

ILLINOIS

THIRD ILLINOIS POLICY INVENTORY ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Prepared by

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Illinois Education Research Council

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About the IERC

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To provide objective and reliable evidence for P-16 education policy making and program development

The Illinois Education Research Council was established in 2000 at Southern Illinois University to provide Illinois with education research to support P-16 education policy making and program development. The IERC undertakes independent research and policy analysis, often in collaboration with other researchers, that informs and strengthens Illinois' commitment to providing a seamless system of educational opportunities for its citizens. Through publications, presentations, participation on committees and an annual research symposium, the IERC brings objective and reliable evidence to the work of state policy makers and practitioners, including the Governor's Office and the Joint Education Committee, a state-level entity composed of the executive officers and designated board members of the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Illinois Workforce Investment Board.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1996, Illinois was one of the original 14 states to engage in a formal partnership with the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (NCTAF), and the state has been actively involved in that partnership ever since. The National Commission is a nonpartisan and nonprofit group dedicated to improving the quality of teaching nationwide as a means of meeting America's educational challenges. Formed in 1994 with initial funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, NCTAF includes a diverse cross-section of public officials, business and community leaders, and educators representing major stakeholders in education. State partners, now numbering 22, participate in NCTAF's work by maintaining collaborations to strengthen teacher preparation and improve the conditions of professional practice in their states.

In December 2001, the Illinois Education Research Council prepared the first *Policy Inventory on Teaching and Learning in Illinois*. It was organized according to the three core principles outlined in NCTAF's first report *What Matters Most: Teaching*

and America's Future (1996). The second *Illinois Policy Inventory* in December 2002 followed the organizational structure of an early draft of NCTAF's second major report, *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children* (January 2003). *No Dream Denied* called attention to the issue of teacher retention as an important factor in building a high-quality teaching workforce. This third *Illinois Policy Inventory* uses as its organizing framework the three major strategies outlined in *No Dream Denied*:

- Organizing Schools for Teaching and Learning Success
- Building a Strong Foundation: Quality Teacher Preparation, Accreditation, and Licensure
- Building a Professionally Rewarding Career in Teaching

This framework provides an opportunity to update our assessment of Illinois' progress in putting *and keeping* a qualified teacher in every classroom to foster student learning. It also sets the stage for Illinois' partnership with NCTAF as it continues its work.

ORGANIZING SCHOOLS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING SUCCESS

SCHOOLS NEED TO BE ORGANIZED AROUND WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT LEARNING

“Good teachers are attracted to and thrive in good schools. These schools are places where teaching and learning prosper, because they are focused on what we know about how both students and teachers learn and grow.” Successful schools are learner-centered, assessment-centered, knowledge-centered and community-centered. (p. 16-17).

➤ Schools are Using Performance Data to Understand Student Achievement

With the movement towards standards-based education and assessment, it has become increasingly important that schools and districts know how to use the data they collect on student performance. Many educational leadership programs in Illinois now incorporate use of data into their coursework for future administrators. Illinois Technology and Leadership for Change addresses the data gap for current administration personnel, offering principals and others free laptop computers and workshops in understanding and utilizing student data. The program is funded by the Gates Foundation and run by Illinois State University (see page 11).

On a larger scale, the National Center for Educational Accountability has created the Just for the Kids website (www.just4kids.org). This site is a gateway to data from different states – a collection of school report cards that can be compared to learn whether a school is under- or over-performing compared to similar schools. The Illinois portion of the site links to the Illinois Interactive Report Card (<http://iirc.niu.edu>), an online interface that makes school report card data easier to understand. The site, produced by Northern Illinois University, allows for easy comparison of schools by parents, teachers, administrators and researchers.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has greatly increased the amount of data required to be collected on students, schools and districts. However, some researchers have noted that determination of important NCLB statistics, such as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), does not take into account changes between cohort groups. Indeed, there is currently no means of tracking cohorts across time to gauge improvement. This issue may be addressed by the upcoming Student Information System being developed by IBM for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The system, scheduled for full implementation in 2007, will assign all Illinois students permanent identification numbers that can be used to link their school records.

➤ Illinois is Aligning Its Tests with NCLB Requirements

In July 2004, the Illinois state legislature enacted Public Act 093-0838, revising assessment in the state to comply with NCLB. In this Act, the legislature changed the subject matter covered by annual student testing: beginning in 2004-2005, students will be tested only on those subjects mandated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) – reading, mathematics and science. Students in grades 3, 5, and 8 will be tested in reading and math only, and students in grades 4 and 7 will be tested in science using the Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT). Beginning in 2005-2006, students in grades 3 – 8 taking the ISAT will be assessed annually in reading, math and science. The law eliminates other subject matter tests, including writing, physical development and health, fine arts, and the social sciences.

Students in grade 11 will continue to take the Prairie State Achievement Test (PSAE), and will be tested only in reading, math and science effective in 2004-2005. (See

Appendix I for an explanation of the PSAE standards.) The IMAGE test for students with limited proficiency in English is administered in reading and math in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11, while the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA) is given in those same subjects and grade levels for students with individual education plans (IEPs) that require alternate testing.

MORE STUDENTS ARE MEETING STANDARDS IN READING, MATH AND SCIENCE

Appendices II and III provide data on performance trends for selected State assessments.

At the third grade level, mathematics scores increased significantly in the past five years. In 1999, 68% of students met or exceeded the state standard for math. That figure rose to 79% in 2004. In reading, 65% of third graders met or exceeded the standards in 2004, up slightly from 61% in 1999. In science, 68% of fourth graders met or exceeded expectations in 2004, compared to 65% in 2000.

