

ISBE's Weekly Message

August 6, 2024

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Evidence-Based Funding Allocations

Dear Colleagues:

Seven years ago this month, I attended the bill signing for the Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) for Student Success Act. My weekly message to District U-46 at that time was titled “Funding Reform Bill Signing!!!” -- with three exclamation points! I wrote that I was proud to be part of pushing to change Illinois’ broken funding formula and to usher in a new era of stable and reliable revenue from the state.

I am incredibly proud of the progress Illinois has made since 2017 to keep its promise of making steady increases toward adequately funding every district. The state’s investments in EBF positioned Illinois districts to survive the COVID-19 pandemic better than almost every other state and to sustain growth in the post-COVID period.

ISBE has released the [district-by-district Evidence-Based Funding allocations](#) for fiscal year 2025, and once again, every district in the state will receive an increase in funding. I believe our lawmakers and governor deserve credit for their commitment to education – at the same time, I recognize that our schools are not fully funded yet.

The progress we have made as a state is undeniable. We have traveled light-years since the dark days of proration, budget cuts, and borrowing to keep schools open. The formula that we can be proud to have in place prioritizes the highest-need districts and continually raises the funding floor. In FY 2018, the first year of EBF, 430 districts were struggling to get by with funding below 70% adequacy. Now, in FY 2025, that number has dropped to just 49 districts.

The formula also is responsive to changes in local needs – such as an influx of English learners, which would raise a district’s Adequacy Target – and changes in local resources, such as a dip in local revenues from the Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax. The responsiveness of the Tier Funding calculation gives us a fair way to distribute increases in funding to the districts in the greatest need.

I am committed to continuing to push for consistency in meeting the original commitment of a \$350 million per year increase in EBF because the effects of that commitment and the progress we have seen to date have been transformative in closing the equity gap in education in Illinois.

You can view each district’s Percentage of Adequacy and EBF allocation for FY 2025 on the [ISBE EBF Distribution webpage](#) and read our [press release about FY 2025 EBF](#).

Pictured: Chicago Public Schools Med STEM students who participated in six-week paid internships exploring medical careers recently presented their capstone projects, which addressed health equity challenges in their communities.

All my best,
Tony

DATES AND DEADLINES

Please note this is not a complete list of events, meetings, and deadlines. For more events and details, visit the [ISBE Calendar page](#).

Aug. 8	Webinar: CTE Lesson Materials - Evaluation Tool (virtual)
Aug. 13	Webinar: Illinois Office of Broadband Meet & Greet with Illinois School Superintendents
Aug. 15	Deadline to submit RTO reduction plan exemption application
Aug. 15	Deadline to submit RTO reduction plan alternative goal application
Aug. 15	Webinar: 2024 Report Card Open Forum
Aug. 16	Site-Based Expenditure Reports due
Aug. 16	Deadline to apply for FY 2025 Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant
Aug. 16	Deadline to apply to help ISBE redefine proficiency on state assessments

Aug. 16	Webinar: My Data Dashboard Summative Designation Tool
Aug. 26	Fireside Chat With State Superintendent of Education Dr. Tony Sanders and Sal Khan
Aug. 30	Deadline to apply for Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards
Sep. 1	Deadline for joint agreements to adopt FY 2025 budget
Sep. 1	Deadline to file School Treasurer Bond Affidavit
Sep. 2	ISBE offices closed for Labor Day
Sep. 5	Webinar: Lessons From the Field: The Secret is OUT! Helping McKinney-Vento Families With Housing in Illinois
Sep. 13	Deadline to submit nominations for the 2024 Turnip the Beet Award
Sep. 13	Deadline to submit Presidential Cybersecurity Education Award nominations
Sep. 13	Deadline to submit Capital Needs Assessment Survey
Sept. 16-18	Illinois Association of Title I Directors Fall Conference
Sep. 30	ARP ESSER III Grant Programs End
Sep. 30	Deadline for school districts to adopt FY 2025 budget
Oct. 1	Joint agreement FY 2025 budget due to ISBE
Oct. 11	Illinois Technical Assistance Projects Fall Virtual Institute
Oct. 14	ISBE offices closed for Columbus Day and Indigenous People's Day
Oct. 15	RTO Reduction Plans due - nonpublic special education facilities and special education cooperatives
Oct. 31	School district FY 2025 budget due to ISBE
Nov. 1	School-Level Finance Surveys due
Nov. 5	ISBE offices closed for General Election Day

- Nov.
11 ISBE offices closed for Veterans Day
- Nov.
15 [8th annual Mastering KIDS Summit](#)
- Nov.
15 [Deadline to apply for Public School Districts' Opioid Recovery Trust](#)

NEW

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

CTE Teacher Professional Development Revised Calendar

As you gear up for the 2024-25 school year, we hope you will join an upcoming professional learning offering hosted by ISBE and Northern Illinois University CTE Project. As educators, we all know that this time of year includes composing new goals and redesigning current ones. We also are currently going through this process with our Professional Development Calendar, so you may notice some changes from previously published versions. These changes allow us to create more impactful and timely professional development opportunities for the field. Continue to visit the [ISBE Professional Development Calendar](#) as we create and redefine professional development for the 2024-25 school year. All sessions are open to all Illinois educators and participants will earn professional development hours.

