

Illinois State Board of Education

**2024-2027**

**Strategic Plan**



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Dear ISBE Stakeholders,

We are thrilled to share with you the 2024-2027 Illinois State Board of Education Strategic Plan. This ambitious plan builds upon the agency's commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to the evolving needs of the nearly 2 million school-aged children in Illinois that we serve. It is important to acknowledge that this plan is not merely a "document" but a living framework that we believe will propel us toward our shared vision for education in Illinois.

The cornerstone of this planning process has been our dedication to hearing diverse perspectives and fostering collaborative efforts. The 90-day listening-and-learning tour Dr. Sanders embarked on as the new state superintendent early last year provided us with invaluable insights. Conversations and feedback from various external stakeholders identified key areas that demand our attention and collective action. Insightful discussions during several instructional retreats with internal leadership cultivated an environment where innovation and new ideas flourished.

In three short months, we noticed several common themes that surfaced, setting the stage for our major focus areas. Among these are the persistent challenges related to the teacher shortage and the pivotal role the \$45 million Teacher Pipeline Grant will play in mitigating the crisis in Illinois.

Our Illinois system of assessments, accountability, and support also has received quite a bit of attention. We have taken proactive steps to reunite data, assessment, and accountability within the same center at ISBE. Our Strategic Plan further outlines exciting work ahead to right-size these systems to better target supports and to strengthen continuous improvement in all districts.

ISBE has built on a strong foundation based on equity and that remains at the heart of our work. This Strategic Plan affirms our commitment to the Equity Journey Continuum and to equity principles across all facets of our agency, both in our internal processes and our external work and engagement.

Special thanks to all the educators, parents, and partners whose dedication, collective wisdom, and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in shaping this Strategic Plan. Our commitment to partnering with you remains a priority. We invite you to explore the plan, engage in the journey it outlines, and join us as we work together toward a future where every student in Illinois receives an exceptional education.

Sincerely,



**Dr. Tony Sanders**  
State Superintendent of Education



**Dr. Steven Isoye**  
Chair of the Board

## VISION

Each and every child is equipped to make meaningful contributions to society and live life to its fullest potential.

## MISSION

Provide each and every child with safe and healthy learning conditions, great educators, and equitable opportunities by practicing data-informed stewardship of resources and policy development, all done in partnership with educators, families, and stakeholders.

## EQUITY STATEMENT

Illinois has an urgent and collective responsibility to achieve educational equity by ensuring that all policies, programs, and practices affirm the strengths that each and every child brings within their diverse backgrounds and life experiences, and by delivering the comprehensive supports, programs, and educational opportunities they need to succeed.

Goal  
**E.1**

## Equity Impact Analysis Toolkit

An Equity Impact Analysis Tool will guide all programmatic decisions and communications provided to stakeholders with special attention given to confronting and resolving historical inequities.

### INTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### E.1.1

By the end of fiscal year 2025, every ISBE exempt and non-exempt employee will be trained on how to use and document usage of the Equity Impact Analysis Tool.

#### E.1.2

By the end of FY 2025, the Equity Impact Analysis Tool will be built into all new Contract Authorization Forms (CAF) and Grant Authorization Forms (GAF), so all major financial decisions take into consideration historical inequities.

#### E.1.3

By the end of FY 2025, the Equity Impact Analysis Tool will be built into all Board memos, so all official actions by the agency take into consideration historical inequities.

### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### E.1.4

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will share its Equity Impact Analysis Tool and training modules as a model for schools and districts to use in their own decision-making.

Goal  
**E.2**

## Equity Journey Continuum

An Equity Journey Continuum will be used to publicly indicate where each Illinois school district is on its equity journey.

### INTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### E.2.1

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE staff will use the Equity Journey Continuum to guide the distribution of resources.

#### E.2.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE staff will begin a continual cycle of reviewing data produced by the Equity Journey Continuum.

### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### E.2.3

By the end of FY 2025, the Equity Journey Continuum will be added to the School Improvement Needs Assessment.

#### E.2.4

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop a suite of resources to assist schools and districts in integrating their Equity Journey Continuum results into their continuous improvement planning.

## Goal 1

# Student Learning

All students will receive a high-quality education with access to appropriate resources and supports to increase their knowledge, skills, and opportunities so they graduate equipped to pursue a successful future.



