

Progress Report

June 2009

Illinois State Board of Education
**Comprehensive Strategic Plan
for Elementary and
Secondary Education**



Jesse H. Ruiz, Chairman
Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D., State Superintendent



Illinois State Board of Education

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Jesse H. Ruiz
Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

June 30, 2009

The Honorable Governor Pat Quinn
The Honorable Members of the Illinois General Assembly
State House
Springfield, Illinois

Re: Illinois State Board of Education Comprehensive Strategic Plan – **June 2009 Report**

Dear Governor Quinn and Members of the General Assembly:

In 2005, pursuant to Public Act 93-1036, the Illinois State Board of Education developed and submitted a five-year Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Elementary and Secondary Education in Illinois. The Plan focused on three primary goal areas: enhancing literacy; improving educator quality for all children; and expanding data-driven management and school support practices.

The Strategic Plan is meant to be an evolving document and as such the Illinois State Board of Education monitors progress on the initiatives and evaluates the Plan on an annual basis. Last August, the Board decided it was time to redevelop the Strategic Plan to better align its goals with the changing educational demands of preparing students for success in careers and college in the 21st Century.

In February 2009, the U.S. Congress passed and the President signed legislation to stimulate our nation's economy. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is providing \$2 billion in funds to Illinois schools through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, which is preventing additional cuts to Illinois' education budget. It is also providing an additional \$1 billion to local districts through federal formula funds. This comes at a time when Illinois students need these additional revenues most, as our state continues to struggle to pay its bills and our economy continues to falter.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education has a "Race to the Top" fund of more than \$4 billion. This "Race to the Top" fund will be administered through a competitive grant process between the 50 states and other educational entities. It is intended to promote innovation and invest in programs that drive education achievement increases.

As you will see in the following report the Board, through its strategic planning and investments, has placed Illinois in a strong position to receive federal funding from the State Fiscal Stabilization and the "Race to the Top" funds. Distribution of the "Race to the Top" funds will be based in part on assurances that Illinois had to make in order to access State Fiscal Stabilization funds. Illinois had to provide assurances to the federal government that we would commit to the following:

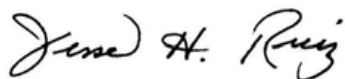
- Establish a longitudinal data system;
- Improve learning standards and develop quality assessments;
- Support struggling schools; and
- Improve teacher effectiveness and ensure equitable distribution of highly qualified teachers throughout the state.

The enclosed report details progress on the initiatives undertaken in FY 2009 supporting the Strategic Plan goals in this transition period. While there is much work to be done, there is good news to share about Illinois education.

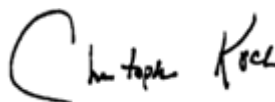
- The high school class of 2008 improved in all areas tested on the ACT college entrance exam.
- Nearly 70 percent of districts received the highest financial status recognition in 2007-2008, up from 40 percent in 2004.
- Nearly 1,000 schools earned a spot on the "Illinois Honor Roll" in recognition of the continued academic progress of their students in 2007-2008.
- 136 schools made two consecutive years of improving student achievement and were removed from the NCLB Watch List last fall.
- Illinois led the nation in access to preschool for three-year-olds.

The Board thanks you for your dedication to public education in Illinois. We look forward to working with you to as we implement our plan and its goals, each of which are focused on educational success for all students in Illinois.

Sincerely,



Jesse H. Ruiz, Chairperson
State Board of Education



Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

Strategic Plan Update

Illinois State Board of Education

Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Elementary and Secondary Education



Jesse H. Ruiz, Chairman
Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D., State Superintendent

Illinois State Board of Education Comprehensive Strategic Plan Initiatives

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) first developed a strategic plan in 2005 as required by Public Act 93-1036. The members of the Board take seriously the responsibility for the education of every student in Illinois and are excited to have been given this incredible, historic opportunity to make long term, invested changes in our state's education system. This is what our educators and students deserve and what our economy is demanding.

Members of the Board believe that the strategic plan should be revisited frequently. It essentially has remained unchanged since 2005. Today we have 475 employees and we are not the same agency we were in 2000, when we had nearly 800 employees. We are not the same agency as when this plan was conceived, for that matter we are not the same agency we were six months ago. Just as the agency evolves, so must our strategic plan.

