analyses could not be completed for FY 2021 because there was no increase in appropriations due to the pandemic. Therefore, tier assignments were unavailable for that year.



RQ 1: To what extent did the Evidence-Based Funding formula distribute new state funds equitably to school districts each year?

EBF has effectively distributed funds to the highest-needs school districts.

Nearly 90% of tier funding has gone to Tier 1 school districts each year since FY 2018.

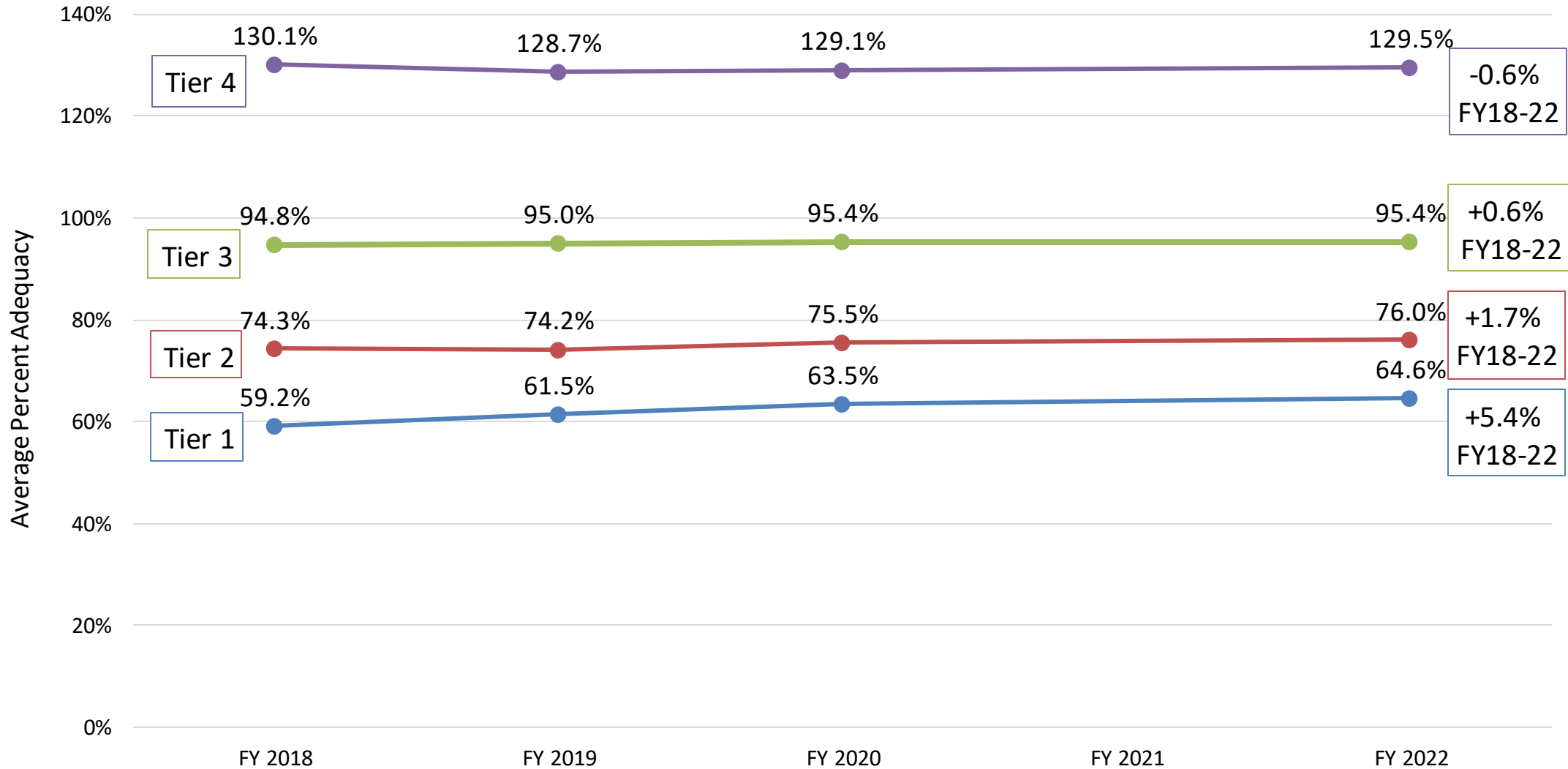




RQ 1: To what extent did the Evidence-Based Funding formula distribute new state funds equitably to school districts each year?

EBF is achieving its goal of improving school districts' adequacy levels across the state.

Average Percent of Adequacy has improved for Tiers 1, 2, and 3.