In 1999, 43% of eighth grade students tested met or exceeded the performance standards on the mathematics portion of the ISAT test. In 2004, that figure rose to 55%. In reading, however, scores dipped somewhat, falling from 72% in 1999 to 67% in 2004. The science portion of the ISAT is administered in seventh grade. In 2000, 72% of students met the science standard, compared with 75% in 2004.

➤ Scores Must Continue to Increase in Order to Make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

While test scores are up in most grades and subject areas, many of the gains are small. The rate of improvement in student achievement must increase in order for schools, districts, and the state to continue to meet NCLB criteria. The goal of NCLB is to have *all* students meeting or exceeding

standards in reading, mathematics and science by 2014. In Illinois, the Equal Steps model raises the bar for the percentage of students that must meet standards annually by 7.5%. In 2004, 40% of students in a school or district had to meet standards on the ISAT, PSAE, IMAGE, or IAA in order for that school or district to make adequate yearly progress (AYP). In 2005, that figure climbs to 47.5%, remains constant in 2006, then jumps to 55% in 2007.

Additionally, scores are disaggregated by racial/ethnic group, English proficiency and family income. Schools and districts must meet the same standards for all the groups that are enrolled in significant numbers (more than 40 in a single school). Schools that fail to make AYP for any subgroup may be subject to sanctions. Many districts across the state continue to struggle to close the achievement gaps between these subgroups.

Currently only reading and mathematics scores are used in calculating AYP. Science scores will be included beginning in 2007. More grade levels will also be tested. Currently students are tested in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11 in reading and math, and 4 and 7 in science. Beginning in 2006, students will be tested annually in grades 3 – 8 in each of these three subject areas.

➤ Schools and Districts are Facing Consequences Under NCLB and State Accountability Rules

While the rules of No Child Left Behind apply primarily to schools receiving Title I federal funds, there are consequences and sanctions at the state level for all schools that fail to meet AYP goals. Under NCLB, Title I schools that fail to meet AYP for two consecutive years are labeled in School Improvement Status and are required to offer students school choice within their district. Without improvement in three years, they must also offer students supplemental educational services. There were 659 schools in 248 districts in Illinois that were under

School Improvement Status in 2004, of a possible 2,357 Title I schools. Those who fail to make AYP in coming years will face increasingly stiff sanctions, including possible replacement of all school staff.

Under Illinois accountability rules, all schools that fail to meet AYP for two consecutive years are labeled Academic Early Warning Status, whether they are Title I or not. There were 402 schools in this category in 2004.¹ Schools that fail to meet AYP for four consecutive years are labeled Academic Watch Status. In 2004, 540 schools were in this category. The consequences for non-Title I schools in the early years are less severe than those under NCLB Title I rules. Non-Title I schools in Academic Early Warning Status must create School Improvement Plans approved by the local school board (first year), then later by the local board and the State Superintendent (second and third years). Other changes include possible external support team involvement and extended school day/year programs. A school or district failing to make AYP for six years, however, can be subject to replacement of the school leadership or district school board, or even dissolution.

For both NCLB and the Illinois Accountability System, schools and districts that make AYP for two consecutive years are removed from all warning and improvement lists and all sanctions are lifted. In 2004, 41 schools met their AYP goals and were removed from these lists.

The State began tracking test scores for AYP calculations in 2001, so Spring 2005 tests will provide a fifth year of data, and could potentially move some schools and districts into new categories of sanctions when the results are released in Fall 2005.

¹ The figures for Academic Early Warning Status and Academic Watch Status include both Title I and non-Title I schools. The Title I schools included also appear on the School Improvement Status list.

SCHOOLS NEED TO BECOME LEARNING COMMUNITIES WITH SHARED LEADERSHIP

"It is time to end the era of solo teaching in isolated classrooms. Good teaching thrives in a supportive learning environment created by teachers and school leaders who work together to improve learning... Shared or "distributed leadership" brings the learning community together in a common commitment and shared responsibility for sustaining improvement" (pg. 17).

➤ Illinois is Contributing to Rethinking School Leadership Nationwide

In 2003, the Institute for Educational Leadership and the Illinois Education Research Council released a report entitled *Preparing School Principals: A National Perspective on Policy and Program Innovations (IERC 2003-I-3)*. The publication cited numerous sources that reported that nationally, current certification programs for school administrators woefully under-prepare candidates for real-world positions as school principals and other administrators. The report called for policy and institutional leaders to demand that colleges and universities be innovative in their principal preparation programs. It went on to propose that states must welcome and support new providers and regulate their entrance into the marketplace in ways that encourage a maximum of healthy innovation and competitiveness. It concluded that "all preparation programs must develop school leaders who can provide instructional leadership."

➤ Defining Distributed and Shared Leadership

The Education Commission of the States defines distributed leadership as "the delegation of leadership responsibilities to other competent staff members, the creation of a team of leaders that divvy up the school's work load and leadership responsibilities, or the explicit use of teacher leadership to provide functions of instructional leadership, staff development and staff mentorship. Distributed leadership structures sometimes

(but not always) include the use of incentives to support staff members taking on these additional responsibilities.” www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/42/99/4299.htm

While most schools and districts in Illinois may not be ready to forgo traditional models of leadership yet, there are many programs around the state focusing on improving leadership and creating a new generation of school leaders.