Board members agree that this five-year look into the future should contain the goals and initiatives that drive the actions of the agency each and every day. As such, the strategic plan must be flexible enough to evolve with the changing needs and demands of the agency and education in general.

The Board decided last summer that they should revise the Strategic Plan and began by creating a new mission statement as follows:

The Illinois State Board of Education will provide leadership, assistance, resources and advocacy so that every student is prepared to succeed in careers and postsecondary education, and share accountability for doing so with districts and schools.

To support this mission statement, the Board agreed upon three broad goals that will provide focus to our work in the agency.

- Every student will demonstrate academic achievement and be prepared for success after high school.
- Every student will be supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.
- Every school will offer a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.

This new mission statement and fewer, clearer goals better reflect the priorities of the agency.

During the next year agency staff will be working to develop more comprehensive strategies that will enable the Board to better fulfill its mission and meet the goals it has set out for itself. Even as budget constraints weigh heavily on the minds of Board members and staff, the focus of the agency remains on the goals created by the Board in order to accomplish the mission it has laid out for itself. In doing so, the agency plans to move forward with continued implementation of the new goals in FY 2010.

Every student will demonstrate academic achievement and be prepared for success after high school.

During FY 2010 Board members will work with staff to continue the revision of the Illinois Learning Standards, as we work in partnership with 46 states and 3 U.S. territories on the Common Core State Standards Initiative to develop international benchmark for student learning. In addition, work will continue on the development of a longitudinal data system and policies, programs and practices that promote achievement in Illinois schools and eliminate achievement gaps.

We will work to strengthen the Statewide System of Support for all schools and districts. We will promote and identify strategies and policies that target interventions on the lowest performing schools, specifically concentrating on high schools where we have seen achievement remain stagnant.

Every student will be supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.

During FY 2010 Board members and staff will work with stakeholders to develop and implement policies that support quality standards for teacher and school leader mentoring programs. We will work to improve teacher quality through better preparation and clarifying the frameworks for recertification.

We will continue to work closely with our colleagues in Higher Education to improve teacher preparation programs. In working with stakeholders staff will develop and begin implementation of policies and procedures that support improved preparation programs that focus on instruction and student learning.

As we work to improve the preparation of new candidates entering the field, we will initiate efforts to evaluate and redesign the existing certification framework. Staff will also work with the field to establish redesigned expectations for certificate renewal.

Every school will offer a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.

The Board and agency staff will continue work to develop and implement policies, programs and practices that promote healthy lifestyles for students and reduce barriers to learning. The Board will build upon existing policies and programs as it works with stakeholders to eliminate dangerous situations in schools and in communities. The Board recognizes that to accomplish this goal, a collaborative approach with communities,

students and stakeholders is critical and we must continue to maintain open communications with these groups.

The Board is committed to investigating and prosecuting cases of educator misconduct. The Board will continue to refine existing policies and establish and implement processes that will allow for swift and appropriate action to be taken when evidence of misconduct can be substantiated.

Illinois' education infrastructure continues to age and become more of a concern as each and every year passes. In 2009, more than \$3 billion was needed for Health/Life Safety repairs and remodeling in Illinois schools. We will continue to work toward streamlining agency processes to assist school districts with respect to inspection, repair and other aspects of facility of safety.

Goal One—Every student will demonstrate academic achievement and be prepared for success after high school

Illinois Statewide Longitudinal P-20 Data System

ISBE received approval in April 2009 for a \$9 million federal grant to develop an Illinois Statewide Longitudinal P-20 Data System (ILDS). The multi-year project will establish



the technical and management systems necessary for ISBE and its education partners to manage, link, and analyze P-20 education data. Concurrently, ISBE worked with the Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Board of Higher Education and other stakeholders in developing legislation to implement a longitudinal data system.

ISBE is currently establishing a State Education Advisory Group (SEAG), a broad-based group of stakeholders that will advise ISBE and its education partners on data use and management. SEAG will establish a defined body responsible for advising on data coordination across agencies and the implementation of joint data activities.

The ILDS calls for the development of a data warehouse. This data warehouse will allow for all student-level data maintained by ISBE to be linked to other student-level data and K-12 education data. LEAs will be able to obtain numerous additional data reports and have expanded ability to perform data analyses using data maintained by ISBE. The agency will create a Data Mart, within the warehouse, specifically for federal reporting that draws data from multiple systems and significantly reduces the reporting burden on the SEA and LEAs.

