

Illinois Literacy Self-Assessment Tool Launch Webinar

Jan. 22, 2025



Self-Assessment Tool Launch Webinar Objectives for EPPs



Confidence in Literacy Guidance

Use the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan as a trusted guide for program development.



Familiarity with Self-Assessment Tool

Understand its structure and purpose.



Effective Implementation

Apply the tool to evaluate program alignment.

Agenda



Background and General Information (10 min)



Key Components for Educator Preparation – The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan (10 min)



Overview of the Self-Assessment Tool and ISBE Expectations (15 min)



Key Ideas from Pilot Participants (30 min)



Closing & Questions (10 min)

Background and General Information

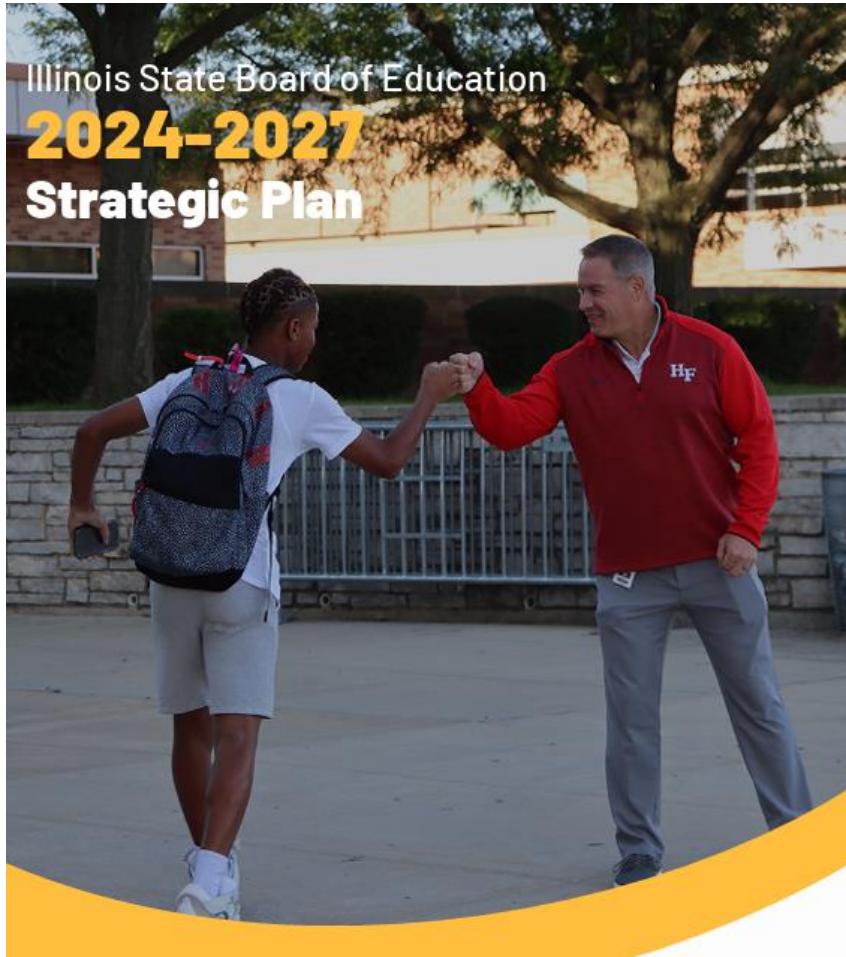
Erin Studer, Principal Consultant,
Educator Effectiveness, ISBE



Overall Timeline



The ISBE Strategic Plan



Tool was created as a resource for EPPs to prepare for the evaluation of alignment in teaching EPPs by the end of FY 2027 ([Strategic Plan Goal 3.1.2](#)).