NEW

DATA, ACCOUNTABILITY & ASSESSMENT

2024 Report Card Open Forum

The [2024 Report Card Open Forum](#), scheduled from **10-11:30 a.m. Aug. 15**, will briefly cover important dates and tools for managing your district's Report Card data and provide an open forum for questions related to the Report Card.

Summative Designation Deep Dive Now Available in My Data Dashboard

My Data Dashboard now includes new deep dive data visualizations for schools' summative designations. My Data Dashboard demonstrates ISBE's commitment to providing districts with tools and resources to support data-driven programmatic decision-making. This new feature will first be made available for district administrators via MyIRC and, in future months, will be rolled out for other My Data Dashboard users. The recently released screens offer more comprehensive summative designation data, allowing users to understand the data reported publicly at a more detailed level.

[Learn more about My Data Dashboard and the new summative designation visualizations at a webinar](#) from **11 a.m.-noon Aug. 16**. Find additional My Data Dashboard resources, such as a quick-start user guide, on the [ISBE My Data Dashboard webpage](#).

NEW

FINANCE

FY 2025 EBF Calculations Now Available

The fiscal year 2025 Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) calculations are now complete, and the first of the 22 payments will be released on **Aug. 10**. The following resources are now available on the [ISBE EBF Distribution Calculation webpage](#):

- [FY 2025 EBF Full Calculation](#)
- [FY 2025 EBF Quick Facts](#)
- [FY 2025/FY 2024 Data Comparison Tool](#)

Supplemental resources will be available in the coming weeks and will be announced in the ISBE Weekly Message. If you have questions about the calculations, contact 217-782-0249 or sff@isbe.net.

Watch the FY 2024 Site-Based Financial Reporting Tutorial Videos

ISBE has prepared several tutorial videos to assist districts in completing the Site-Based Expenditure Report using the online tool in IWAS. Each video provides a demonstration of the key steps needed to prepare and submit the report. Use the timestamps information below the video to easily navigate to specific sections.

- [Tutorial for Single-Site School Districts](#)
- [Tutorial for SDS Districts](#)

FY 2024 EBF Spending Plan Report - New Statewide Analysis and Support for Stakeholder Engagement

The EBF for Student Success Act requires each Organizational Unit (school districts, laboratory schools, Regional Offices of Education [ROEs], and Intermediate Service Centers [ISCs]) to complete an annual spending plan. The EBF Spending Plan was integrated into the school district budget beginning in FY 2024. ISBE has released a new report that summarizes statewide EBF Spending Plan responses. The report aims to help the public interpret published FY 2024 EBF Spending Plan content at both the district and state levels. ISBE hopes that highlighting statewide findings and providing guidance for community members will facilitate visibility and discourse pertaining to the use of state funds. Districts' EBF Spending Plans can be found on the [EBF Spending Plan webpage](#). Stakeholders are encouraged to use the [EBF Spending Plan Report](#) to better understand their local EBF Spending Plan and to consider it in a statewide context.

ISBE's Regional Financial Consultants Provide Budget Development Support for FY 2025

Need support developing your FY 2025 budget? ISBE regional financial consultants are available to offer technical assistance to school districts, ROEs, and other Local Education Agencies.

Our consultants conduct financial and trend analysis of school districts and other administrative entities, particularly financially distressed districts to track their fiscal solvency. They also assist in the ongoing development, implementation, and assessment of training that is targeted toward improving financial management practices in school districts. Visit the [ISBE Regional Financial Consultant webpage](#) for a full list of available services.

School Treasurer Bond Affidavit Due Sept. 1

Section 3-8 (105 ILCS 5/3-8) and Section 8-2 (105 ILCS 5/8-2) of the Illinois School Code require regional superintendents of schools/ISCs to file a yearly affidavit with ISBE showing which treasurers of school districts in their region are properly bonded. This affidavit must be filed before **Sept. 1**. An electronic version of the affidavit and other information can be found on the ISBE [School Treasurer Bond webpage](#). Please contact Christy Morgan at 217-785-8779 or cmorgan@isbe.net for more information or if you have questions.

NEW

MULTILINGUAL/LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Registration for Training for Qualified IEP Interpreters Program Opens Aug. 12

Registration for the first fall session of the Training for Qualified IEP Interpreters program will open at **12:01 a.m. Aug. 12**. Registration is first come, first served with 88 seats available. The registration link, along with all other information regarding the program, can be found on the [University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign website](#).

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

New Guidance Available: Application of Section 24-14 of the Illinois School Code to Teacher Resignations

ISBE has prepared [guidance](#) on the applicability and effect of Section 24-14 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/24-14) regarding teacher resignations. The intent of the guidance is to ensure that district and regional administrators understand the provisions of law and the scenarios in which a teacher's license may be suspended for resigning from a teaching assignment in contravention of law.

