Illinois Needs Assessments (ILNA)

An Update for the Balanced Accountability Measure (IBAM) Committee

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IBAM Committee Meeting | October 2024

Agenda

1. Needs Assessments Overview

2. Year 1 Feedback (School Year 2023–24)

3. Year 2 Approach (School Year 2024–25)

4. Questions?

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Needs Assessments Overview

School Visits Across the State

- **280** schools in **87** school districts:

  - Schools designated for comprehensive and intensive support in the 2022–23 school year by the state accountability system

  - Needs assessment visits conducted February through May 2024

  - School reports provided after visits for use in school improvement plan development

Legend
- Elementary (175)
- High (40)
- Middle (65)
- Regions
- Districts

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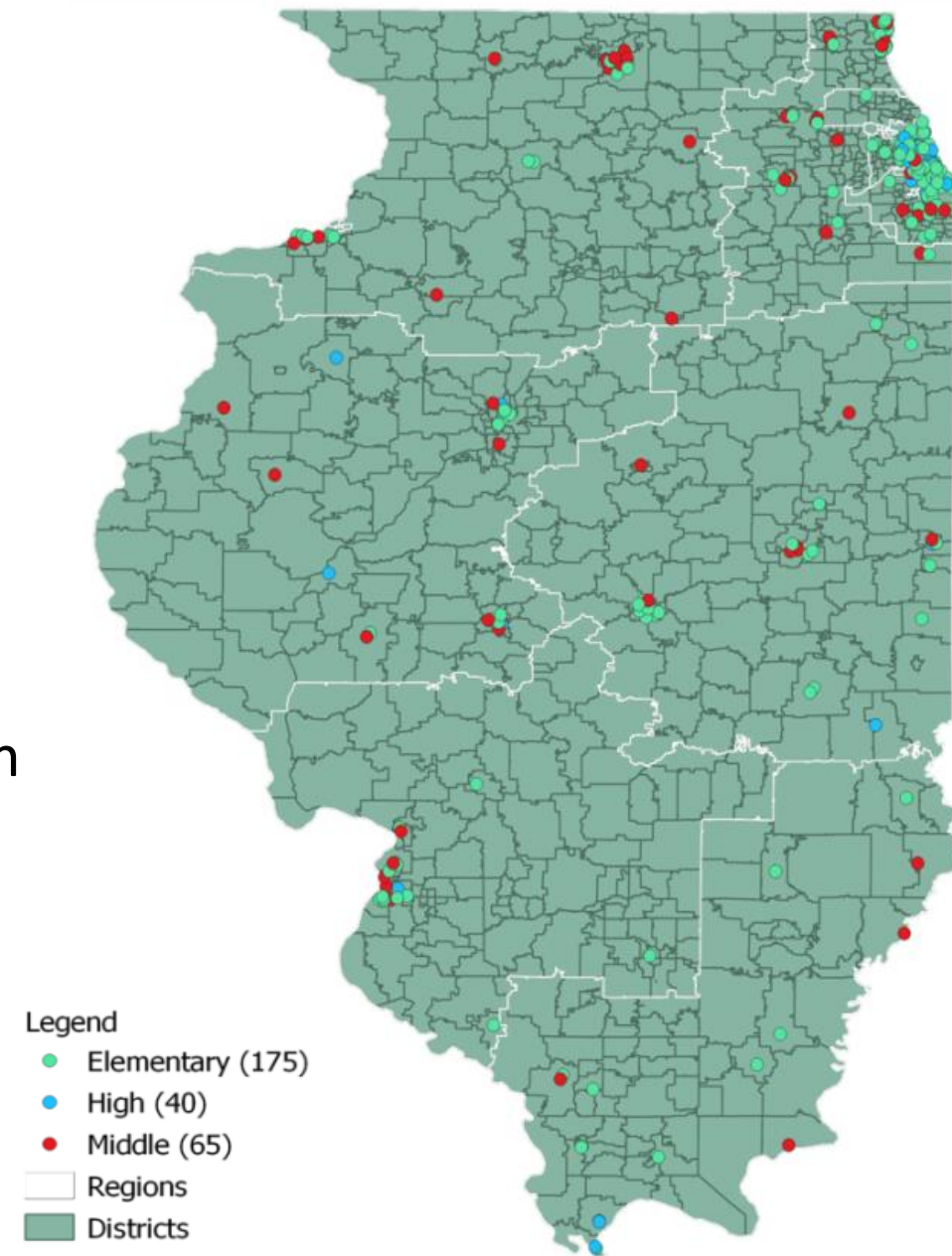
Purpose of Needs Assessments

- Provide schools and districts with **data** on and **information** about their **strengths** and areas for school **improvement**.

- **Support** schools in **making strategic decisions** during the school improvement planning process.

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School Improvement Areas

- **Leadership and Vision.** The school has established a community of practice based on distributed leadership, shared responsibility for all students, and professional collaboration.