The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan



isbe.net/LiteracyPlan

January 2024



- [Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan PDF Document](#)
- [Literacy Plan Website](#)



Launching Soon

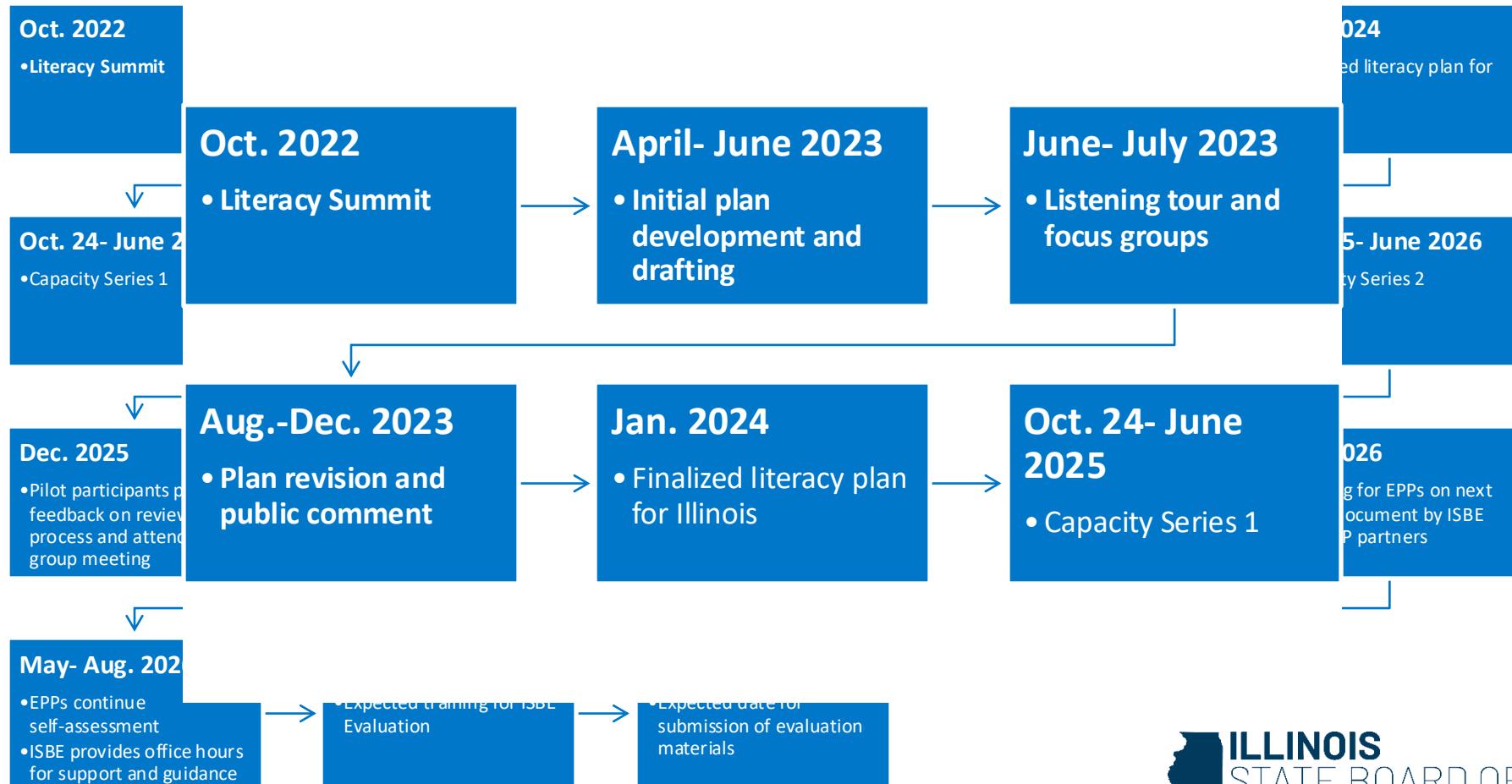
- [Illinois Educator Preparation Alignment to the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan Website](#)
- Website houses:
 - Timeline
 - Self-Assessment Information & Resources
 - Community of Practice recordings
- The website will be updated as the alignment process progresses.

