



ISBE Resource Allocation Review - Rubric in Practice

This document is a supplement to the Illinois State Board of Education's [Resource Allocation Review \(RAR\) Rubric](#) and offers examples to help districts evaluate their resource allocation practices. The original RAR Rubric described levels of implementation corresponding to each of the four [Properties of Effective Resource Allocation Systems](#): Equity, Transparency, Stakeholder Engagement, and District Alignment. District teams use the rubric to categorize their district's current practice within each property as minimal, developing, or high.

The **Rubric in Practice** expands on the original RAR Rubric with examples that can help leaders more accurately identify their district's level of implementation. Rubric language for each of the four properties ("Descriptions of Implementation") is followed by discrete practices that illustrate each level of implementation ("Possible Examples"). The examples are meant to be descriptive rather than comprehensive, and each bullet point should be seen as distinct. In other words, there are many examples of practice at each performance level; the Rubric in Practice includes only a few. ISBE also encourages districts to review the [RAR Resource Bank](#) for materials that showcase high levels of implementation across the four properties, many of which are sourced from school districts in Illinois.

Level of Implementation			
Equity	Minimal	Developing	High
Description of Implementation	Based on available evidence, the district’s resource allocation system does not meaningfully provide resources based on the needs of each school’s student population.	Resource distribution patterns within the district suggest that the district’s resource allocation system provides resources based on the needs of some student populations (low-income students, ELs, students with disabilities, or others identified by district needs assessments) but not all, or for some schools serving identified student groups but not all.	Resource distribution patterns within the district clearly demonstrate that the district’s resource allocation system meaningfully provides resources based on the needs of each school’s student populations (low-income students, ELs, students with disabilities, or others identified by district needs assessment).
Possible Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Per-pupil expenditures are approximately equal at all schools in the district, irrespective of school type and underlying need.</i> ○ <i>Experienced teachers are clustered at certain schools, possibly contributing to inequitable results.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Variation in school spending is mostly related to specialized programs such as early childhood and/or special education programming.</i> ○ <i>The district assigns the same number of support staff members (e.g., counselors, social workers) to every school in the district, regardless of school need or size.</i> ○ <i>It is common for experienced teachers to advocate for programming and receive funding through an informal process.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Resources are distributed to schools through a weighted formula that considers the enrollment of low-income students, special education, and English learners.</i> ○ <i>A systematic needs assessment drives staffing allocations across schools.</i> ○ <i>The district accounts for differences in teacher experience across schools with robust professional development (PD) funding for novice teachers.</i>

Level of Implementation			
Transparency	Minimal	Developing	High
Description of Implementation	<p>The district’s method for allocating resources to schools is not well understood outside of a select few district leaders, such that the district struggles to build trust and enable engagement.</p> <p>Opportunities to clarify resource allocation are limited to district-level financial presentations or web postings required by statute.</p>	<p>The district’s method for allocating resources to schools is well understood in some areas and by some stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Some elements of the resource allocation system remain unclear, contributing to a perception of inconsistency for some stakeholder groups.</p>	<p>The district’s method for allocating resources to schools is accessible and tailored to key stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Overall, the district makes a deliberate effort to provide transparency in resource allocation decisions, thereby building trust and enabling engagement.</p>
Possible Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knowledge of staffing or other resource allocation processes is limited to select staff in the central office. ○ Some stakeholder groups raise concerns around equity and fairness. ○ The district assumes the public is not interested in further resource allocation documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School budgets or grant allocations are determined by a transparent formula that is shared with school leaders. ○ School leaders can describe the parts of the resource allocation process they are involved in. ○ The district publishes visuals or documents on its webpage for some investment decisions, like large capital projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An up-to-date resource allocation formula that is accessible to appropriate staff drives the allocation of resources to schools. ○ The district’s website contains a high-level procedure document, formula, or description for resource distribution to schools. ○ District leadership hosts presentations for staff on resource allocation processes and financial decision-making.

Level of Implementation

Stakeholder Engagement	Minimal	Developing	High
Description of Implementation	<p>Based on available evidence, the district’s resource allocation system provides minimal opportunities for stakeholders, including school staff, families of students, and community members, to provide role-appropriate input on resource decisions.</p> <p>Existing opportunities for input are limited to activities required by federal grants or state statute.</p>	<p>The district’s resource allocation system allows opportunities for some but not all stakeholder groups to provide role-appropriate input on resource allocation decisions.</p> <p>Stakeholder input is inconsistently considered in resource allocation decisions, and outcomes are rarely communicated.</p>	<p>The district’s resource allocation system integrates specific, regular opportunities to gather role-appropriate input on resource allocation decisions from diverse stakeholders, including school staff, families of students, and community members.</p> <p>Stakeholder input is considered in the decision-making process and outcomes are communicated effectively.</p>
Possible Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Required consultations and presentations are not designed to elicit input from stakeholders.</i> ○ <i>The district assumes low attendance is due to limited interest in financial decision-making.</i> ○ <i>A lack of accessible and transparent documentation inhibits the district’s ability to engage stakeholders.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The district seeks case-specific input from stakeholder groups for investment decisions (e.g., new curriculum, capital projects).</i> ○ <i>Some stakeholders are routinely involved, but do not reflect the entire school population.</i> ○ <i>Surveys are distributed to gather input from the community on resource use, though response rates are uneven.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The district has longstanding stakeholder advisory groups that are regularly consulted on many topics, including resource allocation when relevant.</i> ○ <i>The district uses multiple methods to engage the community, focusing specifically on increasing input from groups typically uninvolved.</i> ○ <i>The district publishes a quarterly newsletter to share outcomes related to strategic investments with stakeholders.</i>

Level of Implementation

District Alignment	Minimal	Developing	High
Description of Implementation	<p>Based on available evidence, the district does not align budgetary decisions with School Improvement Plans (SIPs) or district goals and priorities.</p> <p>Resource usage patterns are not considered in conjunction with school outcomes, and variations in spending and other resources are difficult to explain.</p>	<p>There is evidence that the district has aligned budgetary decisions with some elements of SIPs or district goals and priorities, but the alignment is not consistent across schools.</p> <p>While the district considers resource usage in conjunction with goals, priorities, or feedback, it has not developed clear outcome measures to evaluate those investments.</p>	<p>There is clear evidence that the district aligns budgetary decisions with SIPs or district goals and priorities.</p> <p>The district regularly monitors resource patterns in conjunction with school outcomes to make responsive adjustments based on program performance and impact.</p>
Possible Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The district’s strategic plan describes many aspirational goals without concrete plans for realizing change over time.</i> ○ <i>Investments are not tied to or evaluated against outcome measures.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Some goals within the strategic plan have outcome measures affiliated with them, though they are not consistently evaluated.</i> ○ <i>School leaders regularly mention districtwide priorities in SIPs, communication with staff, and community outreach.</i> ○ <i>Some programs continue to be funded, though school leaders note they may no longer be effective.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The strategic plan is an up-to-date living document; priorities are assigned clear outcome measures, timelines, and owners.</i> ○ <i>Districtwide documentation is accessible to all staff and tracks progress on certain outcome measures (e.g., chronic absenteeism, test scores, survey results).</i> ○ <i>The district considers cost-equivalent programs to address an identified need before strategically investing.</i>