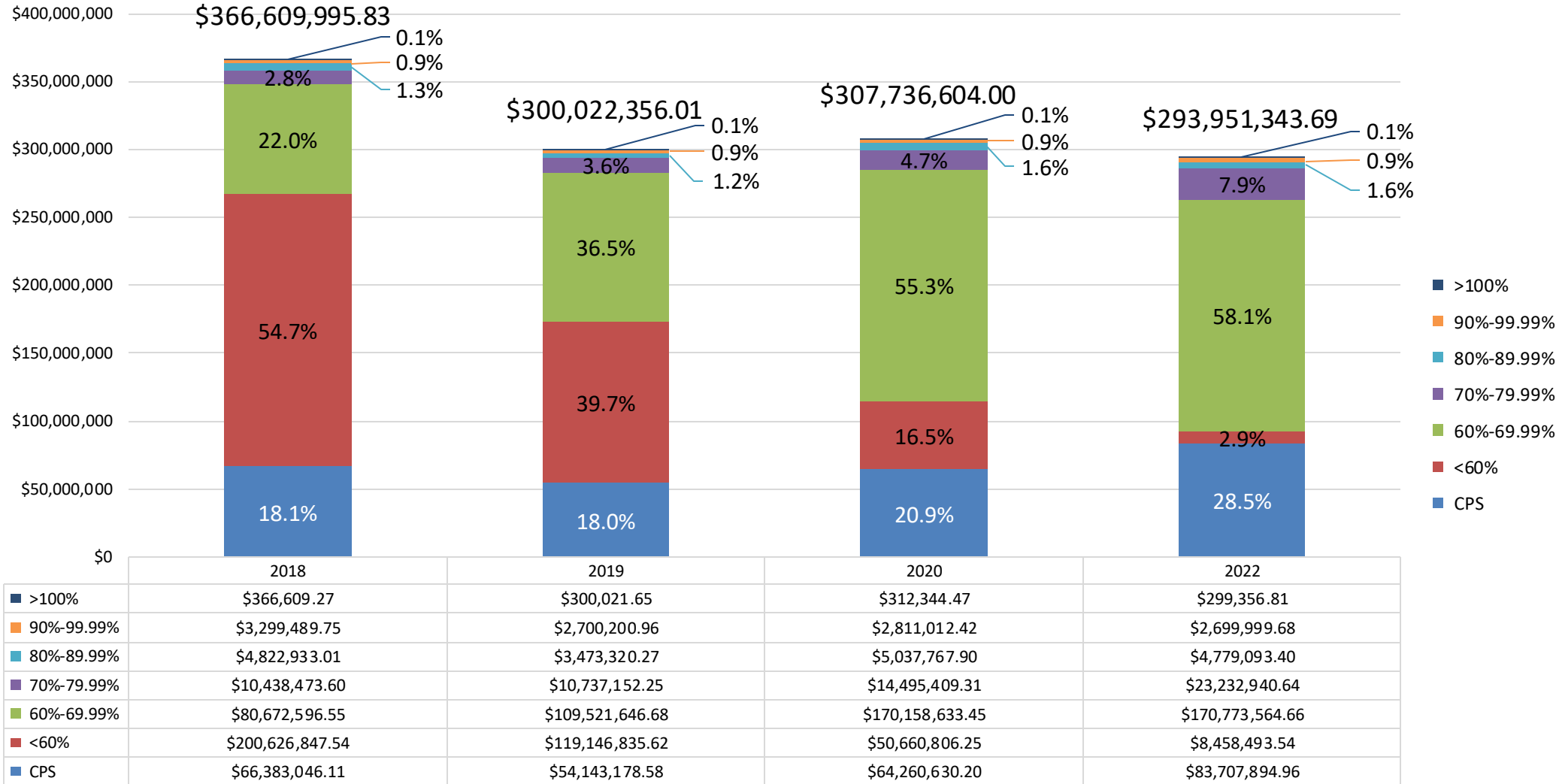




RQ 1: To what extent did the Evidence-Based Funding formula distribute new state funds equitably to school districts each year?

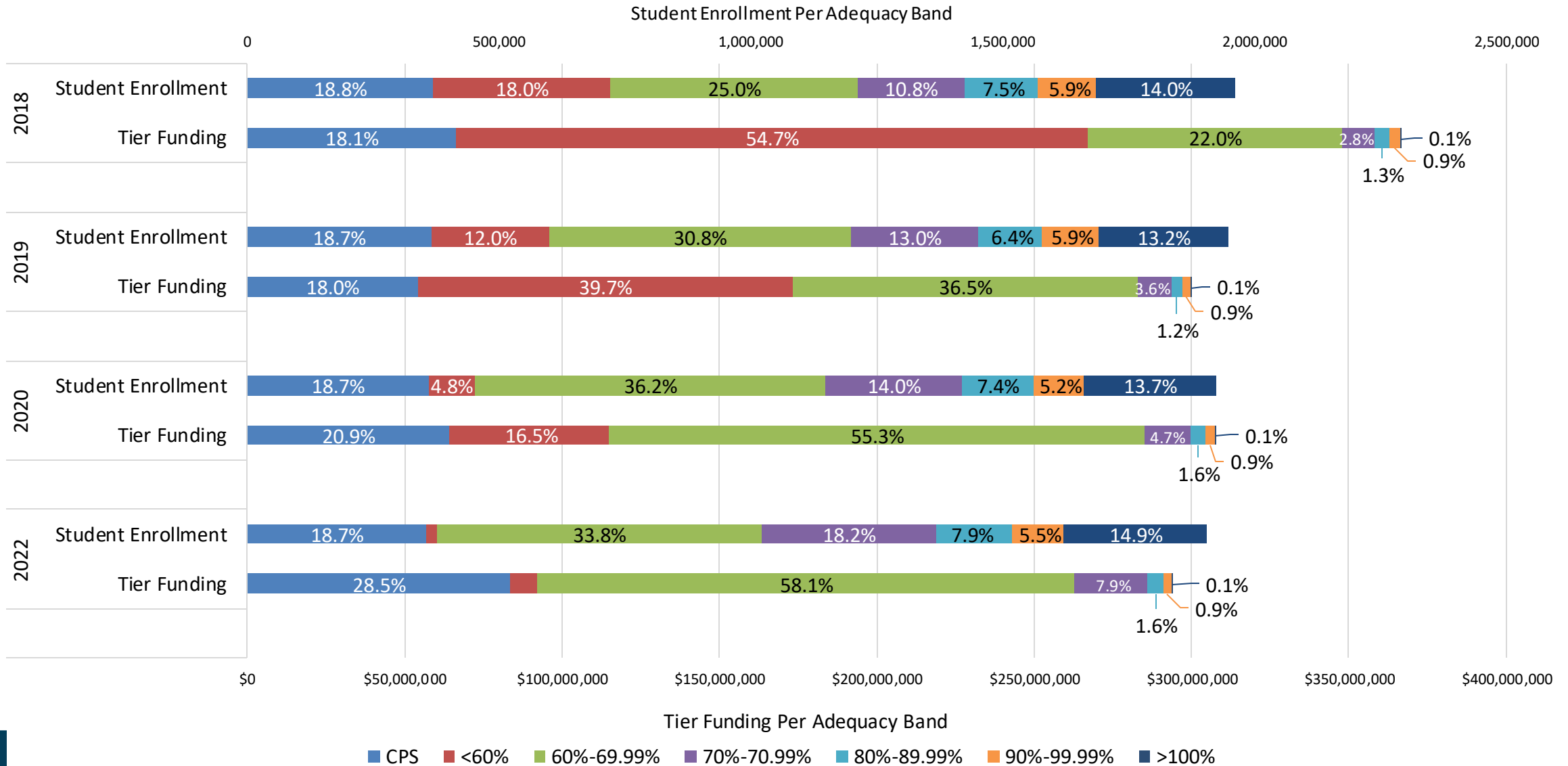
EBF follows high-need school districts.

As more districts move above 60% adequacy, more funding is provided to support those school districts.