Educator Preparation and The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan

Kimberly Johnson, Principal
Consultant, Standards and Instruction,
ISBE



Timeline: Literacy Plan Development



Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan Key Design Elements



Collaborative Design

Developed with input from educators, higher education faculty, literacy experts, and partners across Illinois.



Evidence-Based Framework

Aligns with national literacy standards and culturally responsive practices.
Expectations and guidance supported and cited within the plan.



Reflects Illinois Context

Incorporates state-specific data, equity priorities, and multilingual learner needs.

Shared Ownerships for Literacy Success

District Expectations

- Implement aligned curriculum and support teacher induction with literacy plan principles.

Educator Preparation Expectations

- Align program coursework and learning activities (assessments, lesson plans, practical experience, etc.) to literacy plan guidance.

Shared Ownership

- Ensures consistency from preparation to practice.

Additional Information on the Literacy Plan Website

More information on the development of the literacy plan.

Development Resources: Plan Drafts and Stakeholder Feedback

This section includes materials from the drafting and creation phase of the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan, including draft versions of the plan and feedback reports.

- **Timeline**

- October 2022: Literacy Summit
- April - June 2023: Initial Plan Development and Drafting
- June - July 2023: Listening Tour and Focus Groups
- Fall 2023: Plan Revision and Public Comment
- January 2024: Finalized Literacy Plan for Illinois

- **2022 Literacy Summit**

- [Literacy Stakeholder Engagement Meeting, October 25, 2022: Summary Themes](#) 

- **First Draft (Archived)**

- [Draft Literacy Plan](#) 

Professional Development on the Literacy Plan Website

Access to Free Professional Learning Modules

- What the Research Says: Effective Reading Instruction for All Students
- 16 modules, 12-15-hour course