➤ **Programs Around the State are Working to Improve Existing Leadership**

A major initiative currently underway in Illinois is the State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP). Funded in 15 states by a grant from the Wallace Foundation and managed in Illinois through the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University, the project seeks to strengthen leadership capacity statewide to improve student achievement. The project has various components, including an effort to reform the school code to remove redundant and obsolete rules and regulations, and work to redesign leadership preparation curricula, including an emphasis on teacher leadership. www.wallacefoundation.org/WF/ELAN/SD/SAELP_IL/

In conjunction with SAELP is the Leadership for Education Achievement in Districts project (LEAD). Where SAELP focuses on statewide issues, LEAD is located within the Springfield public schools, attempting change at a local level. The program (also in 11 other districts nationwide) is working to develop a secondary leadership program to recruit and train administrators for the district, and includes as a component internships for young leaders. Another goal of the project is to develop an assessment tool for evaluating administrators. www.coe.ilstu.edu/eafdept/centerforedpolicy/initiatives/lead_initiative.shtml

The Interactive Teaching & Learning Communities Project at Northeastern Illinois University takes a broader view of leadership. Serving elementary and middle schools in Chicago and Plano, the program uses a systemic reform model based on creating school leadership teams (5-7 teachers and a principal), creating a “collaborative learning culture,” and integrating curriculum across subjects. The program emphasizes the importance of data driven decision-making, using both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate school progress. The Principal Support Network helps principals get to know each other and receive support in their reforms. The Project also supplies extensive professional development to teachers. www.neiu.edu/~itl/components.htm

The Distributed Leadership Study at Northwestern University has, over the past five years, produced a series of academic papers and presentations on leadership in schools. Funded by the National Science Foundation and the Spencer Foundation, the program is located in School of Education and Social Policy. <http://dls.sesp.northwestern.edu/>

Illinois Technology and Leadership for Change (ITLC) is chiefly a technology initiative, but also strives to enhance leadership in Illinois schools. The program, funded through the Gates Foundation and run by Illinois State University, provides participating administrators with a laptop computer and training in its use, especially to better access and understand school and district data. Training workshops for administrators also focus on leadership skills and team building. www.sadi.ilstu.edu/

➤ **Illinois Colleges are Working to Produce Better Educational Leaders**

With increased demand for skilled administrators in Illinois and across the country, some colleges and universities are creating new doctoral educational administration programs. However, a recent

report by Arthur E. Levine of Columbia University's Teachers College, entitled *Educating School Leaders* (The Education Schools Project, March 2005, www.edschools.org/pdf/Final313.pdf), suggests that Ed.D. degrees may not be the best pathway to producing skilled administrators. We will continue to monitor developments as leadership preparation is examined nationwide.

In Illinois, new Ed.D. programs are being developed at Western Illinois University, Chicago State University, and the University of Illinois at Chicago. The latter's Ed.D. program in Urban Education Leadership provides an example of innovation. It includes coursework on assessment and testing, and graduates can also earn certification as a teacher, administrator or superintendent concurrent with their doctoral work. The program also features classes co-taught by UIC faculty and principals and school leaders who have turned their schools around, as well as paid student internships with Chicago Public Schools. www.uic.edu/depts/grad/programs/edd.shtml.

The New Leaders for New Schools program in Chicago trains teachers and others from the education field to be principals and administrators. It provides an intensive summer program, followed by a one year paid residency in a Chicago public school and coursework in school management and related topics. A program partnership with National Louis University provides certification for participants. Following the residency, participants receive two years of ongoing support, as they become school principals. The program exists in five cities, and has trained more than 150 people nationwide. In Chicago, 10% of the public schools contain at least one person trained by NLNS. www.nlms.org/

SCHOOLS NEED TO BECOME SMALL, WELL-FOCUSED LEARNING COMMUNITIES

"In smaller schools – typically 300 to 600 students – more flexible staffing, better use of time, and more responsive learning designs ensure that teachers and administrators get to know their students well and serve as their champions throughout their school careers." (pg. 17).

➤ Small Schools Have Taken Off in Chicago

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) has embraced the concept of small schools as a reform model. CPS defines a "small school" as one with no more than 350 students at the elementary level, or 500 at the high school level. As of September 2003, there were 36 autonomous small schools and 54 schools-within-schools in the Chicago Public Schools, each with their own focus.

In the summer of 2004, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley outlined his Renaissance 2010 program. A portion of that plan calls for the creation of 100 new schools by the year 2010. The aim is to increase education options for families, as well as reduce overcrowding in rapidly growing areas. It may also address a concern of NCLB: Title I schools that fail to make AYP for two consecutive years are required to offer school choice. However, many have pointed out that choice is difficult for those who live in areas with overcrowded schools, or who may be surrounded by schools that are all failing to make AYP. The creation of new schools may help address both these concerns and provide more choices for families. In January 2005, eighteen new schools, many of them small schools, were approved to open in September 2005.

➤ Charter Schools and Magnets Offer Small Learning Communities

While each charter and magnet school in Illinois is different, many are smaller than conventional public schools. Some, such as Chicago's Big Picture charter schools, are designed to be small learning communities.

Illinois law allows for 60 charter schools throughout the state, and 30 in any city with a population above 500,000. Currently there are 24 charter schools in Chicago, one in the Chicago suburbs, and five charter schools outside the Chicago area, serving more than 8,500 students in total. There are nearly 400 magnet schools in the state, with more than 300 of them located in Chicago. While all of these magnet and charter schools may not be small learning communities, all were created with the intention of drawing in students with special interests and needs, and offer a different template from the average public school.

SCHOOLS NEED TO USE MODERN TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT LEARNING COMMUNITIES

“Modern technologies increase the ability to organize schools around what we know about how students learn.... Networked information technologies also support and sustain teachers in learning communities.” (pg. 18).