EBF effectively targeted new tier funding to the highest-need school districts – those districts furthest from their Adequacy Targets.

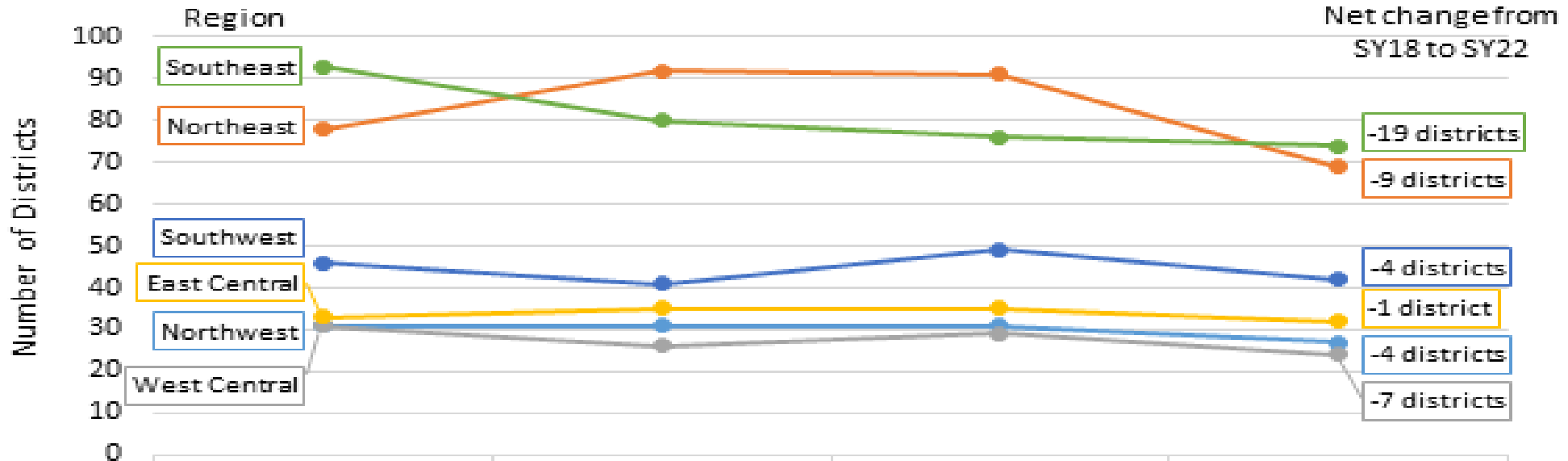




EBF has improved adequacy levels in all geographic regions across Illinois, but lingering inequity remains among regions.

Tier 1

All regions saw a decrease in their number of Tier 1 schools.



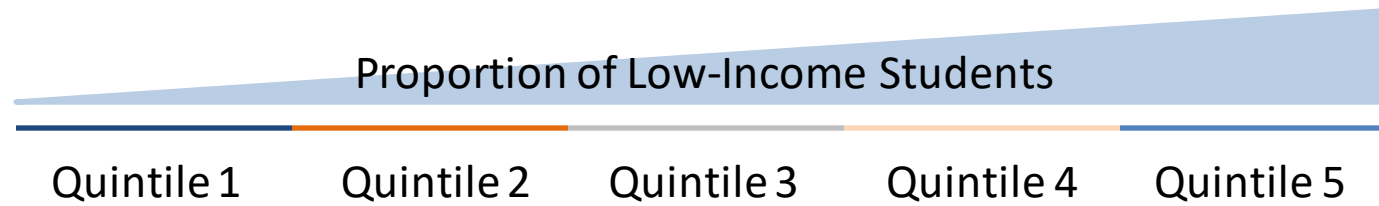
	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2022
Northwest	31	31	31	27
Northeast	78	92	91	69
West Central	31	26	29	24
East Central	33	35	35	32
Southwest	46	41	49	42
Southeast	93	80	76	74

*Geographical distribution of school districts in Tier 1, FY 2018-22 (district mobility)
(District mobility for Tiers 2, 3, and 4 can be found in the draft report.)*



Low-Income Analysis

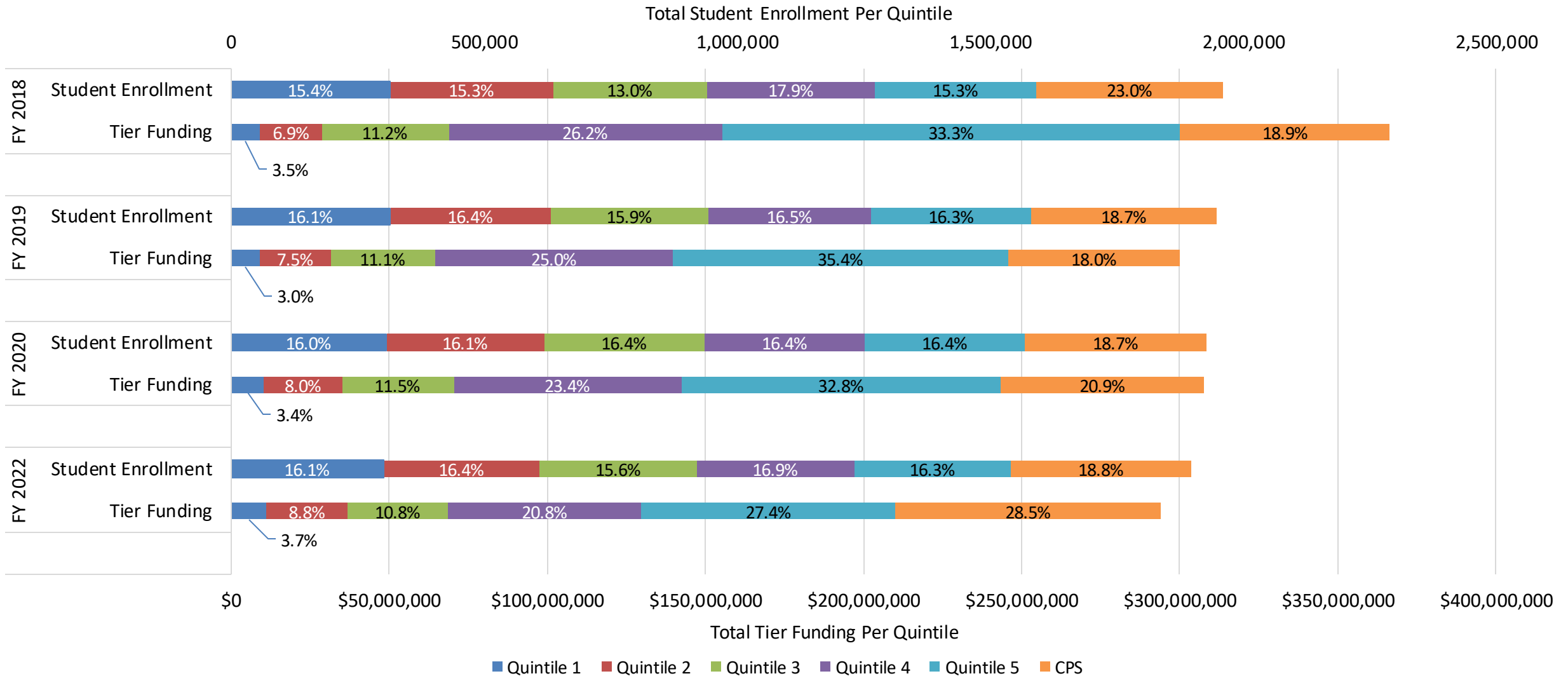
- An analysis was completed by assigning districts to one of five quintiles, each containing approximately one-sixth of the student population. Chicago Public Schools (CPS), which also enrolls about one-sixth of the student population in Illinois, was disaggregated as its own category.