Goal  
**1.1**

## Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan

ISBE will work with stakeholders to curate resources and develop instructional guides using evidence-based strategies to support the teaching of literacy in two or more languages.



### INTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 1.1.1

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE staff will be trained on the literacy plan.

### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 1.1.2

By the end of FY 2024, ISBE, in partnership with stakeholders, will develop and post the following:

- a** A rubric to evaluate and select evidence-based, culturally inclusive core reading curriculum.
- b** A comprehensive, district wide literacy plan template.
- c** A guidance document on evidence-based practices for training and deploying equity-oriented literacy coaches.

Goal  
**1.2**

### Statewide System of Support

ISBE will work with stakeholders to develop a continuous improvement model and make resources available to support its implementation for all schools in Illinois.



#### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

**1.2.1**

By the end of FY 2024, ISBE will work with stakeholders to develop a continuous improvement model.

**1.2.2**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will promote the continuous improvement model through a road show modeled after the state literacy plan rollout.

**1.2.3**

By the end of FY 2025, in collaboration with the Illinois Association of School Boards, ISBE will develop training on continuous improvement and student outcomes for district school board members, available to anyone on demand.

**1.2.4**

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will develop a menu of continuous improvement resources that are responsive to the unique needs of schools.

Goal  
**1.3**

## **Regional Offices of Education (ROEs)/ Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs)/Rural Leadership Development**

ISBE and ROEs/ISCs will partner to develop a statewide plan to support all districts in school improvement efforts.



### **EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES**

#### **1.3.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE, in partnership with ROEs/ISCs, will provide instructional coaches to schools in improvement status.

#### **1.3.2**

By the end of FY 2026, a plan will be developed to provide various resources through ROEs/ISCs to support improvement in all districts, with a special emphasis on increasing support to schools in Targeted status.

Goal  
**1.4**

## Higher Education

ISBE will partner with other state agencies and stakeholders to maintain and develop high-quality educator preparation programs.



### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 1.4.1

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will identify high-performing programs via data submitted by institutions of higher education to the Illinois Educator Preparation Profiles system. ISBE will complete an evaluation of the effective recruitment and retention practices utilized by high-performing programs in high-need subject areas and share this information with all programs and other relevant state agencies.

#### 1.4.2

By the end of FY 2027, ISBE, in consultation with stakeholders, will develop scoring criteria for all educator preparation programs.

Goal  
**1.5**

## ISBE Culture of Learning

ISBE will promote equitable professional learning opportunities in support of an environment where shared decision-making and accountability are grounded upon the diverse perspectives and expertise of staff.



### INTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 1.5.1

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop new professional learning offerings in support of employees' professional responsibilities. ISBE will review the offerings annually.

#### 1.5.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop training aligned to best practices for adult learning for new and existing supervisors, directors, and executive directors on core operational duties and systems (e.g., GAF, CAF, grant management, MIDAS, Request for Sealed Proposals). The training will be required as a part of new manager onboarding.

Goal  
**1.6**

### **Leadership Development**

ISBE will identify and provide opportunities for staff to develop specific leadership tenets necessary to galvanize action and effect change throughout the organization.



#### **INTERNAL OBJECTIVES**

**1.6.1**

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will offer professional learning on a continual basis to further develop existing leadership through cross departmental collaboration.

**1.6.2**

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will provide leadership training and leadership pathways to create a pipeline for future leaders.

Goal 2

## Learning Conditions

In partnership with its stakeholders, ISBE will advocate for the necessary resources to create safe, healthy, and welcoming learning environments that meet the unique academic, social, and emotional needs of every student.





## Student Safety and Wellness

ISBE will work with external stakeholders to create a developmentally appropriate Resiliency Toolkit.



### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 2.1.1

By the end of FY 2024, ISBE, with assistance from external stakeholders and in partnership with ROEs/ISCs, will pilot the Resilient Schools Certification program.

#### 2.1.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will work with external stakeholders to create a developmentally appropriate Resiliency Toolkit for students and educators.

#### 2.1.3

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE, in consultation with external stakeholders, will develop resources to support the implementation of mental health screenings in schools.

#### 2.1.4

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE, in partnership with external stakeholders, will update the Illinois Learning Standards for Social-Emotional Learning.

Goal  
**2.2**

### Statewide System of Support

ISBE will work with ROEs/ISCs to develop and deliver professional learning opportunities promoting the implementation of the Resiliency Toolkit.



#### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

**2.2.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE, in collaboration with ROEs/ISCs, will hold an annual wellness conference.

**2.2.2**

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE, in collaboration with ROEs/ISCs, will increase the number of school personnel who receive professional learning about resilience-related topics.

Goal  
**2.3**

**Operations**

ISBE will develop a tool to model equitable practices in day-to-day operations, recruitment, retention, hiring, promotion, and evaluation.



**INTERNAL OBJECTIVES**

**2.3.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will partner with an external vendor to identify and administer an employee feedback survey.

**2.3.2**

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will design and implement a program in response to employee feedback surveys.

**2.3.3**

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will design and implement an equitable program that allows exposure to different departments and roles to enhance capacity and provide internal coaching to help people advance within the agency.



## Budget Systems

ISBE will model a budgeting process aligned with agency priorities and inclusive of inter and intra-departmental needs.



### INTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 2.4.1

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will work with stakeholders as necessary to complete an assessment that identifies target processes, current state understanding of each process and associated systems, and opportunities to improve. ISBE will make recommendations for future implementation related to financial systems as a whole.

#### 2.4.2

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will prioritize a second group of processes and associated systems and will work with stakeholders as necessary to complete an assessment that identifies the processes, current state understanding of each process and associated systems, and opportunities to improve. ISBE will make recommendations for future implementation. ISBE will implement new systems and processes within allowable timelines.

Goal  
**2.5**

### **IT/Infrastructure Investment**

ISBE will analyze current systems to improve efficiency and collaboration while prioritizing and investing in an IT infrastructure equipped to support the needs of districts, partners, and the agency.



#### **EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES**

**2.5.1**

By the end of fiscal year 2024, ISBE will conduct an internal assessment to identify redundancies and opportunities for improvement.

**2.5.2**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop a report that identifies redundancies and opportunities for improvement.

**2.5.3**

By the end of FY 2027, ISBE will have completed the first phase of a comprehensive business mapping process that will provide pathways to improve efficacy and efficiency within our systems.



Goal 3

## Elevating Educators

Illinois' diverse student population will have educators who are prepared through multiple pathways and supported in and celebrated for their effectiveness in providing every child a high-quality education that meets their needs.



Goal  
**3.1**

### Higher Education

ISBE will work with institutions of higher education to develop professional learning communities of practice to promote the use of resources for literacy instruction.



#### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

**3.1.1**

By the end of FY 2025, in collaboration with institutions of higher education, ISBE will develop Communities of Practice promoting effective literacy instruction in educator preparation programs.

**3.1.2**

By the end of FY 2027, ISBE will conduct a program evaluation to determine the extent to which instruction in educator preparation programs aligns to literacy preparation standards and the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

Goal  
**3.2**

### Professional Learning

ISBE will work in collaboration with stakeholders to research, identify, and pilot innovative models of education preparation.



#### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

**3.2.1**

By the end of FY 2024, based on continuing research of educator preparation programs in other states, ISBE and stakeholders will recommend additional innovative educator preparation models.

**3.2.2**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will support apprenticeship pilots for institutions of higher education.



## Teacher Vacancy Grant

ISBE will partner with districts in need to highlight equitable practices in recruitment and retention of educators.



### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 3.3.1

By the end of FY 2024, ISBE will continue to support districts participating in the Teacher Vacancy Grant with the implementation of equitable, evidence-based strategies through Communities of Practice.

#### 3.3.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will research effective practices among districts participating in the Teacher Vacancy Grant.

#### 3.3.3

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will share information on effective practices with districts throughout the state.

#### 3.3.4

By the end of FY 2027, ISBE will provide evidence of a stronger teacher pipeline, as evidenced by the 2026 Educator Supply and Demand report.



### Succession Planning

ISBE will work collaboratively to develop a template for succession planning utilized by every department.



#### INTERNAL OBJECTIVES

##### 3.4.1

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop a template that each department will complete to document protocols, processes, and procedures.

##### 3.4.2

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will develop department onboarding manuals, timelines, and relevant programmatic information for new employees.



## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Professional Learning

ISBE will model professional learning opportunities focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).



### INTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 3.5.1

By the end of FY 2025, based on continuing research, ISBE will expand its internal resources focused on DEI.

### EXTERNAL OBJECTIVES

#### 3.5.2

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will expand DEI professional learning offerings.