ISBE and its education partners will build on existing efforts to enable use of the ISBE unique student identifier for linkages with postsecondary and employment data. ISBE and its education partners will also work to establish data-sharing agreements consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and state privacy protection laws that permit data sharing among ISBE, and postsecondary and employment systems.

The development of the ILDS will forever change the way we collect, store, and utilize education data. Development of the ILDS will continue through 2013.

Revising the Illinois Learning Standards

ISBE is committed to ensuring that each and every Illinois student has the opportunities and the support to graduate from high school fully prepared for success in postsecondary education and the workplace.

In October 2008, the Board, in partnership with the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, Office of the Governor, and the Illinois Business Roundtable, joined 33 states in the American Diploma Project (ADP). The purpose was to conduct both an external and internal review of the Illinois Learning Standards in English, Math and Science. Teams of secondary and postsecondary educators convene to compare the Illinois learning standards to the ADP exemplary standards and to clarify what it means to be ready for college success. The teams have been working to revise the Illinois standards and bring needed coherence between standards, curriculum, assessments, and college entry requirements.

As Illinois was engaged in this review process, a national effort led by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA) provided Illinois with an opportunity to join 45 states and 3 territories to create common rigorous academic standards in math and English language arts. A primary goal of this partnership is to eliminate the patchwork of academic standards across the country that result in students in the same grades learning different items in different states. The effort also is intended to devise a more rigorous set of academic targets that are internationally benchmarked. This work will result in a common core of standards that states can voluntarily adopt. Illinois may choose to include additional standards as long as the common core represents at least 85 percent of the State's Standards in English language arts and mathematics.



The common core of state standards will enable Illinois to:

- Articulate to parents, teachers, and the general public clear expectations for student learning.
- Align textbooks, digital media, and curricula to internationally benchmarked standards.
- Support professional development that is based on identified need and best practices.
- Develop and implement an assessment system to measure student performance against the common core.
- Evaluate policy changes needed to help students and educators meet the common core standards and “end of high school” expectations.

Illinois citizens will have the opportunity to review and comment on the standards throughout the development process beginning in July 2009. The common core of state standards is expected to be completed later this year.

P-21 Partnership

ISBE joined the P-21 State Leadership Network because of our commitment to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary for today's students to be successful in tomorrow's workplace. We must incorporate 21st century skills and

expectations into the learning opportunities of all students and infuse these attributes throughout our educational system.

Learning academic content in core areas is of utmost importance, however, we expect our schools to instill in students a love of knowledge and learning, the ability to think critically and employ analytical and technical skills, a sense of pride in accomplishment, the ability to interact with and within other cultures, and an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy.



As we review and revise the Illinois learning standards, we will be intentional about examining both the depth and sequence of the content and real world applications and linkages between the subjects.

We will be working closely with our stakeholders, including employers to help guide and inform this work.

CTE Curriculum Revitalization

ISBE is working with Career/Technical Education (CTE) stakeholders to revitalize CTE curriculum to infuse courses with 21st century literacy skills and meet core academic requirements. This initiative, which is a partnership between ISBE, the Facilitating Council for Agricultural Education, Illinois Office of Education Services and the Center for Agricultural Research and Training, is being carried out by the Career and Technical Education division.

The project, now in its fourth year, develops online tools that allow teachers to plan standards-based instruction, document the standards their curriculum addresses, deliver it via an online format that is attractive to today's students, and assess student performance relative to the standards. The test data generated enables teachers and administrators to address areas of deficiency for individual students. Any Illinois teacher can access and use the online tools free of cost.

The project involves continuous consultation with educators and business/industry leaders from across Illinois and includes professional development activities.

Spanish Language Arts Standards

The Illinois State Board of Education is dedicated to providing educators with tools that assist them in meeting the needs of English language learners (ELLs). Research into best practice for ELLs supports the notion that students benefit when they have



foundational literacy skills in their first language and when schools incorporate their primary language and culture into the classroom.

Illinois worked in collaboration with the departments of education in Delaware, Wisconsin, and Washington D.C., the Illinois Resource Center, and the George Washington University Center for Equity & Excellence in Education to develop the WIDA Spanish Language Arts (SLA) Standards. The Standards were developed by a group of teachers and administrators with vast language experience who used the Reading Language Arts Standards from their states, as well as their own knowledge, to inform and guide their work.