➤ ISBE is Developing a Student Database

In 2004, ISBE contracted with IBM to develop the Student Information System. The system, which will be phased in over three years, will allow ISBE to better track student achievement. The system should improve the accuracy of state report cards, streamline data collection responsibilities for districts, and ensure that the state meets NCLB guidelines for accountability and reporting. The database will also aid in the study of student migration and academic progress because it will, for the first time, assign a permanent identification number to every student in the state.

➤ Illinois Virtual High School is Reaching a Growing Number of Students

The Illinois Virtual High School has offered Illinois students online courses for the past nine academic semesters. According to their statistics, 54% of Illinois high schools have signed up to participate in the program, which has offered 3500 for-credit courses and

3600 ACT and Advanced Placement test review courses over the past three years. The program serves a broad range of students, from those wishing to retake failed classes to those looking for courses not offered at their schools. The IVHS is operated by the Illinois Math and Science Academy under a grant from ISBE. www.ivhs.org

➤ Technology Projects are Proceeding Across the State

Illinois received \$2.25 million in funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for the Illinois Technology and Leadership for Change (ITLC) project, with matching funding from state agencies, organizations and businesses. The project is housed at Illinois State University and provides training and laptop computers to principals and superintendents in Illinois. Training focuses on databased decision-making, especially in regards to student achievement data.

All local districts and the majority of school buildings are now connected to the Internet. Most teachers have received some technology training, and instruction on the use of technology to support engaged learning in the classroom continues to increase throughout the state. There are now Learning Technology Centers located throughout the state.

The Illinois Century Network provides all elementary, secondary and higher education institutions (as well as libraries and museums) with affordable, reliable high-speed connectivity.

The Illinois Online Leadership Council, made up of representatives from education technology initiatives across the state, is working to develop linkages between these various initiatives. Their website, eLearning Illinois (<http://elearning.illinois.net/about.htm>), outlines the goals of the various projects, as well as the ways in which undertakings such as the Illinois Digital Academic Library and the Illinois Virtual

High School interact and support one another.

In Chicago, the Office of Technology's eLearning center seeks to provide technology-based learning for teachers and students. Teachers can take an online assessment of their computer skills, then enroll in classes ranging from basic computer skills to PowerPoint to use student test score data.

➤ **Teacher Certification Standards
Include Technology Component**

Content standards in technology have been in place in Illinois since 2000. They were updated in 2002, and include general technology standards for all teachers and specific standards in most academic content areas. All teacher candidates must demonstrate knowledge of computers, and their ability to use them in instruction, to be eligible for certification.

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION: QUALITY TEACHER PREPARATION, ACCREDITATION, AND LICENSURE

WHAT ALL NEW TEACHERS SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO: SIX STEPS TO QUALITY TEACHER PREPARATION

“Great teachers have a deep understanding of the subjects they teach. They work with a firm conviction that all children can learn. They know and use teaching skills and a complete arsenal of assessment strategies to diagnose and respond to individual learning needs.” (pg. 19).

Step 1. Careful recruitment and selection of teacher candidates

The state of Illinois is raising the bar for teacher education candidates. Effective July 2003, all teacher candidates must pass a basic skills test prior to their admission into a teacher education program. Those with certificates from other states do not have to pass the basic skills test if they took a similar test in another state, but do have to pass other tests and meet other requirements.

Alternative certification is increasingly available in Illinois and across the country. Approximately two dozen Illinois institutions offer some form of alternative certification, usually designed for those who hold a Bachelor’s degree in a non-education-related field and have relevant experience. Alternately certified teachers remain a small percentage of the total teachers certified each year.

Step 2. Strong academic preparation for teaching

In addition to the basic skills test, teacher candidates must pass two other exams. First, effective Fall 2004, all teacher candidates must pass content area tests specific to their area of certification prior to beginning their student teaching. Second, after October 2003, all candidates for certification in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Secondary Education or Special Education must pass the Assessment of

Professional Teaching, or APT. The APT is designed to assess candidates’ knowledge of the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (Appendix IV), as well as the general language arts and technology standards that apply to all teachers. Teachers certified in other states may receive a waiver for the content area test, but only if they have taken a similar test in their home state. Teachers certified in other states still have to pass the APT.

All of the tests are administered by National Evaluation Systems, Inc., under the heading Illinois Certification Testing System (ICTS). The tests are specific to Illinois, and therefore scores are not comparable to data from other states. Forty-two other states use the Praxis test, created by Educational Testing Service (ETS).

Step 3. Strong clinical practice to develop effective teaching skills

➤ ISBE Sets Standards for Clinical Practice Statewide

In the past, ISBE set a standard minimum number of hours that teacher candidates had to spend in clinical experiences: 100 clock hours prior to student teaching, and 10 weeks (10 credits) of student teaching. ISBE has now reworded their regulations, allowing colleges and universities to set their own requirements for both pre-student teaching clinical experience and student teaching. ISBE now requires that certification candidates’ experiences be extensive and intensive, and cover the grade range of the certification. The ISBE Certification office reports that universities have generally increased their requirements for clinical practice since this new wording went into effect.

