

## **Illinois Teacher Equity Plan**

Illinois has a commitment to provide every student the opportunity to be supported by highly effective teachers and school leaders. Further, Illinois understands that the two most important components for providing student learning are effective teachers and school leaders. Therefore, Illinois is focusing on developing highly effective teachers and leaders who are prepared to work to meet the instructional needs of each child, including those who have special needs and/or are English Language/Bilingual learners whether they come from high-poverty schools or low-poverty schools. To meet the needs of its lowest performing schools, Illinois is focusing on preparing teachers and principals to focus on differentiated instruction, student learning, and school improvement. Ensuring that teachers and principals are highly prepared to work in high need schools (HNS) will help to reduce the inequity among schools. Additionally, providing induction, mentoring, and professional development programs that focus on instructional needs of children will further support student learning in HNS.

Illinois further contends that one of the strongest supports for ensuring that every child in schools with high-poverty and/or minority students will have highly qualified teachers and principals is to better prepare teachers and principals. Therefore, Illinois is and will continue to work towards changes to strengthen the preparation of teachers and leaders. Additionally, Illinois will establish incentives and initiatives to reduce the inequities between high-poverty and low-poverty schools so that every child will have the opportunity to learn from highly qualified and effective teachers.

Illinois' plan for teacher equity includes the following components:

### *Strengthening Professional Development:*

- Illinois will coordinate statewide efforts to provide professional development to high-needs districts in an attempt to reduce disparities in resources by allocating assistance to schools on the basis of need.
- The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will link evaluation of teachers and principals to student learning growth and school improvement and target areas for improvement

### *Support National Competency-Based Teacher standards attainment in High Need Schools.*

- Illinois will expand support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

### *Provide induction and mentoring for HNS*

- Illinois has instituted Beginning Teacher Induction Pilot Programs based on standards and will continue to expand.
- ISBE will continue to offer Principal Mentoring Programs and will expand to include a second year of mentoring.
- ISBE will institute Superintendent Mentoring Programs modeled after Principal Mentoring.

### *Establish Data Systems to track Teacher Data*

- ISBE will implement a new Longitudinal Data system that will interface with a redesigned Teacher Certification Information System (TCIS)/Educator Certification System (ECS) application and a redesigned Teacher Service Record (TSR) application. The two applications will be linked to produce information regarding Highly Qualified status of teachers.
- ISBE will implement a system that links teachers to student learning and preparation programs.

- ISBE will analyze data to determine effectiveness of preparation programs, induction and mentoring, and professional development to student learning.
- ISBE will collect and analyze data on principal mentoring to determine effectiveness.

*Establish Scholarship/Forgivable Loan/Alternative Programs for HNS Aspiring Teachers and Principals*

- Illinois will continue to support programs such as Golden Apple designed to recruit middle school and high school students to teach in high needs schools.
- Illinois will continue to support teacher scholarships and loan programs through the Illinois Student Assistance Commission in which recipients must each teach for five years in a hard-to-staff school or a shortage area.
- Illinois will support initiatives to recruit non-traditional students into teacher preparation programs who come from high need school communities and who will remain in local communities to teach for a minimum of 5 years after completion of programs.
- Illinois will continue to promote high-quality alternative route programs, such as Teach for America and the Academy for Urban School Leadership.
- Illinois will continue to support formal arrangements that enable high-needs districts to recruit and hire qualified international teachers.

*Eliminate Funding Inequities and Inadequacies Among Districts*

- Illinois will establish incentives to encourage highly effective teachers and principals to staff high need schools.
- Illinois will continue to expand access to highly qualified teachers through the use of distance learning through the Illinois Virtual High School statewide.
- Illinois will offer dual credit opportunities for students to have access to additional courses and to gain college credit while still in high school.

*Encourage Equitable Distribution of Experienced Teachers Across HNS*

- Continue to review and analyze data on the equitable distribution of teachers to develop systems to continue to reduce the number of “Not Highly Qualified” teachers.
- ISBE will continue to work with the Illinois Board of Higher Education to encourage institutions to train current teachers in high-minority and high-poverty schools who are certified and experience to become highly qualified.
- ISBE will work with the legislature to develop statutory changes and the funding necessary to provide incentives for effective teachers who teach in high need schools.

The equitable distribution of experienced teachers will be monitored by the External Assurances Division of ISBE through site visits conducted to monitor districts on many facets of No Child Left Behind.

## **ISBE Strategic Plan**

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) adopted a strategic plan in August 2009, which addresses, as one of its components, teacher equity. Goal 2 is “Every student will be supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.”

**GOAL:** Expand and improve the pool of highly qualified educators by supporting the preparation, recruitment and retention of educators with expertise both in content areas and instruction.

### **Strategic Objectives**

- Collaborate with higher education and other agencies to ensure educators have the preparation and background to teach successfully in rural and urban settings and work with at-risk students.
- Provide high quality induction and mentoring and professional development in “best practices” for teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators working in schools struggling to meet Adequate Yearly Progress.
- Work with higher education and other entities to redefine school leader preparation to focus on student learning and school improvement.
- Develop strategies to recruit, induct, mentor and retain educators to serve “hard-to-staff” schools for at least five years.
- Redefine teacher preparation to focus on the individual needs of students and strengthen content knowledge at both elementary and secondary levels so every teacher is better prepared.

### **Phase I – 2009-2010**

- Review existing approval and accreditation model for higher education preparation programs to ensure the ability of pre-service educators to work successfully with all students and collaborate with all partners to develop a new process.
- Establish rules for newly defined principal preparation programs that focus on student learning and school improvement.
- Raise passing score on state’s basic skills test to ensure educators entering preparation programs have stronger foundational knowledge.
- Set new endorsement requirements so that those seeking secondary endorsements must pass the state content test for the specific areas of endorsement.
- Revise the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards to focus on differentiated instruction and to emphasize the individual learner (including special education, English language/Bilingual, and gifted learners).
- Continue to expand induction and mentoring programs to support new teachers and administrators.
- Rewrite legislation to develop a new structure of licensure, redesign alternative programs, and strengthen professional development with a focus on student learning, student growth, and individual needs of every student.

### **Phase II – 2010-2012**

- Implement new requirements for principal preparation programs.
- Expand induction models based on standards to provide access to high-quality induction and mentoring programs by all new teachers in the state.
- Redesign professional development requirements to focus on strengthening the needs of teachers and school leaders with a focus on student learning and school improvement.
- Redefine teacher preparation to focus on content and the learning needs of each child (including emotional, cultural, and social needs) and to include enhanced clinical experiences.
- Work with other states to develop an evaluation system to measure effectiveness of teachers.

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