There is tremendous diversity in the type of programs offering instruction in Spanish to students and the students in these programs are equally diverse. Some are new arrivals to the United States with little or no knowledge of English, others are U.S. born native speakers of Spanish who present a wide range of proficiency in Spanish, while others are students that are native English speakers learning Spanish as a second language. The SLA Standards do not differentiate among all the groups of students but rather include the language competencies all students studying in Spanish, whether it be their native or other language, need to become fully proficient in the language. The rationale for developing the Standards in this manner is as follows.

Rationale:

- Acknowledge the growing numbers of programs serving school-age Spanish speakers in US schools.
- Establish rigorous and comprehensive standards that are comparable to and align with existing state English language arts standards.
- Foster the development of bilingual/ biliterate individuals so that they may contribute to the increasingly diverse workforce and global society.
- Offer educators practical ways to translate the body of research that supports the cognitive and academic advantages of being bilingual into their teaching practices.
- Fulfill the need for teachers and administrators to have SLA standards in this age of accountability.

The SLA Standards were developed for educators at all levels. They are intended to provide a framework for instruction and assessment at the program as well as the classroom level. The overall uses include guiding development of curriculum, providing continuity of SLA instruction across grades, anchoring assessment and instruction in settings where Spanish is the medium of instruction and serving as benchmarks for stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators and Boards of Education.

In January 2006, the Spanish Language Arts Standards were introduced at the State Bilingual Conference, reproduced, and distributed to all districts and Regional Offices of Education. ISBE continues to work with the Illinois Resource Center to provide

workshops and updates on the SLA Standards throughout the state and at the annual Bilingual State Conference.

Increasing access for all students

ISBE increased the use of available accommodations for students identified as limited English Proficient in its state standardized assessments. The Board chose to do this in order to make state assessments accessible to all students.

Three new accommodations were made available on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test:

- Linguistically modified forms were developed for the mathematics and science assessments. Approximately 40,000 students used this accommodation. Linguistically modified items are not easier than their counterparts. Rather, they are simply more accurate in their measurement of the content being assessed. Linguistic modification reduces or eliminates unnecessary complex language that interferes with students' abilities to demonstrate content knowledge.
- The mathematics short answer and extended response items were translated into Spanish.
- Students were allowed to respond to the mathematics and reading short answer and extended response items in Spanish. Approximately 8,500 students took advantage of this accommodation.



One new accommodation was added to the Prairie State Achievement Examination:

- A translated version of the PSAE was expected to be utilized by between 500-1000 students. The audio DVD in Spanish was made available for the mathematics and science portions.

Drop-Out Prevention Initiative

Annually, more than 41,000 Illinois students drop-out of school and it is estimated that the number of young people between the ages of 16-24 is as high as 250,000. The State Board of Education believes there is a social imperative to change the dialogue so that every student has the opportunity to achieve his or her educational potential.

In partnership with State Farm Insurance and other key stakeholders, the State Board of Education will host the first Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit in November 2009. The summit will bring together key stakeholders to examine the data and initiate the development of statewide and regional plans to address this issue.

A student summit is schedule for August and the issues, concerns, and suggestions identified by Illinois students will serve as a foundation for the Leadership Summit.

Pre-School for All

In 2009, the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) named Illinois a national leader for its state-funded preschool program, based on quality, funding, and access. With the implementation of Preschool for All, Illinois became the first state in



the nation to include 3-year-olds in a universal preschool program. Illinois includes a set-aside in the preschool funding for services to children in the birth-to-three age range. Currently 11 percent of the total funds are used to provide intensive services to infants and toddlers living in high-risk families.

Illinois became the first state in the nation to include 3-year-olds in a universal preschool program when Preschool for All was signed into law in July 2006. In 2008, Preschool for All was extended through 2010. Nearly 20,000 children have been served in the first 3 years of funding, bringing the total number of children served in state-funded preschool programs to almost 95,000 in FY 2009.

A multi-year statewide system evaluation of the effectiveness of state-funded early childhood programs was launched in FY 2008. The study will provide information on the implementation of state-funded programs, and their effectiveness in improving school readiness and later outcomes for young children. That project was ongoing in FY 2009, and will conclude in FY 2011.