Quintile	Percent Low-Income							
	FY 2018		FY 2019		FY 2020		FY 2022	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
1	1.5%	19.4%	0.8%	19.5%	0.6%	19.1%	0.4%	18.4%
2	19.5%	32.8%	19.6%	33.7%	19.2%	32.5%	18.7%	32.6%
3	32.9%	48.7%	33.8%	49.6%	32.6%	49.0%	32.6%	48.2%
4	48.7%	62.3%	49.7%	62.2%	49.2%	61.3%	48.3%	59.6%
5	62.4%	100.0%	62.3%	100.0%	61.4%	100.0%	59.8%	100.0%
CPS	82.6%		77.9%		78.8%		69.0%	



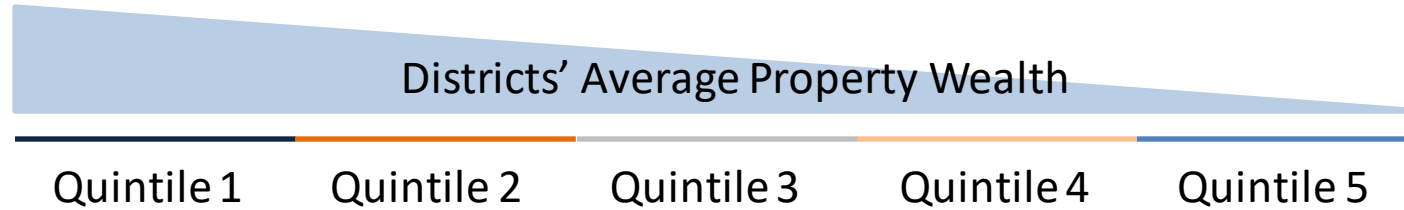
EBF tier funding went overwhelmingly to districts that were identified in Quintiles 4 and 5.





Property Wealth Analysis

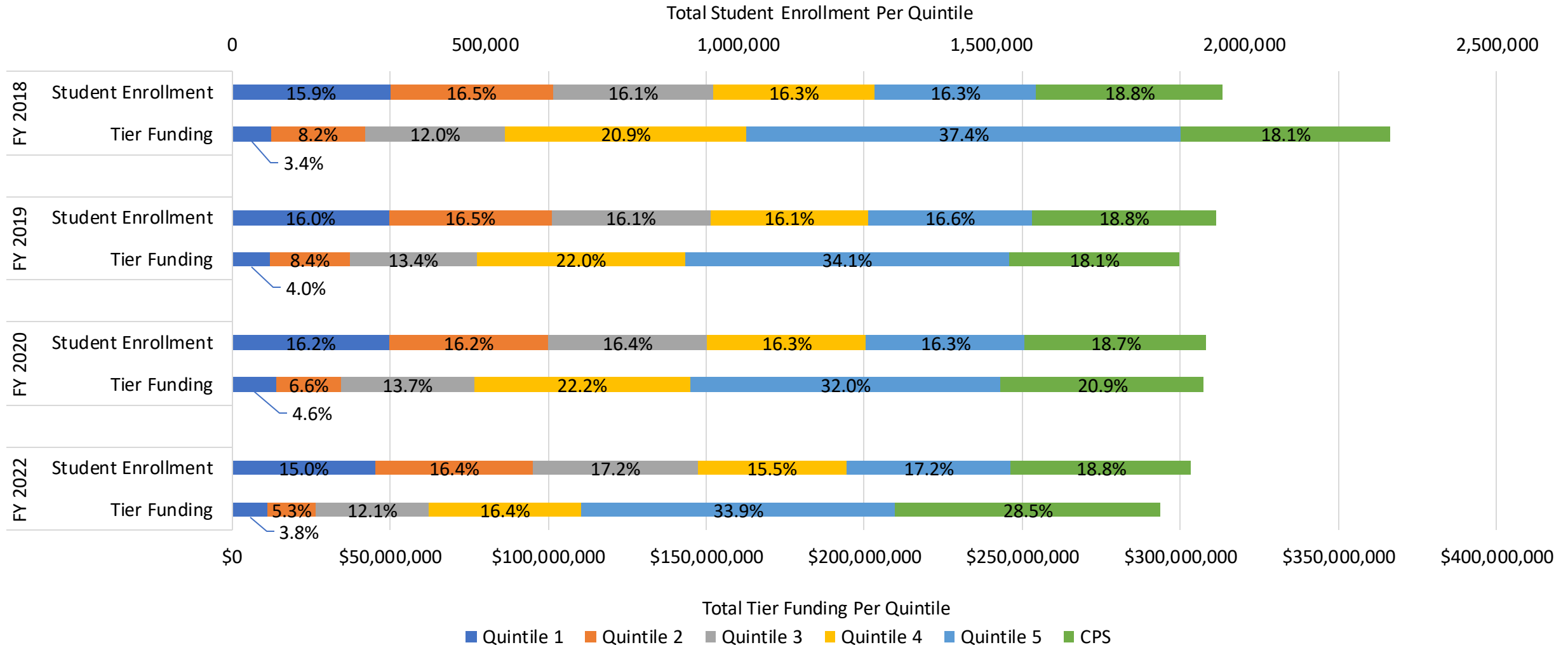
- An analysis was completed by assigning districts to one of five quintiles, each containing one-sixth of the student population. CPS is disaggregated and contains another one-sixth of the student population.