Capacity Builders Sessions

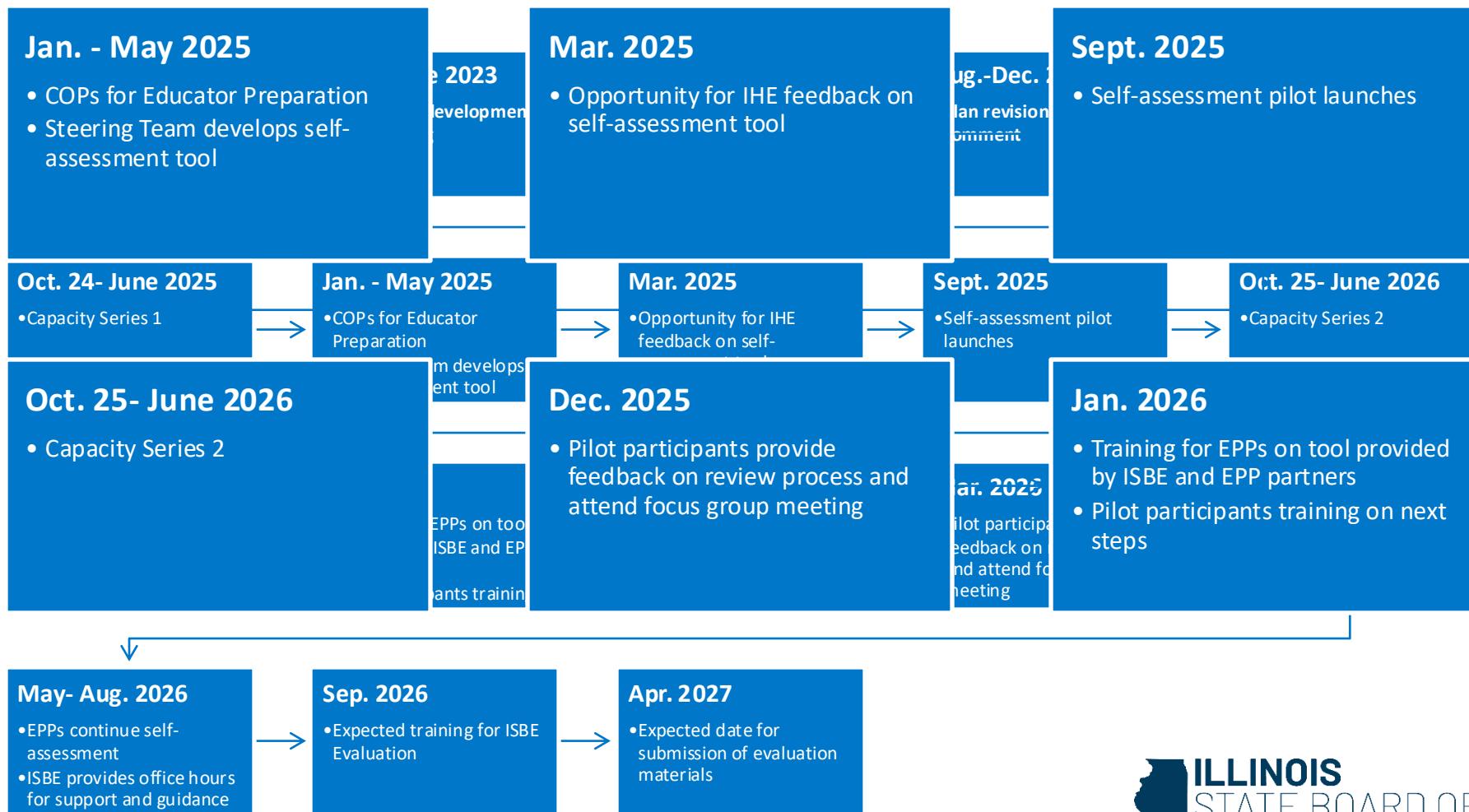
- Offers practical strategies, opportunities to learn alongside peers, and support for implementing evidence-based literacy instruction aligned to the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

Resources and Tools

- Getting Started Toolkit
- Coaching Guidance
- Other recorded presentations

Overview of the Self-Assessment Tool

Timeline: Self-Assessment Tool Development



Steering Team

Representatives of IHEs able to volunteer to be a part of the steering team.

ISBE compiled a team to represent the diverse landscape of Illinois institutions and program types.

Steering team met twice a month synchronously or asynchronously to transition the expectations of the literacy plan into a useable tool for EPPs.

Steering team took an extra step to develop an additional resource and compilation of resources to help EPPs take next steps after evaluation.



Steering team members

- **Scott Filkins**, Program Coordinator, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
- **Dr. Susan Foster**, Assistant Professor, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- **Dr. Melissa Jones-Bromenshenkel**, Professor, Eastern Illinois University
- **Dr. Karen Lauritzen**, Assistant Professor, Millikin University
- **Dr. Kenya Mandeldove Sadler**, Leadership Coach, University of Illinois Chicago
- **Dr. Jacquelyn Benchik-Osborne**, Associate Professor, Chicago State University
- **Dr. Sandra Lucia Osorio**, Professor, Erikson Institute
- **Dr. Alexandra "Niki" Owens**, Assistant Professor of Education, McKendree University
- **Dr. Dawn Schwarzkopf**, Professor, Olivet Nazarene University
- **Dr. Melizabeth Santos**, Assistant Professor, Dominican University
- **Dr. Thera Tilmon**, Director of Elementary Educator, National Louis University
- **Maxine Welcome**, Department Chair, Relay Graduate School of Education
- **Dr. Concetta A. Williams**, Professor, Chicago State University
- **Dr. Christopher Worthman**, Program Director and Professor, DePaul University

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Purpose of the Self-Assessment

The self-assessment tool provides a structured framework for evaluating current practices and identifying areas for growth.