Continue to Identify Issues Specific to Kindergarten

ISBE, together with public and private sector partners, is convening a group to study the possibility of a statewide kindergarten readiness assessment. Ultimately, the group will seek input from kindergarten teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders. ISBE continues to maintain the Kindergarten Corner on our website, providing a number of resources about kindergarten and resources for kindergarten teachers.

The Illinois State Response to Intervention (RtI) Plan

ISBE believes that increased student learning requires the consistent practice of providing high quality instruction matched to student needs. Response to Intervention (RtI), introduced in January 2008, is a general education instructional initiative which requires collaborative efforts from all district staff, general educators, special educators and bilingual/ELL staff. In a quality educational environment, student academic and behavioral needs must be identified and monitored continuously with documented student performance data used to make instructional decisions.

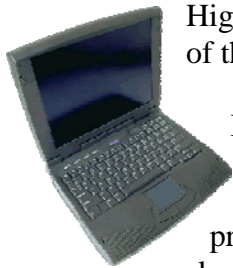
The process of identifying learning needs and providing appropriate and timely instruction is foundational to a successful education system. The success of all students toward the Illinois Learning Standards is improved when instructional and behavioral goals are frequently monitored. Data derived from such monitoring should then inform instructional strategies gauged to enhance success. It is important to note that it is through the continuous use of progress monitoring and analysis of student academic and behavioral growth that proper instructional and curricular responses may be made.

During FY 2009, districts submitted RtI Plans through the Illinois Interactive Report Card website using the District Improvement Plan templates. ISBE staff has been working to review all RtI Plans and providing Illinois districts with feedback for improvement.

ISBE staff members continue to provide workshops and technical assistance to Illinois schools and districts in their transition to a system of RtI. In late spring 2009, ISBE issued a Request for Sealed Proposals (RFSP) to develop thirteen professional development modules to support RtI implementation matching the Illinois model. Work on these modules is underway with both direct training and online courses versions of materials available by August 2009.

Expand Access within Illinois Virtual High School

In 2008, ISBE began to explore expanding access and offerings within the Illinois Virtual High School network issued a RFSP for new administration and management of the Illinois Virtual School (IVS).



In addition to new and improved course offerings for Illinois students, the redesigned IVS will conduct a thorough review and assessment of existing coursework for alignment to the Illinois Learning Standards and provide online professional development coursework for Illinois teachers and administrators.

In 2008, 4,024 learners were served by the IVS through the 95 courses offered.

Goal Two—Every student will be supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders

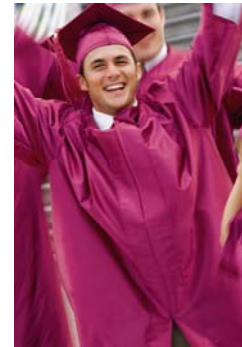
High School Reform Initiatives

The State Board of Education is working on several fronts to improve student performance in our high schools, through our work with Successful Practices Network, our partnerships with the High Schools that Work consortium, and Project Lead the Way.

ISBE joined the Successful Practices Network (SPN), an initiative within the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE), to provide several high schools with technical assistance and professional development.

In fall 2005, the Gates foundation, working with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), engaged ICLE and SPN to choose several states and work with a few high schools in each state to assist in transforming them from “Promising Schools” to “Proven Schools.” The initiative is in the fourth of its five years. Since 2005, ICLE has provided regular contact with the schools, including technical assistance visits with targeted interventions.

The High Schools that Work consortium, is an organization committed to improving student performance in low-performing and urban high schools while raising standards in career and technical education.



Through Project Lead the Way (PLTW), in co-operation with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, ISBE supports the advancement of mathematics, science, and pre-engineering instruction in 62 Illinois high schools. PLTW has a 4-year sequence of courses which, when combined with college prep mathematics and science courses in high schools, introduces students to the scope, rigor, and discipline of engineering and engineering technology prior to entering college.

The University of Illinois is a critical partner and provides comprehensive professional development for teachers and counselors.

In addition to ongoing reform work, Illinois was recently selected by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) to be one of three states to participate in a project that will assist in the development of a comprehensive plan for improving student performance in Illinois high schools, especially our persistently under-performing high schools. Working collaboratively with our postsecondary and private sector partners we are developing a comprehensive statewide plan with a cohesive educational framework that clearly delineates policies, infrastructure, initiatives, and support for Illinois high schools.

