

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



EBF LEGISLATION

In 2017, the [Evidence-Based Funding for Student Success Act](#) was signed into law. It replaced one of the most regressive funding formulas in the country and was designed to address inequity in Illinois' school funding to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education.

THE 5-YEAR EVALUATIVE STUDY

The legislation calls for an evaluative study to be completed every five years by the EBF Professional Review Panel and submitted to the State Board of Education, the General Assembly, and the governor. It is intended to assess whether the EBF model is achieving state goals, including whether the formula is leading to the desired outcomes in student achievement, adequacy, and equity. See the full report [here](#).

Qualitative Analysis Methodology

District administrators, principals, and teachers from **87 schools** that saw academic improvement in ELA and math assessment scores from SY 2017-18 to SY 2018-19 **participated in interviews and completed a digital survey regarding their spending decisions**. Each of these districts were designated as Tier 1 in SY 2017-18, and academic improvement was determined by meeting the following criteria:

- Statistically significant increase in ELA and math assessment scores for all students.
- Each of the target student groups (Black, Hispanic/Latino, IEP, EL, and low income) either saw no decreases in proficiency or a narrowing of the achievement gap.

KEY FINDINGS

Interview participants were asked about the process of allocating new tier funding and prioritizing certain EBF cost factors included in the legislation for SY 2017-18 and SY 2018-19.



- According to the interviews, 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.
- Districts largely used the funds in a way that aligned with the cost factors outlined in the EBF formula. Instructional facilitators and core teachers were the most common Core Investments made by districts.

2022 5-YEAR EVALUATIVE STUDY

Top Three Investments by EBF Cost Factor Categories

Core Investments

The cost of staffing core positions such as core teachers, guidance counselor, and intervention teachers.

1. Core Teachers
2. Instructional Facilitators
3. Specialist Teachers

Per Student Investments

The cost for investments including gifted, professional development, and student activities.

1. Instructional Material
2. Computer and Tech Equipment
3. Professional Development

Additional Investments

The cost of staffing positions for special education, low-income students, and English learners.

1. Social Workers
2. Other Pupil Support Staff
3. Special Education Teachers

Prioritization of the **most urgent or impactful investments** was critical, as **districts remain far from full funding.**

“We were very thankful [for] the increases in EBF funding from General State Aid and what we had prior to that. But I think we were just at a point where we were moving to breaking even every year. And so that was just that extra push we needed so that we weren’t drawing on our reserves or looking for ways to save money.”

- District Administrator

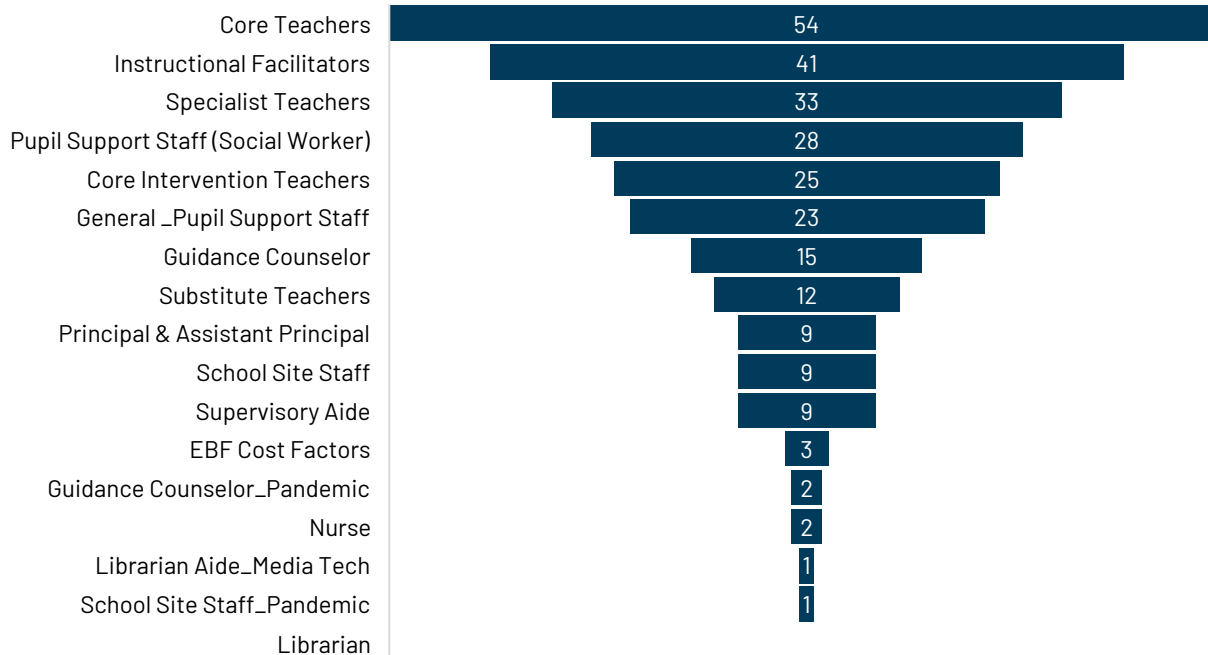
“I think the proof [and our data] is there that those items work, but we can’t afford it if the formula is not fully funded.”

- District Administrator

“I think the challenge was everybody was ready to move really quickly based on all this information. And we were only able to allocate this much in that first year... You’re looking at all of these needs and you’re saying we need EL, we need dual language, we need Special Ed support. We need additional administrative support. What do we pick first?”

- District Administrator

Most common Core Investments based on digital survey, interviews, and focus groups



8 out of **10** students in Illinois attend a district that operates **below 90% adequacy.**