SAFE & HEALTHY CLIMATE

Lessons From the Field: The Secret is OUT! Helping McKinney-Vento Families with Housing in Illinois

There is a way for your school district to financially help McKinney-Vento families keep or rehouse in your community and at the same time, save you money on transportation costs, and receive additional reimbursement via state transportation funding. This option enables a family to receive support through the local Continuum of Care homeless agency in your area. Families can take advantage of a partnership between a school and its local Continuum of Care agency to become or remain financially stable. Additionally, children who are involved can continue to have a quality education without interruption. Join ISBE for a webinar at **1:30 p.m. Sept. 5** to learn more.

Our guest speaker will be Tom Bookler, a McKinney-Vento regional liaison based in Des Plaines. He will take you through the ISBE Housing Checklist, which is a simple guide to help you implement this program in your school district. You also will hear success stories. Register for [Lessons from the Field: The Secret is OUT! Helping McKinney-Vento Families with Housing in Illinois](#).

New Cheerleading and Spirit Group Safety Standards

[Public Act 103-0632](#) establishes new safety guidelines for cheerleaders and spirit group members participating in school-affiliated activities. This legislation takes a significant step forward in promoting student well-being within these programs.

Effective Jan. 1, 2025, all Illinois interscholastic athletic associations will be required to adopt the [National Federation of State High School Associations](#) Spirit Rules Book, or a comparable document, as the official safety standard for cheerleading and spirit groups. We encourage you to review the [new law](#) to gain a comprehensive understanding of the new safety guidelines.

Radon Testing and Reporting Reminder

Sections 10-20.48 and 34-18.39 of the Illinois School Code recommend that school districts test their school buildings for radon levels every five years. For more information regarding radon testing and to learn more about the harmful effects of high radon levels, please contact the Illinois Emergency Management Agency's Radon Program at 217-782-1325. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also has radon information, which can be found on the [EPA's Health Risk of Radon webpage](#).

School Code requires that results of radon testing of a public school building be transmitted to ISBE. They may be mailed to the Illinois State Board of Education, School Business Services, 100 North 1st Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777. Alternatively, an electronic copy may be sent to HLS@isbe.net. If you have any questions regarding submitting the results, please contact ISBE at 217-785-8779.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

RTO Reduction Plans Due Oct. 15 - Nonpublic Special Education Facilities and Special Education Cooperatives

In accordance with Section 2-1.30 of the Illinois School Code, all nonpublic special education facilities and special education cooperatives in Illinois must complete a physical restraint, time out, and isolated time out (RTO) reduction plan (105 ILCS 5/2-3.130). Information about the dates to apply for an exemption or to use an alternative goal is provided below.

RTO Plan Deadline: A reduction plan is due to ISBE by **Oct. 15**.

Exemption Criteria: An entity can be exempt from submitting an RTO reduction plan if it meets all three of the following conditions:

- Within the previous three years the entity has never engaged in the use of physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out;
- The entity has adopted a written policy that explicitly prohibits the use of physical restraint, time out, and isolated time out on students; **and**
- The entity can demonstrate enforcement of this policy.

Exemption Application: If you believe your entity qualifies for an exemption from the requirement to complete an RTO reduction plan, you must file an application to request an exemption by **Aug. 15**. ISBE will review exemption requests and provide responses by **Aug. 30**.

Alternative Goal Application Criteria: Entities that have 100% of their students identified as students with disabilities may apply to use an alternative goal. ISBE reserves the right to deny an application for the use of an [alternative goal](#) from any entity that has had a complaint finding regarding a violation of 23 Ill. Administrative Code 1.285 in any recent school year.

Alternative Goal Application: If your entity would like to use an alternative goal, your staff must complete an [application](#) and submit it to ISBE for review by **Aug. 15**. ISBE will review alternative goal applications and respond no later than **Aug. 30**.

TEACHING & LEARNING

Illinois Office of Broadband Meet & Greet with Illinois School Superintendents

Join the [Illinois Office of Broadband](#) from **3-4 p.m. Aug. 13** for an [informational session](#) about how it will achieve universal broadband connectivity statewide. Digital inclusion initiatives and grant opportunities, including information on how school districts can apply for grants under the [Federal Digital Equity Act](#), also will be covered. School districts can learn how to get involved to ensure broadband access for all.

IN BRIEF

Educator Opportunities

AIR Attendance Lab

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) recently launched [Attendance Lab](#), a new initiative to help school districts use evidence-based strategies to increase school attendance. As part of the launch, AIR will partner with up to 10 districts (at no cost to the district) to develop customized strategies for addressing chronic absenteeism. Districts interested in participating in Attendance Lab should [email AIR](#).

Featured ISBE Career Opportunities

- [Accountability Director #1572](#)
- [Special Education - Program Specialist \(Program Specialist II #1001\)](#)

[View all open positions at ISBE.](#)