Scaling up of Evidence-based Practices

Illinois was one of four states nationwide selected to participate in the U.S. Department of Education’s State Implementation of Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices. Illinois is participating in the “Active Scaling States” category, which is for those states that are fully engaged in capacity building for scaling up.

The purpose of the State Implementation of Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices (SISEP) Center is to promote students’ academic achievement and behavioral health by supporting implementation and scaling-up of evidence-based practices in education settings. SISEP will provide the critical content and foundation for establishing a technology of large-scale, sustainable, high-fidelity implementation of effective educational practices. SISEP will work with selected states to improve their capacity to carry out implementation, organizational change, and systems transformation strategies to maximize achievement outcomes of all students in each state.

This initial year of implementation is focused on identifying as many challenges and barriers to statewide implementation as possible, to ensure the development of an effective and efficient statewide infrastructure to deliver evidence-based practices. The first Regional Implementation Team is beginning implementation in 12 schools located in four Central Illinois districts. They will continue to service up to at least 50 schools within the four Central Illinois districts. Following successful implementation in the 50 schools, additional teams will be formed to replicate the integrated system for delivering technical assistance across the state.

It is expected that Illinois will need approximately 30-35 Regional Implementation Teams around the state to support SISEP implementation in every school.

Principal Mentoring

The purpose of the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program is to provide new principals with the individualized mentoring support they need to successfully transition into effective leaders, and to improve the retention rate of principals in Illinois schools.



ISBE contracted with the Illinois Principals Association to manage and implement the program during the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years. Services were provided to 425 new principals statewide, which includes 65 new Chicago Public School principals, and 360 new principals outside the Chicago Public School District.

Each mentor:

- Successfully completes the initial training and all ongoing professional development activities;
- Dedicates sufficient time (no less than 50 hours) to mentoring to meet program requirements and serve the needs of the new principal;
- Is available to the new principal as specified by mentoring entity expectations and the needs of the new principal;
- Creates, develops and maintains an effective, professional mentoring relationship with the new principal;
- Documents the types and duration of mentoring activities and outcomes;
- Makes regular reports of status and progress in the mentoring process to the appropriate mentoring entity and ISBE; and
- Completes a final evaluation report as required by the mentoring entity and ISBE.

Through the mentoring process, new principals are matched with an experienced principal who provides on-the-job guidance and helps principals develop competencies in a broad array of leadership skills and practices aimed at improving teaching and learning in their schools. The mentoring relationship provides focused and rigorous support to the new principal that is designed to result in increased student performance.

New Principal Mentoring—Early Childhood

ISBE has targeted principals for professional development in Early Childhood Education, building on the information from the Kindergarten Focus Groups and in collaboration with the Illinois Principals Association, we have conducted two trainings for elementary school principals. In 2008, through a partnership with the Regional Offices of Education Early Childhood Committee, the Early Childhood Administrators Academy training was updated and will be offered in partnership with IPA in FY10.

First-Year Teacher Support



ISBE continues to collaborate with higher education, Regional Offices of Education, the Illinois Education Association, Illinois Federation of Teachers, and other entities to support new teacher induction and mentoring. Illinois Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs have been developed to set a framework to assist in the development of mentoring programs designed to meet the needs of new teachers and focus on improved instruction and student learning.

ISBE continues to support the Beginning Teacher Induction Programs. In FY 2007, \$2 million dollars was appropriated to establish pilot programs in order to ascertain best practices for induction and mentoring of first and second year teachers. Ten pilots were funded at varying amounts ranging from approximately \$50,000 to \$375,000. Through an

Intergovernmental Agreement, the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC) was charged with oversight of the pilots. In addition, INTC produces a year-end report that summarizes the work of the programs and denotes strengths and weaknesses of the various models in order to identify best practices. The number of programs has grown over the last two years and in FY 2009 a total of 67 programs are being supported which focus on mentoring programs to support improved instruction of new teachers. INTC continues to provide oversight of the programs. Data is being collected by INTC, SRI International, and the Illinois Education Research Council to further study the selection of mentors, training of mentors, types of programs, how mentoring is being implemented, and how programs impact retention of teachers and support of instruction.