Average Property Wealth (measured by Adjusted EAV per pupil)								
	FY 2018		FY 2019		FY 2020		FY 2022	
Quintile	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
1	315,569	1,913,001	321,858	1,977,062	326,461	1,915,273	370,987	1,946,631
2	189,139	314,154	193,531	319,732	200,219	325,416	227,970	370,350
3	126,132	188,453	130,797	193,354	138,645	200,102	149,932	226,577
4	92,236	125,945	94,223	130,202	97,075	138,417	103,675	149,748
5	16,414	92,139	16,785	93,869	17,727	96,852	19,297	103,629
CPS	160,162		164,215		171,615		181,090	

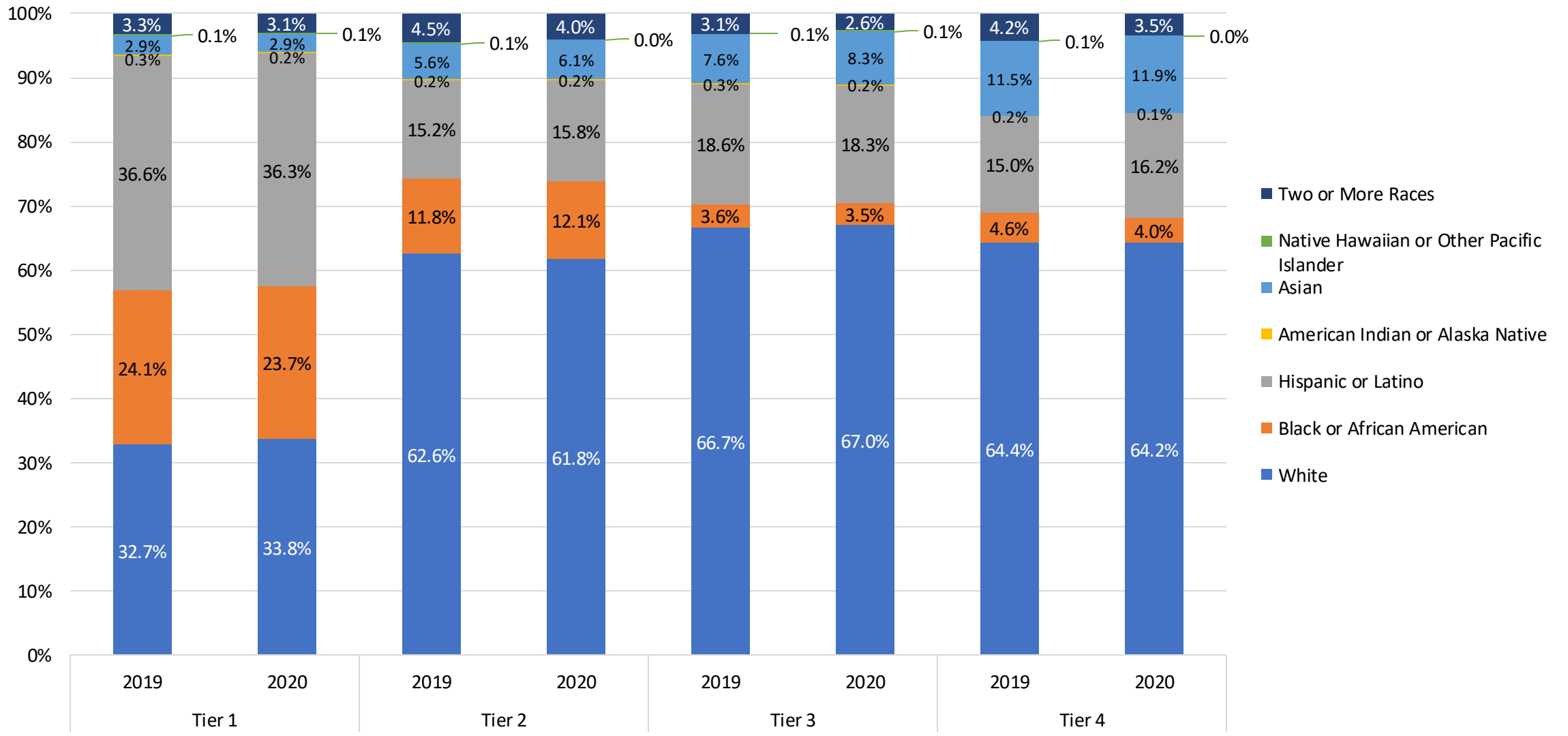


More money is flowing to students who live in districts with lower property wealth. Quintile 5 districts enrolled about 16.3% of state's total students but received 37.4% of the total tier funds in 2018.





A review of metrics for SY 2019 and SY 2020 showed that districts with lower Percent of Adequacy generally had larger proportions of students of color.





RQ 2: Did growth in student achievement and other student outcome measures occur from the baseline 2017-18 school year through the 2020-21 school year in Illinois public schools?

- **Metrics**

- Student achievement measures include proficiency and student growth percentile.
 - Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) Grades 3-8
 - SAT Grade 11
 - Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA)
- High school graduation rates (4- and 5-year)
- Academic Behavior Indicators
 - ***Student attendance rate (SY 2018-19 to SY 2019-20)***
 - ***Chronic absenteeism rate (SY 2018-19 to SY 2019-20)***
 - ***Chronic truancy rate (SY 2018-19 to SY 2019-20)***
 - High school dropout rate
 - 9th Grade on Track rate
 - % of high school students taking advanced courses
 - In- and out-of-school suspension rates

- **Data Source**

- 2018-21 Report Card Data

- **Data Analysis**

- Changes in student achievement and academic behavior indicators between the years
 - By adequacy band
 - Student demographics
 - Race
 - Individualized Education Program (IEP)
 - English Learners (ELs)
 - Low-income

- **Data Limitations**

- The timeline of the initial five-year evaluation and the ongoing pandemic has resulted in an **inadequate data set, which greatly limits the quantitative analysis that can be completed at this time.**



RQ 2: Did growth in student achievement and other student outcome measures occur from the baseline 2017-18 school year through the 2020-21 school year in Illinois public schools?