Institutions can use the results to inform strategic planning, curriculum development, and faculty professional development.

The self-assessment tool will be used to evaluate educator preparation programs as requested in the Strategic Plan.

Evidence collection for the evaluation can be gathered now in preparation for the evaluation.



Directions for Using the Tool

1. Review Each Section:

- Review headings for section
- Focus on objective
- Objective aligned to the literacy plan

2. Gather Evidence:

- Collect evidence that demonstrates alignment
- Evidence examples- curriculum maps, lesson plans, assessment tools, instructional materials, etc.
- Retain electronic versions of all evidence

3. Program Information

- Compile identify information for program

4. Evaluation Guidance

- Use the evidence that is collected to evaluate alignment
- Use the Program Notes/Rationale space to provide comments
- Complete the Further Insights portion to demonstrate the level of alignment

Self-Assessment Design Elements: Provided Example

<p>Evidence of Alignment: This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, and there is no expectation for an EPP to provide all the examples of evidence to show alignment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum Maps: Detailed curriculum maps showing how each literacy component is integrated into the program.<input type="checkbox"/> Developmental Progression of Literacy: Documentation of planning and sequencing of coursework and learning outcomes that support teacher candidates' skill-building in evidence-based literacy instruction and instructional strategies that emphasize developmentally appropriate vertical alignment.<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lesson Plans: Sample teacher candidate lesson plans that include activities and assessments for oracy, phonological awareness, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing and include evidence-based literacy instructional practices.<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Tools: Examples of formative and summative evidence-based literacy assessments used to evaluate students' proficiency in each literacy component.<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Materials: Textbooks, digital resources, and other evidence-based instructional materials that support the teaching of each literacy component.<input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and Inclusion Policies: Documentation of policies and practices that promote equity and inclusion in evidence-based literacy education.<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development: Records of professional development sessions for faculty focused on culturally responsive teaching and equity in evidence-based literacy instruction.<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Course syllabus EDU 310 and CRTL Matrix
<p>Program Notes/ Rationale</p>	<p>Curriculum Map identifies coursework in planning and delivering all seven components is present. Faculty has highlighted evidence to <u>maintain as records</u> and for continual evaluation for whether the coursework aligns to evidence-based literacy practices. Last review of the Curriculum Map was in 2020; it may not reflect current evidence-based literacy practices. Assessment of components is detailed in the Curriculum Map for five of the components (missing writing and oracy). Lesson Plan template includes assessment. Sample lesson plans are available for six of the components and include writing assessment samples (missing oracy). Students are <u>provided</u> coursework in and intentional classroom discussions on the impact of equity or the lack of equity in evidence-based literacy education as part of alignment for the CRTL standards. The discussions are identified in the course syllabus and in the CRTL Matrix.</p>

Self-Assessment Design Elements: Sections



Alignment to Instructional Framework

Seven Components of Literacy



Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction
and Practices

Evidence-based literacy for all learners



Quality Practical Experiences

Awareness and Thoughtful Design



Data-Driven Focus

For the Candidate and EPP



Commitment to Equity

Equitable evidence-based literacy education

Self-Assessment Design Elements: Evidence



The evidence lists are not intended to be an exhaustive, and there is no expectation for an EPP to provide all the examples of evidence to show alignment.

- • •

Use the "other" option to provide evidence not identified in the list.

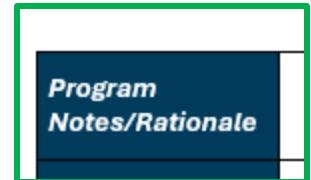


Think about providing only enough evidence to show alignment.

Evidence of Alignment: This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, and there is no expectation for an EPP to provide all the examples of evidence to show alignment.