Develop Framework for Induction and Mentoring

The agency reviewed the existing induction models in order to develop a framework to provide high quality induction and mentoring programs for access by all new teachers in the state.

Ten pilot projects were funded in order to foster intensive induction and mentoring models and study their results. The Illinois New Teacher Collaborative provided technical assistance and support to the ten projects.

In FY09, there were 39 continuation and 28 new Beginning Teacher Induction (BTI) applications funded. The total FY09 funding for 67 programs is \$10,273,488. Administrative Agents for these programs include 38 school districts, 22 regional offices of education, four institutions of higher education and 3 other program administrative models. The programs are located throughout the state with 31 programs north of I-80, 21 programs centrally located, and 9 programs south of I-70. There are now approximately 4,187 new teachers being mentored in 323 Illinois school districts. There are 3,018 first year teachers and 1,169 second year teachers represented in the total. Illinois has 2,761 mentors serving first and second year teachers through the Beginning Teacher Induction program.

Bilingual Teacher Recruitment

The Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) began as a partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain and ISBE in 1999. The purpose of the partnership(s) is to enhance understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries through educational and cultural exchanges. The benefits of this program include: improving the instructional skills of Spanish and bilingual teachers within the State of Illinois and provide highly qualified teachers to address the need for teachers in various instructional areas.

In an effort to address the lack of needed bilingual teachers in the State of Illinois, the critical need for highly qualified



foreign language arts and reading teachers, and instruction in the history and culture of the English Language Learning students' native countries, ISBE began exploring the development of additional international exchange programs with other countries, targeting the languages spoken in the bilingual education programs statewide.

In 2007, ISBE researched and evaluated the scope of activities needed to recruit teachers from Mexico and in January 2008, ISBE formalized the MOU with Mexico's Chicago Consulate offices to expand the Exchange Visitor Program.

To date, 497 teachers from Spain and Mexico have participated in the EVP.

Statewide System of Support

ISBE created the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) to provide assistance to schools and districts that fail to meet the state's academic performance expectations. The system currently consists of a network of 10 entities spanning 10 regions in the state, and also includes the Illinois Association of School Administrators, the Illinois Principals Association, and the Illinois Association of School Boards.

Through the SSOS ISBE assists schools and districts in their efforts to increase student achievement and ensure that all students graduate with the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to be successful in college and careers.

Assistance provided through the Statewide System of Support includes programs and processes representing best practices in four improvement areas.

- Data analysis and school and district improvement planning.
- Standards aligned curriculum, instruction and classroom assessment.
- Teacher and administrator enhancement.
- Student, family and community support services.

Services are individualized based on the needs of the individual school and district.

In the 2007-2008 school year, 791 schools were in school improvement status under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In that same year, 113 schools showed sufficient progress to have their improvement status frozen, while 33 schools were removed entirely from improvement status.

Goal Three—Every school will offer a safe and healthy learning environment for all students

Educator Misconduct

ISBE has made it a priority over the past two years to provide agency staff with the resources to investigate evidence of teacher and administrator professional misconduct. Historically, the agency has not had the internal resources for these types of investigations, nor has there been an effective reporting mechanism for the agency to be notified when accusations of misconduct arise.



Within the past year, ISBE has made great strides to address educator misconduct. In FY09, for the first time and at the specific request of the State Board, the agency budget included a dedicated line item to address “Educator Misconduct.” The line item was for \$375,000. With funds from this line item, ISBE has been able to retain an outside legal firm to handle investigations of alleged educator misconduct and, where appropriate, to prosecute matters before hearing officers. For FY10, the State Board again requested a dedicated line item for “Educator Misconduct” in the amount of \$450,000.

Additionally, during FY09, the State Board adopted as one of its legislative proposals SB 2071 which recently passed both chambers. This bill, among other things:

- clarifies and streamlines the investigation and hearing system;
- improves the reporting of information of actual and possible misconduct to the State Board; and
- adds training requirements for school districts related to educator ethics and teacher-student conduct.

The State Board and Agency staff continue to make sure that allegations of educator misconduct are reviewed, investigated, and, where appropriate, prosecuted, so that individuals found to have engaged in misconduct are sanctioned.

Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning

School districts face an ever-increasing list of potential risks and hazards in their school buildings. Educators must learn to not simply react to these incidents but to plan for a variety of threats and to respond as a well-trained team. In nearly every school crisis educators are the first responders. Once rescuers arrive on the scene, educators continue to play an integral role in responding to the incident.