The 2021 assessment results are not comparable to SY 2017-18 and SY 2018-19 due to the following reasons:

1. Student enrollment declined more than expected.
2. Lower state test participation rates were observed for all demographic groups and the “All Students” group.
 - For example, the “All Students” group participation rates for IAR English language arts (ELA) were 98.1% in SY 2018, 98.8% in SY 2019, and 68.3% in SY 2021. See full report for additional details.
3. In SY 2021, White students have more than an 80% state participation rate on the IAR, while Black and Hispanic or Latino students barely reached 50% participation.
4. The demographics of the test participants do not align with the demographics of the statewide enrollment population, so the test results do not represent the achievement of statewide enrollment.
5. Assessment data are not based on random samples.

Metrics regarding test enrollment and participation follow in order to illustrate the disparities in assessment data, which prevents trend analysis.



Evidence-Based Funding Formula 5-Year Evaluation

Quantitative Analysis: RQs 1 and 2

1. To what extent did the Evidence-Based Funding formula distribute new state funds equitably to school districts each year?
2. Did growth in student achievement and other student outcome measures occur from the baseline 2017-18 school year through the 2020-21 school year in Illinois public schools?

Qualitative Analysis: RQs 3, 4, & 5

3. To what extent were the EBF cost factors reflected in district expenditures from SY 2017-18 to SY 2018-19?
4. Among schools that improved, which systemic and organizational change elements were used to improve student performance and close opportunity gaps?
5. How do changes in funding and circumstances influence the implementation of EBF from year to year? What was the overall effect of EBF on districts?



RQs 3, 4, and 5

Methodology – Qualitative Analysis

- Sample of 87 schools that improved and closed the achievement gap from SY 2017-18 to SY 2018-19.
 - Tier 1 school in SY 2017-18.
 - Sample was determined by the following:
 - Statistically significant increase in ELA and math scores for “All Students” group.
 - Each of the targeted student groups (Black, Hispanic, IEP, EL, Low-Income) either saw no decreases in proficiency or narrowed the achievement gap.
- Digital Survey
 - Principals and district leaders will provide additional data regarding the 34 cost factors (e.g., full-time equivalency [FTE] and per-student investments) prior to EBF and in the years that new tier funding was distributed.
- Interviews and focus groups with the following groups:
 - Teachers
 - Principals
 - District leaders

Data Sources

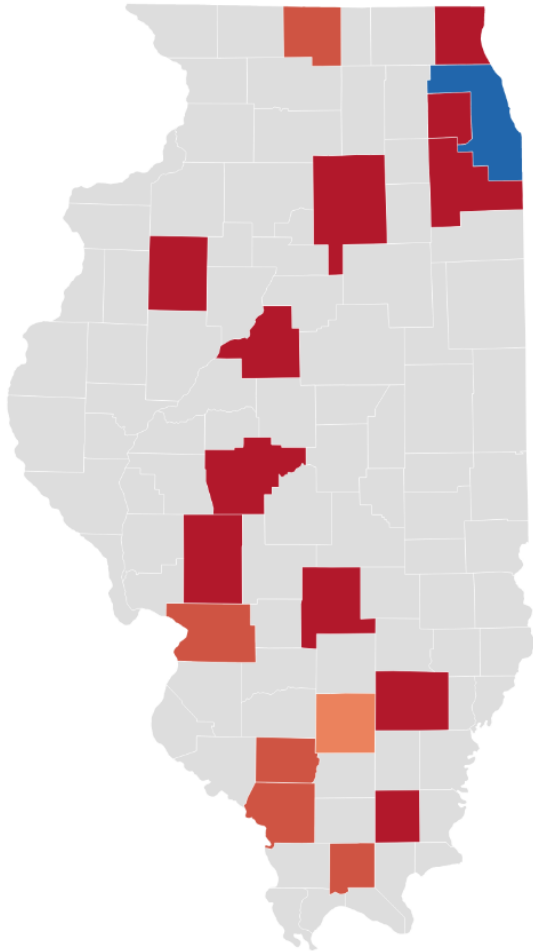
- 2018-19 Report Card Data
- Digital Survey
- Interview and focus group transcripts

Data Analysis

- Qualitative data analysis will be completed.



Qualitative Sample District Information



- 38 schools from 27 districts were included.
 - All districts were identified as Tier 1 in SY 2018.
 - 13 unit districts, 14 elementary districts.
 - 10 large, 9 medium, and 8 small districts.



RQ 3: To what extent were the EBF cost factors reflected in district expenditures from SY 2017-18 to SY 2018-19?

- Which of the EBF cost factors represent how districts changed staffing for their schools?
- Which of the EBF per-pupil cost factors represent how districts changed (e.g., gifted, instructional materials, assessment, student activities, maintenance and operation, and central office)?



RQ 3 Findings

- District spending decisions were informed by student data and local needs assessments as well as evidence on the impact of EBF cost factors and suggested staffing ratios.

Test scores were pretty low across all the few subgroups that we have... they really had never adopted a true RTI program, so they spent a lot of time finding out where kids were and then accelerating those kids and getting to where they needed to be. So it was just a total revamp of the RTI process that really led to those test scores in those couple years.

– Educator

We take [the]... **MAP screener and look at kids and where they are aligned among their peers.** And then with the interventionists that we've hired recently with ESSER money, **we hired 16 [Core Intervention Teachers].** We didn't have interventionists at the 4-8 level because we couldn't afford it. We had a few at the K-3 level, but we added 16 more, some math as well as language, arts. So, we use that as a screener.

– District Administrator



RQ 3 Findings

- Districts largely used the funds in ways that aligned with the cost factors outlined in the EBF formula.
- Prioritization of the most urgent or impactful investments was critical, as districts remain far from full funding.

One of the most important factors I've already referenced is the effect-size data that was provided from EBF, and trying to look at, again, what has the greatest effect on student achievement and saying, this is what we need, to our board who ultimately makes those choices. And then we provide those recommendations and we've been lucky enough to have the support to do that, and it's been successful.