- Curriculum Maps:** Detailed curriculum maps showing how each literacy component is integrated into the program.
- Developmental Progression of Literacy:** Documentation of planning and sequencing of coursework and learning outcomes that support teacher candidates' skill-building in evidence-based literacy instruction and instructional strategies that emphasize developmentally appropriate vertical alignment.
- Lesson Plans:** Sample teacher candidate lesson plans that include activities and assessments for oracy, phonological awareness, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing and include evidence-based literacy instructional practices.
- Assessment Tools:** Examples of formative and summative evidence-based literacy assessments used to evaluate students' proficiency in each literacy component.
- Instructional Materials:** Textbooks, digital resources, and other evidence-based instructional materials that support the teaching of each literacy component.
- Diversity and Inclusion Policies:** Documentation of policies and practices that promote equity and inclusion in evidence-based literacy education.
- Professional Development:** Records of professional development sessions for faculty focused on culturally responsive teaching and equity in evidence-based literacy instruction.
- Other:**

Self-Assessment Design Elements: Program Notes/Rationale



“

Provide comments to further explain evidence, keep track of key ideas, and outline ideas for Further Insights sections.



May also use this section to provide information on or list other evidence that shows alignment but was not specifically used for the sections.

Self-Assessment Design Elements: Further Insights



Use to demonstrate the level of alignment and to guide the next steps for addressing areas needing improvement and leveraging strengths.



EPPs should focus on identifying Development Focus Points and Key Success Areas as the first step in the process.



Evidence will directly support these observations.

Further Insights	Development Focus Points:	Key Success Areas:
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ISBE Expectations: Which Programs?

- All approved educator preparation programs that could lead to initial licensure in the teaching field should complete a self-assessment to prepare for the evaluation to be completed by June 30, 2027.
- Reading Specialist programs should also complete the self-assessment.



Early Childhood (Birth-Grade 2)**Early Childhood Special Education
(Birth-Grade 2)****Elementary Education (Grades 1-6)****Elementary Math Specialist (Grades 1-6)****Middle Grades (5-8)**

General Science

Language Arts

Mathematics

Social Science

Senior High (9-12)

English Language Arts

Mathematics

Science- Biology

Science- Chemistry

Science- Earth & Space Science

Science- Environmental Science

Science- Physics

Social Science- Economics

Social Science- Geography

Social Science- History

Social Science- Political Science

Social Science- Psychology

Social Science- Sociology & Anthropology

Senior High (5-12)

Agricultural Education

Business, Marketing, & Computer Ed.

Computer Science

Family & Consumer Science

Special Education (K-Age 22)

Learning Behavior Specialist (K-Age 22)

Learning Behavior Specialist I (LBSI)

Special Education (PK-Age 22)

Teacher of Students Who are

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Teacher of Students Who are

Blind/Visually Impaired

Special (PK-12)

Dance

Drama/Theater Arts

World Language (multiple languages)

Health Education

Library Information Specialist

Music

Physical Education

Reading Specialist

Technology Specialist

Visual Arts



Completing the Self-Assessment Tool



EPPs should work on completing the tool and completing the Further Insights section.

Identify and Collect Evidence

Enough evidence to show alignment

Continued Support from ISBE.

Guidance on next steps to be provided in an April 2026 webinar

Office Hours for self-assessment window: Wed. 2-3 p.m. Feb.-Apr. 2026

Review of Supports to Prepare for Evaluation

- Communities of Practice
- Resources from the Literacy Plan website
 - Learning Modules
 - Capacity Builders
- Self-assessment tool
- Office Hours
- Future supports as work progresses



Key Ideas from Pilot Participants Panel Discussion

Panel Participants



- **Susan Foster Ph.D.**, is an Assistant Professor of Elementary Education in the School of Education, Health, and Human Behavior at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Dr. Foster teaches courses in literacy development and differentiated instruction. Before coming to SIUE, Dr. Foster supervised the *America Reads Challenge* literacy program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and taught elementary and middle school in Springfield, Illinois.