- **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.** The school employs intentional practices for improving teacher-specific and student-responsive curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

- **Culture and Climate.** The school provides a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and a collegial, collaborative, and professional culture among teachers.

- **Targeted Instruction and Support.** The school is able to provide student-specific supports and interventions informed by data and the identification of student-specific needs.

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Incorporation of IBAM's Initial Recommendations

- Needs assessments include **multiple types of data**, which align to accountability indicators and frameworks.

- Reports to schools and districts include identification of **strengths** and **areas for growth.**

- Surveys and focus groups incorporate **school leader** and **instructional school staff perspectives**; in intensive support schools, **student perspectives** are also included through a focus group of students who are in Grades 6–12.

- **Existing administrative data** are also analyzed, including the **5Essentials** Survey data, to contribute additional information about school strengths and areas for growth.

- Needs assessment questions are organized around the local school level and provide actionable information to schools for planning.

Elements of Data Collection

Staff Survey Data

This survey was for instructional staff only.

Principal Survey/ Interview

Additional administrators as relevant were included, and survey could be completed on-site.

Classroom Observations

Ten or more classrooms were observed.

Staff Focus Groups

Groups were scheduled based on school and site team availability.

Student Focus Groups*

Schools identified, recruited, and collected parent consent forms from students.

Student focus groups were only for Intensive schools serving Grades 6–12.

Key Deliverables: School Report

Provided within 6–10 weeks of the completion of all data collection activities

Contains comprehensive summary of insights, including analysis of new and existing data

Formatted to be easy to read and can be shared with school leadership teams and staff, as well as district leaders, to inform improvement efforts

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Year 1 Feedback (School Year 2023–24)

ISBE Coordinator Feedback

Areas of strength:

- **Data collected and reports; collaboration between AIR staff and ISBE team members**

"The focus group interviews were insightful, and I think the information gathered really added context to the final report."

"The majority of my schools were pleased with the report produced. The information collected and compiled was informative for some and confirming for others."

"I feel that my meetings went very well. The AIR staff were well prepared, and we worked well together to support the schools."

"All of the schools that I worked with this year stated that the site visits were good experiences. They enjoyed hosting the staff from AIR."

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ISBE Coordinator Feedback

Areas for Year 2 improvements:

- **Increase coordination between ISBE coordinators and AIR teams.**

- **Increase time at schools to allow for more support and flexibility during data collection.**

  "Scheduling was challenging for some schools due to the proposed timing of the site visit, especially when district calendars change or demands arise."

- **Reduce turnaround time for report provision.**

  "The timeliness of completion of the report and getting it to the district and ISBE Coordinator. I do understand that you need to have a process and protocol to make sure the report is accurate and reflective of what was observed and data gathered."

- **Provide additional resources.**

  "Provide an explanation of the observation tool and process."

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Principal Feedback

Areas of strength:

- **Value and usefulness of data and report**

"The data was helpful for our SIP plan in providing specifics."

"It confirmed my own findings, which helps to have more data that shows what we are doing well and what we need to work on."

"The day of observations and collection of data and evidence was successful. The debriefing meeting to discuss the findings and results was informative and successful. The information provided will be utilized to drive the next steps in planning our school improvement action plan."

"Report was thorough, and the reflection questions were incredibly helpful."

"The report and data debrief supported our understanding of the next steps to move forward in our planning."

"I appreciate the thoroughness of the report. The findings all aligned with other data points we had."

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Principal Feedback

Areas for Year 2 improvements:

- **Timing in provision of reports**

"Took a long time to get the report."

"Receiving the results was longer process than expected. It took over two months and the school year was ending. I do believe that the report will be helpful for us in our improvement process."

"The length of time to receive feedback was longer than anticipated."

Year 2 Approach (School Year 2024–25)

Preparation/Continuous Improvement Efforts for Year 2

- To address the need to produce reports more quickly, teams will **complete reports prior to conducting the next cycle of visits**. This will reduce the amount of time between the school visit and the final report being provided to schools.

- We will **maintain the report format**, including the detailed descriptions of the data summaries.

- We are **adding additional resources** to provide to school leaders, team, and districts related to the collected data, including the classroom observation framework we use.

- We will **increase collaboration with the ISBE coordinators** to ensure schools receive the most comprehensive and seamless support related to the school improvement planning process.

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Continued Focus on Alignment: Needs Assessment Process and School Improvement Process

AIR and ISBE:

- **Meet weekly** to ensure there is consistent communication to schools and districts.

- **Review tools, resources**, **and communication** prior to dissemination to schools.

- **Coordinate requests** for existing administrative **data** to inform the preparation and analysis of the needs assessment summary report.

- **Monitor progress** of needs assessment activities through **Airtable (live technology).**

- **Collaborate** to ensure that **schools feel supported, heard, and understood** by being responsive to their questions or concerns.

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Questions?

Thank you

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