➤ **A 2004 Report Recommends Extending Clinical Practice for Teacher Candidates**

In March 2004, the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago's Task Force on Teacher Preparation and Initial Development released a report entitled *Improving Results: Transforming the Teaching Profession in Illinois*. The report was critical of many aspects of teacher training and induction. Among its recommendations to improve teacher quality was to extend student teaching to a full semester. The committee recommended that student teaching and other clinical experiences for teacher candidates be carefully designed and monitored – student teachers should be paired with highly skilled supervising teachers and observed by skilled college faculty members. Additionally, the report calls for a “comprehensive system of professional induction, support and evaluation” for all new teachers, viewing the first year of teaching as an extension of clinical practice. The report also notes that the Illinois APT test is unique to the state, and recommends using a more standardized test of teacher professional skills, such as the Praxis.

Step 4. Entry-level teaching support in residencies and mentored induction

Numerous studies and reports, including NCTAF's *No Dream Denied* (2003), have emphasized the importance of high quality induction and mentoring programs. In Illinois, this component has been missing in efforts to improve teacher quality and turnover rates. In 2003, the state funded a mentoring and induction program. However, funding has not been available for this project since that year. Many groups, including the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, have called for a state-funded, comprehensive mentoring program for all new teachers (see above).

While Illinois lacks a statewide mentoring program, some certification programs offer

support for their new graduates. The Golden Apple Scholars program in Chicago provides scholarships to minority and low-income students interested in teaching in poor and low-performing schools. The program stresses mentoring through summer institutes while participants are in college, and continues the mentoring process through the first years of teaching.

To increase teacher retention, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has partnered with area school districts to form the Novice Teacher Support Program. Components of this program, designed for teachers in their first four years in the classroom, include six yearly Saturday seminars, a summer workshop, and an online community that provides mentoring and support for beginning teachers. The program is being expanded to include all state universities. <http://ntsp.ed.uiuc.edu/>

Step 5. [Using] Modern learning technologies

➤ **Teacher Preparation Programs are Using Electronic Portfolios**

Across Illinois and the country, an increasing number of colleges are asking their education majors to develop electronic portfolios of their work. It appears that LiveText has become the common standard, while TaskStream is also in use. In addition to online and electronic portfolios, both programs have the capacity to be used by universities to offer professional development, link to state standards, and assess student progress.

➤ **State TQE Middle-Grades Grant had Strong Emphasis on Faculty Training**

A recent federal Teacher Quality Enhancement grant focused on improved preparation for pre-service and in-service teachers working with middle-grade students. Four public universities and their partner community colleges were included in the

grant project, and each had a slightly different focus. All, however, included workshops to train higher education faculty to better incorporate technology into their courses for education majors. The workshops went beyond the school of education faculty to include members of the colleges of arts and sciences, and from the community colleges. The grant also funded the creation of online professional development modules for pre- and in-service teachers. Some experimental modules were developed, and ranged from individual conceptual units to full courses.

➤ **Illinois PT3 Focuses on Technology Training for Teacher Candidates**

Through its federal Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology (PT3) grant, Illinois has focused on the creation of technology-infused postsecondary education for teacher candidates. The grant provides them with opportunities to learn through a program that models appropriate use of learning technologies in the classroom. Additionally, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) has used PT3 money to develop "Preparing Technology-Proficient Teachers in Illinois." The project offers workshops designed for higher education faculty, with the aim of helping them incorporate technology into their courses for pre-service teachers.

Step 6. Assessment of teacher preparation effectiveness

As is outlined in the next section, all teacher preparation programs in Illinois are evaluated every seven years by ISBE. Several years ago, ISBE adopted NCATE's accreditation standards for all Illinois institutions awarding teacher certification.

➤ **Survey to Ask Beginning Teachers About Their Preparedness for the Classroom**

A new survey from the Illinois Association of Deans of Public Colleges of Education, in

conjunction with the Illinois Teacher Data Warehouse (a data collection system managed by UI-UC), will ask first year teachers who graduated from Illinois public colleges of education, as well as their supervisors, about how their programs prepared them for success in the classroom. The Teacher Graduates Assessment for the State of Illinois, funded in part by the Joyce Foundation and managed by the College of Education and Professional Studies at Eastern Illinois University, will be completed in the fall of 2005. Results will be broken down by university and distributed to those institutions to use to improve their programs, while statewide results, as well as a separate breakdown of Chicago Public Schools, will be made public

ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

"Accreditation is the primary vehicle for quality control of teacher preparation, as it is for many other professions." (pg. 21).

All Illinois higher education institutions that offer teacher certification must meet NCATE standards. Programs can choose to seek NCATE accreditation – currently 21 of the 55 teacher preparation programs in the state are accredited. For NCATE accredited institutions, ISBE and NCATE conduct their evaluations jointly, with members from both accreditation groups on the evaluation team. Since 2000, ISBE also uses NCATE standards in its evaluation of programs that are not NCATE accredited. Colleges and universities are evaluated for renewal of accreditation every seven (previously five) years. Three institutions were labeled by ISBE in 2003 as "at risk" for failing to meet one or more accreditation standards and will be reassessed in Fall 2005 and Spring 2006.

While the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) must approve new academic degrees at the college level, they are not directly involved in the accreditation review process, and have not yet coordinated their review process with ISBE.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR TEACHER PREPARATION AT FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LEVELS

“The Higher Education Act Amendments of 1998 authorized federal and state agencies to measure, report on, and hold teacher preparation programs responsible for the quality of their graduates.” (pg. 22)

➤ Title II Report Cards Provide Data on Illinois Teacher Candidates and their Colleges

Title II of the Federal Higher Education Act requires that all colleges and universities that certify teachers must provide data to their states annually, and in turn the states must report this information to the federal government. The data from institutions includes the number of teacher candidates in education programs, and the number passing various state tests. The information reported by states includes an outline of their state standards and licensing requirements, as well as statistics about the total population of newly certified teachers and the number of teachers who hold waivers rather than certification. The 2004 Title II State Report Cards were released in December (www.title2.org).