– District Administrator

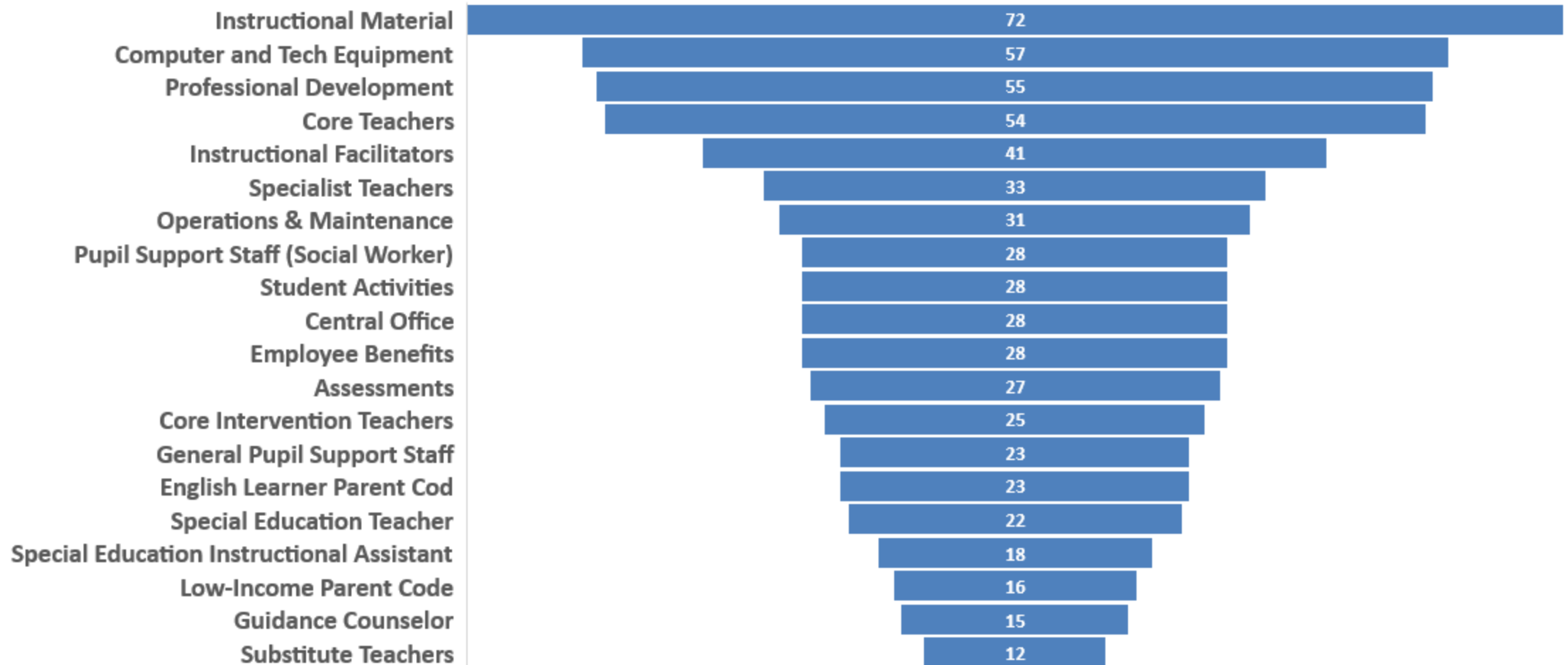
Everything was urgent for us. . . we've prioritized some of the research around, if you can get students to read on grade level by third grade, you exponentially change the trajectory of students' lives. And we decided we had to just put a flag in it and mark that this was the hill we were going to die on, and decided to really start to funnel resources and focus and capital, both human and financial capital, around what we thought was going to be the most high-yield goals and targets. And for us, it really started to become around focusing our capital content-wise around literacy and really then trying to prioritize as much as possible.

– Principal



RQ 3 Findings: Instructional facilitators and core teachers were the most common core investment made by districts, as seen in the transcripts and on the Digital Survey.

Top 20 Cost Factor Investments from Digital Survey and Transcripts





RQ 4: Among schools that improved, what systemic and organizational change elements were used to improve student performance and close opportunity gaps?

Pattern Code	Total	District Admin	Principal	Educator
Additional Staff	49	25	11	13
Prioritizing Professional Development	27	15	3	9
School Culture Change or Shift	26	17	5	4
Student Staff Ratios Class Size	21	12	4	5
Implementing High-Quality Curriculum Core (Reading and Math)	18	6	4	8
Progress Monitoring	17	4	4	9
Implementing High-Quality Curriculum	12	4	5	3
Increased Tech	12	5	1	6
Data-informed decision-making	11	6	0	5
Logistics - Adjusting Building Schedules	11	2	4	5



RQ 4 Findings

- Changes in staffing, including adding staff (to fill open positions or create new positions), consistency in staffing, and lowering student-to-staff ratios, were seen as a critical adjustment for improving student outcomes.

We were just running bare bones and then... **we started getting smaller class sizes. Because we were adding teachers** or, you know, the aides were a big part of this... where people aren't just stretched so thin that it was just – it just wouldn't work, but we were making it work.

– Principal

I think even **implementing those interventionists at the grade school level, carrying over into the high school, more elective courses there, SAT prep classes** within the building to help those students that are interested.

– District Administrator



RQ 4 Findings

- Improving instructional quality was a common focus among districts that saw improved student outcomes.

We had to think about teaching differently and that required really different ways of doing professional development. It became about thinking more intensively about time with teachers, time with coaching, with students, embedded coaching, things that we just haven't had the luxury.

– District Administrator / Principal

We've also replaced a lot of our instructional materials. You'll see on the survey that... one of our biggest cost increases... is instructional materials, which we went... from about \$9,000 to a \$100,000.

– District Administrator

They've come in. They've modeled instruction. They have been sounding boards. So just that extra support, they've offered professional development ideas. They've done trainings.

– Educator



RQ 4 Findings

- Engaging in and executing strategic plans tied to long-term goals was another large-scale change enabled by additional funding and perceived to be associated with improvement.

We did not have a district strategic plan for decades. Because there was no consistent funding level to provide that. My second year we implemented a ---- initiative, and yes, that was to parallel Vision 20/20... And so **we had broad social-emotional, academic, and physical and emotional goals set for the district and it funneled down to building level and classroom specific goals and objectives.**

– District Administrator

Well, I think having new leadership was a positive because we were able to be just a **little bit more creative**, and I'm trying to think outside of the pandemic. Like if I go back to the instructional coaches, we were able to find ways to **utilize them effectively, even if they weren't utilized for the purposes that we initially hired them** through evidence-based funding.