Since 2005, ISBE has sponsored more than 120 training sessions, reaching more than 800 public school districts in Illinois, or about 92 percent of all districts in the state. More than 5,300 Illinois educators have attended one or two-day safety sessions as part of the ISBE’s “Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Illinois Schools.” In addition, ISBE has

also trained educators in more than 371 non-public schools and we will continue to expand training for our non-public Illinois schools in the coming year.

School officials and local emergency responses can attend a one-day training which covers the mandates of the School Safety Drill Act, including formation of school-based emergency management teams and responses to critical incidents. They can also attend a more intense two-day course. The curriculum for these trainings is continually updated to reflect the best research and practices of the day.

Schools Cooperating with Local Law Enforcement

Efforts to keep our students safe require districts to build and maintain close relationships with their community responders as they run the law enforcement drills required under the School Safety Drill Act and respond to any variety of critical incidents, whether it be a bomb threat or a rumors of a gun on school property.



In 2007, ISBE reached out to the Regional Offices of Education to encourage them to submit their building floor plans to the Illinois State Police. To date, the Illinois State Police have received the floor plans of more than 3,600 schools – or about 94 percent of all schools in the state. The State Police have transferred those floor plans to computers to allow first responders a quick and accessible view of campus grounds during an emergency.

Health Life Safety Processing System

ISBE unveiled in January 2008, the new electronic Health Life Safety Processing System (HLS), which has allowed the agency to eliminate the backlog of Ten Year Safety



Surveys. The system has allowed the agency to maintain amendment processing of the 10 Year Safety Surveys Current as well.

The system has improved coordination and communication between the field and ISBE by allowing architects, district personnel, regional superintendents, and ISBE staff to communicate, submit, track and approve/deny system documents through the ISBE IWAS system. Documents

include 10-year surveys, amendment data for school district buildings and annual inspection reports, among others.

Over the past year in-house modifications to the HLS to accept the type code in each LEAs region, county, district, type code. This allows for the electronic processing of Ten Year Safety Surveys and Amendments for cooperatives. The system was also modified so

that regional superintendents could process some of their required forms electronically as well.

If the regional superintendent or ISBE staff disapproves an amendment or a 10-year survey, it will automatically be sent back to the architect/engineer along with a comment for modification. After it is modified, it can be sent through the electronic process for approval. The system will also keep electronic copies of field paperwork that can be retrieved and reviewed at any time as necessary. The system tracks fire prevention and other safety concerns. The system has a facilities inventory report that will reflect all the buildings in each district, their square footage, and the additions and year built.

Healthy Eating Habits

ISBE is promoting healthy eating habits for students throughout Illinois by participating in the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, Special Milk, and After-School Snack Programs. The agency also promotes safe meals by offering the workshops to schools participating in the National School Lunch Program that emphasize developing and implementing food safety guidelines and accommodating children with special dietary needs, such as food allergies.

Last year, 190 million lunches, 48 million breakfasts, 19 million milks, and nearly 4 million snacks were served through Illinois schools. Of those, 120 million lunches, 41 million breakfasts, 19 millions milks, 3.5 million snacks, were provided at free and reduced costs to students, many of whom the school meals maybe their only meals.

During FY 2009 ISBE introduced the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) to Illinois. The FFVP is funded through a \$2.2 million federal grant and provides 141 schools and tens of thousands of students across the state, increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

The 141 schools participating in Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program will share equally in the funding based on each school's student enrollment numbers. The program requires the same amount, about \$50, be allocated for each student in participating schools. Program funding runs through June 30, 2010.

FFVP provides all students in participating schools access to a variety of free fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. It allows schools to make available the additional produce anytime during the regular school day, except during breakfast and lunch when the School Lunch and Breakfast Programs are in effect.



The idea is to expose students to lifelong healthy eating habits. For example, schools can incorporate nutrition education into numerous daily classroom activities such as math,

health, geography and science, by developing lesson plans involving fruits and vegetables.

According to the Fruits & Vegetables – More Matters, a public health initiative sponsored by Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), over half of all elementary students nationwide eat no fruit on any given day and one-quarter of all vegetables eaten by elementary students are French fries. The initiative encourages children and adults alike to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables.



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