Reported teacher candidate test scores in Illinois are high, with all candidates passing the basic skills test in 2004. However, passing this test is now required by law in Illinois prior to admittance in all accredited teacher education programs. The percentage of students passing content area test scores was lower, however. Though candidates only need to pass one test to graduate, they can attempt tests in multiple subject areas, which may account for some of these lower passing percentages. The percentage of candidates passing content tests in shortage areas such as special education and secondary sciences ranged from 89 – 94%, while the percent passing the elementary and middle grades content test was 99%. Overall, 98% of teacher candidates in Illinois passed their content area test in 2003.

The State Report Card also rates the teacher preparation colleges and universities based on their meeting the accreditation standards. Federal reporting requires the colleges to be divided into quartiles, but their test results and other measurable data are similar.

➤ ISBE Makes Teacher Quality a Priority

The Illinois State Board of Education has developed a Comprehensive Strategic Plan (March 2005) to set priorities for reform in the state. One of the top goals is improving teacher quality statewide. Several planned strategies involve partnering with higher education to better prepare educators to work in rural and urban settings and to develop school leadership.

www.isbe.state.il.us/pdf/strategic_plan_2005.pdf

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITY FOR QUALITY TEACHER PREPARATION

“College presidents, university chancellors, and deans need to take their place in the chain of accountability for the quality of teachers prepared at their institutions. That means moving quality teacher education to the forefront of institutional planning.” (pg. 22).

➤ Universities are Recognizing the Importance of Teacher Preparation

Across the state, universities and colleges that offer teacher certification are reassessing their programs to help new graduates be better prepared for the career of teaching. Many are utilizing federal and nonprofit grant money to fund particular initiatives aimed at recruiting, mentoring, technology training and preparing teachers to work in high-needs areas. Examples include UIC’s Community College Collaborative for Excellence in Teacher Preparation, and its NSF-supported Graduate K-12 Fellows program.

In addition, to the State-level TQE grant discussed earlier, other institutions in Illinois have also received federal TQE grants to improve teacher preparation. The Illinois Professional Learners Partnership (IPLP) is

Number of People Completing Teacher Certification Programs

Data based on the self-reported institutional data reports. All of these completers did not necessarily request a certificate

	1999	2000	2001	2002
Early Childhood	638	639	584	621
Elementary	3,953	3,715	4,243	4,453
Secondary	2,228	2,882	2,506	2,719
K-12	854	788	948	1,065
Spec Ed	1,495	1,322	1,889	1,770
Total	9,168	9,346	10,170	10,628
Science	227	341	285	278
Math	246	290	231	241

Source: Illinois State Board of Education, *Educator Supply and Demand in Illinois: 2003 Annual Report*.

currently completing its TQE grant work. The program, centered at Illinois State University, brought together five major universities, numerous community colleges, and school districts, including Chicago Public Schools. IPLP created more than forty working groups, who still meet and work to achieve their goals. The overarching aim of the partnership was to bring together many different groups to improve teacher preparation programs. Aspects of change addressed included creating new assessment tools, mentoring programs, and increased and enhanced clinical work for pre-service teachers.

The Associated Colleges of Illinois also received a federal TQE grant. Their Center for Success in High-Need Schools seeks to attract and retain high-quality teachers for hard-to-staff schools. Established in January 2005, the Center plans to work to redesign teacher education curricula to better prepare teachers to work with minority and low-income students.

At the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Big City Teacher Preparation Initiative aims to train teachers specifically to work in large city districts such as the Chicago Public Schools. The program, which receives foundation support, seeks to recruit more

minority and low-income teaching candidates, as well as to better prepare white middle class candidates to work in neighborhood schools in Chicago.

LICENSURE SHOULD TESTIFY THAT BEGINNING TEACHERS ARE WELL-QUALIFIED TO PRACTICE

“Certification or licensure is the state’s legal vehicle for establishing competence for members of professions, including teaching.... The Commission advocates that all teachers be licensed on the basis of demonstrated performance, including tests of subject matter knowledge, teaching knowledge, and the teaching skills that reflect the core competencies of a highly qualified beginning teacher.” (pg. 22).

Illinois works to ensure that all teachers are qualified through two mechanisms – teacher training program accreditation and teacher candidate testing. As outlined above, Illinois uses NCATE standards to evaluate all colleges and universities in the state that provide teacher certification. Each institution is evaluated in depth every seven years and must demonstrate how they are teaching students to implement all Illinois education standards. In addition, all teacher candidates must pass three separate tests before receiving certification:

- **Basic Skills Test**
Must be passed prior to admittance

into a teacher education program. Assesses basic skills in academic subjects.

- **Content Tests**
Must be passed prior to student teaching. Assesses knowledge in the specific area of certification.
- **Assessment of Professional Teaching (APT)**
Must be passed prior to issuance of any teaching certification. Assesses general knowledge of the teaching profession and pedagogical methods.

MORE MUST BE DONE TO IMPROVE LICENSURE

“States have raised teaching standards substantially in the past decade; now they need to improve the measures of teaching competence that make standards credible.... Further, loopholes can make licensing a mockery.... Only a few states keep complete or accurate data on the extent to which their students are being taught by individuals who lack credentials in the subjects they are teaching.” (pg. 23).

➤ The Goal is a Certified and Highly Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom

The Title II State Report Card from 2004 provided figures on teachers with emergency and provisional credentials. According to the Report Card, overall in Illinois, 2.5% of teachers do not hold full certification. The number is higher in high-poverty areas (where more than half of students come from low-income families) – 6.7%.