- **Dr. Schwarzkopf** is a Professor and Director of Early Childhood Education at Olivet Nazarene University. She taught in public schools for 26 years before a career change to ONU in 2015. She is a Reading Specialist, has served as a Literacy Coach through several grants, and was a member of the Steering Committee for the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan. Dr. Schwarzkopf enjoys teaching the Reading Methods courses at ONU, enabling her students to become successful reading teachers in the classroom.

Panel Participants



- **Dr. Thera Tilmon**, serves as the Director of Elementary Education and an Assistant Professor at National Louis University, where she oversees Elementary and Early Childhood educator preparation programs. Her expertise includes evidence-based literacy instruction, curriculum design, field-based coaching, and program alignment to state and national standards, including CAEP and Illinois Learning Standards. In her leadership role, Dr. Tilmon supports continuous program improvement through data-informed decision making and accreditation-focused initiatives. She played a key role in completing the ISBE Self-Assessment Tool for the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan (ICLP), ensuring alignment between program practices, literacy preparation, and statewide priorities.
- **Jacquelyn Benchik-Osborne, Ph.D.**, is an Associate Professor of Elementary Education for Chicago State University. As the examples provided in the models given, I want school to be that space as Deborah Meier, progressive educator who started open classrooms of the 1970s in New York, envisioned learning experiences to be active and engaging. She often spoke of wanting students who do that deep problem solving when building a city neighborhood with blocks, debating a topic in a mock trial, or drafting a portfolio of one's most meaningful work starting from kindergarten onward. School is important. Culture should be embedded to support deeper thinking and skillsets that will transfer across all content areas.

Panel Participants



- **Dr. Alexandra (Niki) Owens** is an Assistant Professor of Education at McKendree University with 15 years of experience teaching elementary students with diverse learning needs. She specializes in evidence-based literacy assessment and instruction, foundational and remedial literacy, and literacy leadership. Dr. Owens is a certified Special Education Teacher, Illinois Reading Specialist, and IMSE Orton-Gillingham Teacher, and she served on the ISBE steering team supporting the implementation of the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan. She is committed to preparing teacher candidates to deliver high-quality, equitable literacy instruction.
- **Marie Ann Donovan, Ed.D.**, is associate professor of teacher education at DePaul University. She anchors courses in early reading development, young children's literature, and induction to the teaching profession. Her research focuses on improving access pathways across two- and four-year education degree programs through the awarding of credit for prior learning. She serves as an associate editor for the *Illinois Reading Council Journal*, coauthoring with an Illinois school librarian its column on the intersection of classroom and school libraries in fostering children's literacy. She also serves as the program director for Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education at DePaul.

Panel Question #1

- **What resources did you use or develop to help begin and organize the self-assessment? Did any type of evidence stand out as being the most beneficial to your review?**
- **Panelists:**
 - Susan Foster Ph.D., Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
 - Dawn M. Schwarzkopf, Ed.D., Olivet Nazarene University

Panel Question #2

- **Equity is included as a key factor in each section and has a section dedicated to itself. How did you go about keeping an equity-focused mindset during your review?**
- **Panelists:**
 - Thera I. Tilmon, Ed.D., National Louis University
 - Jacquelyn Benchik-Osborne, Ph.D., Chicago State University



Panel Question #3

- When completing another review or giving advice to a peer completing a review, what is a key element to success that you would share?
- Panelists:
 - Dr. Marie Ann Donovan, DePaul University
 - Dr. Alexandra (Niki) Owens, McKendree University