– Educator



Research Question 5

- How do changes in funding and circumstances influence the implementation of EBF from year to year? What was the overall effect of EBF on districts?
- How did the COVID-19 pandemic change the way districts approached the use of EBF?
 - Did certain EBF cost factors become more or less important depending on the context?
- What are the effects of the lack of additional EBF?
 - What are the effects on student outcomes? Did districts change their practices from SY 2018-19?



Preliminary Patterns Emerging from Interview and Focus Groups

General Challenges

Staffing

None

Pandemic-Related Topics

Increased Tech
Was in
Place/Needed

Staffing Changes
Were Necessary

No New Tier Funding in FY 2021

Disrupted Cost
Factor Planning

Undermined
Reliability of the
Formula



RQ 5: Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic on Resource Allocation

- Regarding the pandemic, participants cited a need for **increased investments in technology, mental health supports, and physical resources.**

Pattern Code	Total	District Admin	Principal	Educator
Increased Tech	60	25	8	27
Instructional Modality Change	40	23	8	9
Mental Health_SEL Supports	24	12	4	8
RQ 5 - Impacts of COVID-19	22	15	3	4
Physical Resources	19	6	3	10
Staff Changes	18	13	2	3
ESSER/CARES Funds	14	8	3	3
Professional Development	14	6	0	8
Focused Priorities	13	12	1	0
Curriculum	6	3	2	1
Fear of Wasted Resources	4	2	0	2



RQ 5: Effects of No Tier Funding on Resource Allocation

- The lack of tier funding in FY 2021 created challenges for some districts, forcing administrators to **forgo hiring or cut staff, stop certain programming or forgo planned investment in EBF cost factors, and choose less expensive technology options.**

Pattern Code	Total	District Admin	Principal	Educator
Cost Factor Planning Disruption	19	16	1	2
No Difference	19	5	6	8
Additional ESSER/CARES Masked Lack of EBF Dollars	14	10	1	3
Undermined Reliability Sustainability	13	8	4	1
RQ 5 - Impact of No Tier Funding in FY 2021	10	8	0	2
Presumed Funding Continuity	4	4	0	0
Concern, Slowed Progress to Adequacy	3	3	0	0



RQ 5: Challenges to Progress

- The primary challenges to progress that participants have experienced since EBF implementation include having to choose **how to spend between competing priorities**, as districts are still far below full adequacy, and **difficulty hiring due to turnover among staff members and lack of qualified candidates.**

Pattern Code	Total	District Admin	Principal	Educator
Staffing	28	17	5	6
RQ 5 - Challenges to Progress	19	9	2	8
Competing Priorities	17	12	4	1
Still Below Adequacy Target	15	14	1	0
Barriers to Long-Term Focus	6	5	1	0
Starting from a Point of Financial Distress	4	4	0	0
Maximize Impact of Limited Funds	2	2	0	0
None	1	0	1	0



RQ 5: Overall Effects of EBF

- When asked about the overall effects of EBF, many interview and focus group participants reported an **overwhelmingly positive impact on their schools and districts** so far but noted that **they remain far from being fully funded** and **emphasized the need for continued investment.**

Pattern Code	Total	District Admin	Principal	Educator
RQ 5 - Overall Effects of EBF on Districts	34	24	5	5
Provided Predictability/Financial Stability	24	23	1	1
More Prepared for Crisis (COVID-19)	17	13	1	3
Allowed for Long-Term Investments	13	12	1	0
District Culture	10	10	0	0
Replace Cut Positions	9	7	1	1
Reversed Historical Inequities	5	5	0	0



RQ 5: Overall Effects of EBF

District Administrator

- “I think if I want to sum this all up, I'm going to tell you the **EBF money is the reason we're at, where we're at today. That's why we went from lowest performing to exemplary** because we could provide the curriculum. We could provide the staff to help these kids achieve what they're capable of achieving. And that's how I would sum this all up. Because of what EBF did for our school districts, where I'm at today.”

Principal

- “But if **EBF continues to be funded, we'll be able to continue that social work position** here when that grant money runs out. And that would be huge, not just for this school, but for Perry County in general and just the community also. EBF has been super important, and **if it continues to get funded, it will close those gaps that you're seeing between the haves and the have-nots**, which is really what it was designed to do.”

Educator

- “I'm going to get personal for a minute. I think in my personal opinion, I love the extra funding. Absolutely. But I guess **it doesn't matter how much extra money that you get if your staff and your teachers are not receptive of it and do not take what they've been given and use it**, you know. And I feel like here, we took it and ran. You know, we took all of the programs and all of the technology and we didn't let it sit on a shelf. We used it and, you know, I just think it doesn't matter how much you get if you don't use it.”



Conclusion

- EBF is working as intended to address inadequacies and inequities in school funding across the state.
- EBF has shifted Illinois from having the most regressive school funding policy in the country to one that is distributing funds in an increasingly equitable way by providing additional tier funding to:
 - Districts farthest from adequacy.
 - Districts with low property wealth.
 - Districts with larger proportions of low-income students and students of color.
- Despite continued investments, eight out of 10 students in Illinois remain under 90% adequacy. Participants in the study reiterated that although EBF has had profound effects on students, the state needs to fully invest in EBF to fully actualize the impacts.



Continued Work

- One-pagers that summarize each of the five research questions
 - Currently in development by ISBE staff
- Proposal for next 5-year evaluative study
 - Will need to be completed by 2027
 - PRP Reporting Committee Subcommittee convened in July to discuss the following:
 - Past and present data limitations
 - Lessons learned from this first evaluative study
 - Updates to the research questions
 - Updated research questions are currently in development for approval by the PRP at the December meeting



Thank You

- Interview and Focus Group Facilitators
 - Illinois Association of School Administrators
 - Illinois Principals Association
 - Illinois Education Association
 - Illinois Federation of Teachers
- PRP's Reporting Committee
 - Subcommittee Members
 - Jane Russell – IFT (Chair)
 - Unique Morris – IEA
 - Melissa Figueira – Advance Illinois
- ISBE Staff



Questions