No Child Left Behind requires that all classrooms be staffed by “highly qualified” teachers. Here standards vary somewhat from those for Illinois state certification – teachers with a bachelor’s degree in a non-education field may still be termed “qualified” if they have the right training and experience. According to the 2004 Title II Report Card, 2.1% of teachers in Illinois were “not highly qualified” under NCLB. The figure jumps to 5.4% in high-poverty areas.

IMPROVING LICENSURE PRACTICES: WINDS OF CHANGE

“Considerable work is now under way at the state level, much of it led by the states themselves in partnership with the Commission and other organizations committed to quality teaching.” (pg. 24).

Professional Standards Boards

Teacher certification is regulated by ISBE with advice from the State Teacher Certification Board. There is not an independent Professional Standards Board in Illinois. During the 2004 legislative session, a bill was introduced that would have created a separate Professional Teaching Standards Board (SB1074). This proposed board would have been appointed by the governor and comprised of teachers’ union members, college faculty, school administrators and parents. It did not emerge from committee.

During the same legislative session, SB3000 passed. It changed the composition of the State Board of Education and gave the Governor the power to replace a majority of the school board members, as well as a role in appointing the state superintendent.

Cooperation Across States

➤ Illinois Has Not Taken Steps to Align its Certification with Other States

As mentioned above, the standardized tests that Illinois administers to all teacher candidates are customized for the state standards, and are not comparable with test scores in other states. Most other states use the Praxis to assess teacher readiness.

According to the Title II State Report Card, Illinois does not recognize any out-of-state teacher licensing. While all surrounding states, with the exception of Missouri, recognize Illinois certification as transferable to their states, Illinois does not have reciprocity agreements with any other states. Teachers with out-of-state licenses are exempt

from the basic skills test, provided they took a similar one in their home state. They have to take the APT test, and may also need to take the appropriate content area test unless their prior state's testing system is very similar and they receive a waiver from ISBE.

It should be noted, however, that the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards, the core of Illinois teacher certification, are a slightly modified version of the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards for teaching. These same standards have been adopted in various forms by many other states. While out-of-state teachers may need to pass tests to receive Illinois certification, the standards that are the basis of Illinois credentialing are virtually the same as many other states.

Tiered Licensure

➤ 2004 Brought Changes in the Licensure System

Illinois has had a tiered licensure system for teachers with three levels – initial, standard, and master – since 2000. The system is still evolving - in 2004, the state legislature passed SB1553, which made changes to the administrative code. Their aim was to help ensure that teachers had multiple options as they moved through the stages. The major change was that teachers wishing to renew their license or move from one level to another no longer have to receive pre-approval of their professional development plan from a Local Professional Development Council (LPDC). Instead, when ready to apply for a new or renewed license, they can submit evidence of their professional development activities to their regional superintendent or LPDC.

➤ There Are Multiple Options For Teachers to Move from Initial to Standard Certification

All teachers must move from initial to standard-level certification after four years of

teaching in order to keep their licensure current. Aside from their four years of experience in the classroom, teachers must complete one of the following professional development options:

- Hold an advanced degree in the field of education
- Participate in an approved induction and mentoring program for 1 year (2 years after 2007)
- Receive National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification
- Complete 12 semester hours of graduate-level work in education
- Earn a 12 hours of professional development certificate from an Illinois certified institution of higher education
- Earn an additional Illinois teaching certificate or endorsement
- Meet the requirements for becoming “highly qualified” in another teaching area under NCLB
- Pass an exam (not yet created)
- Complete 4 semester hours of graduate-level coursework NBPTS preparation, or assessment of teaching performance
- Earn CPDUs (Continuing Professional Development Units) through a variety of measures

➤ Teachers with Standard Certification Must Renew Their Licensure Every Five Years

Standard certification is renewable indefinitely, so long as teachers complete one of the following options each time their certificates come up for renewal:

- Meet Illinois criteria for becoming highly qualified in another teaching area

- Complete the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process
- Earn eight semester hours of college coursework in an education-related program
- Earn a subsequent Illinois certificate or endorsement
- Complete four semester hours of graduate coursework in Self-Assessment of Teaching Performance or NBPTS preparation
- Earn 24 CEUs (Continuing Education Units) or 120 CPDUs, or a combination of the two

➤ **To Earn a Master Teaching Certificate, Teachers Must Become NBPTS Certified**

Unlike the transition from Initial to Standard certification, there are no options – all teachers who wish to be certified as master teachers in Illinois must receive NBPTS certification. Master certification must be renewed every ten years – candidates can either follow NBPTS procedures for renewal, or can follow Illinois guidelines, which are similar to renewal at the Standard level.

➤ **Teachers Are Rewarded for Holding Higher Degrees**

Teachers with Master’s degrees in education are only required to do two-thirds as many hours of professional development (CEUs or CPDUs) to renew or upgrade their certification. Teachers with Doctorates, multiple Masters’, or NBPTS certification only need one-third the hours.

Teachers holding NBPTS certification receive a \$3,000 per year increase in pay under the Illinois Teaching Excellence Program. That amount can climb to \$4,000 if a teacher provides 60 hours of mentoring annually to other teachers, or \$6,000 if that mentoring occurs in a school that is on Academic Early Warning, or has high levels of student poverty. A notice sent out by ISBE in November 2004, however, warned NBPTS certified teachers that, due to increases in the number of master teachers, compensation may be prorated in the 2004-2005 school year.