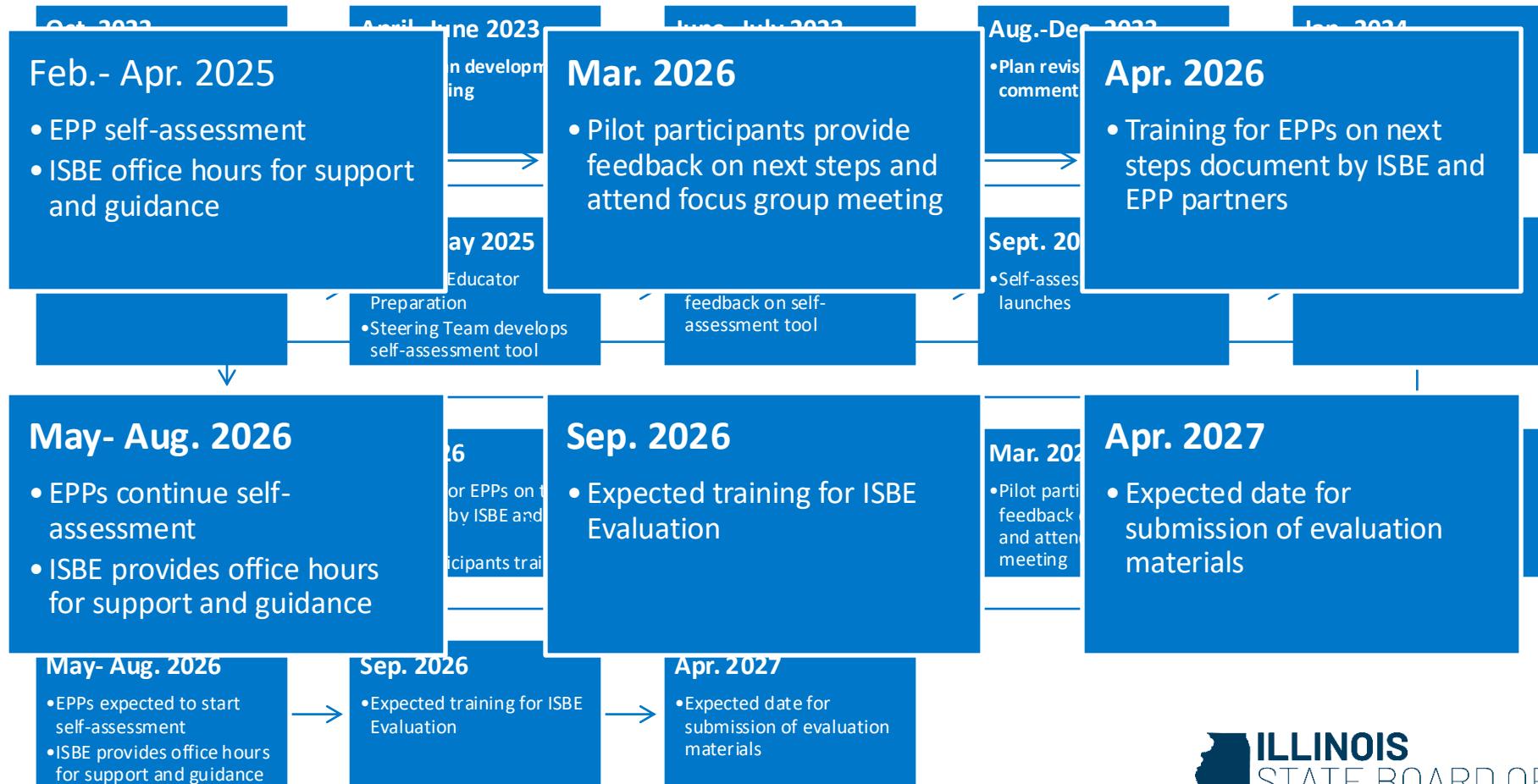
Closing

Erin Studer, Principal Consultant,
Educator Effectiveness, ISBE

EPP Next Steps

- Anticipate the launch of the website and the self-assessment tool.
- Complete the self-assessment tool for ISBE-identified preparation programs.
 - Collect the evidence.
 - Identify the starting point.
- Anticipate the next steps guidance to come at the end of April.

Timeline: Self-Assessment Tool Development



Questions

thank you