SMART RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING

“The first step is still getting good teachers in the door. Too many good candidates never quite make it to the youngsters who need them most because job information is too scant, hiring procedures are antiquated, and administrative barriers are too daunting.” (pg. 26).

➤ Online Job Banks Help Match Teacher Candidates with Schools

The Internet has given job seekers in all fields a new tool to search for jobs beyond the newspaper classifieds. The ISBE website directs users to three sites that focus on Illinois teaching jobs:

- IASA Online: Illinois Education Job Bank – ISBE partnered with the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) to create this website that lists jobs around the state. The site is easy to use, and lists numerous jobs around the state, sorted by position, grade level, and county. Administrators can list positions available in their schools and districts as well. The site is kept up-to-date, with no obsolete listings. www.iasaedu.org/Jobbank
- Recruit Illinois – This site was created through an U.S. Department of Education grant by the students at Lyons Township High School as a model for teacher recruitment via the Web. The site links to IASA’s job listings, but also provides information and advice on getting a good teaching job. www.recruitillinois.net
- National Teacher Recruitment Clearinghouse – This site is a clearinghouse, a collection of other job banks across the country. Users may find individual districts posting jobs, or placement agencies and other sites that list jobs in Illinois. www.recruitingteachers.org/channels/clearinghouse/

➤ An IBHE Website Helps Secondary Students and Adults Learn About Teaching

The Illinois Board of Higher Education has created a website entitled “Recruit Illinois” (unrelated to the site of the same name above) that provides information about teaching as a career, and pathways to teaching. The site has three sections for three different audiences – middle school students, high school students, and adults. The content of the sections overlap, and all include video clips of teachers working in the classroom and discussing the profession. The section for adults also includes information on alternative certification. www.recruitillinois.org

➤ Scholarships are Helping Increase Teacher Supply in Needed Areas

Numerous scholarship programs have been created in Illinois to help address staffing issues. While some focus on staffing poor and low-performing schools, others focus on increasing the percentage of minority teachers. Still a third group aims to increase teacher supply in needed subjects, such as special education. Several innovative and important programs are outlined below. Information on all listed programs can be found at www.collegezone.com, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission’s website for scholarship, loan and grant information.

- Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois – Participants, predominantly minority and low-income high school seniors, receive scholarships of \$5000 per year for four years of college in exchange for agreeing to teach in a poor or low-performing schools for five years. In addition, scholarship recipients receive a \$2000 stipend annually to cover living expenses during summer teaching seminars that feature

- mentoring from master teachers. New teacher candidates also receive support and mentoring during their student teaching and first years of classroom teaching.
- Illinois Future Teacher Corps – In 2004, this program, sponsored by the Governor’s office, replaced the David A. DeBolt Teacher Shortage Scholarship Program and the ITEACH Teacher Shortage Scholarship Program. The new program provides financially needy college juniors and seniors with \$5,000 per year in scholarship money. In exchange, participants must agree to teach for five years in any Illinois public school. Participants who agree to teach in a poor school, in an area of shortage, or for a longer period of time are eligible for higher amounts of scholarship money – up to \$15,000 per year. [Under the previous DeBolt and ITEACH scholarships, freshman and sophomore education majors were also eligible to receive funding.]
 - Minority Teachers of Illinois Scholarship – Provides \$5,000 per year to minority college juniors and seniors. Participants must agree to teach for one year for each year they received the scholarship. Participants must teach in an Illinois school with at least 30% minority enrollment.
 - Federal Perkins and Stafford Loans – Under this federal program, teachers can receive \$4,000-6,000 in loan and interest forgiveness if they teach for five years at a low-income school or in a shortage discipline.
 - Illinois Teachers and Child Care Providers Loan Repayment Program – Those who receive Federal Perkins Loan forgiveness for teaching in a low-income area may also be eligible for Illinois to contribute an additional \$5000 in loan forgiveness. Teachers can only receive loan forgiveness after completing five years of teaching and receiving Perkins forgiveness.
 - Illinois Special Education Tuition Waiver Program – Teaching candidates who commit to teaching special education in Illinois for two years are eligible to receive a waiver of all tuition for four years of college.
 - Grow Our Own Teacher Program – The program was authorized by the State Legislature in July 2004 and scheduled to begin in January 2005. However, it remains unfunded as of Spring 2005. The program would provide full tuition reimbursement or loan forgiveness for students enrolled in programs developed by consortia comprised of colleges of education, school districts, and community groups. Students would move through the programs as cohorts and receive two years of support as they begin teaching. Candidates must be parents, community leaders, or paraprofessional personnel prior to starting the program, and must agree to teach for five years in a needy school.

CREATING A PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

“Incentives and hiring improvements help bring teachers through the schoolhouse door. However, if we expect teachers to perform at the top of their game, they must be welcomed into a professional learning community.” (pg. 27)

Sound Induction, Mentoring, and Peer-Review Processes

► Funding is Currently Unavailable for a Statewide Induction Program

As outlined earlier in this paper, Illinois currently lacks a statewide induction program. One was created and funded in 2003, but state funding has not been made available for this program since that year.

Research has demonstrated that such programs can have a positive effect on teacher retention. The IERC found, in their 2003 analysis *Teacher Induction in Illinois: Evidence from the Illinois Teacher Study* (IERC 2003-2), that while most of the teachers surveyed said their school had offered some form of induction activity, teachers who had received a package of varied induction opportunities were the most positive about their career choice, and most likely to be planning to continue as teachers.

➤ Induction Programs are Growing Across the State

Despite the lack of a state-level induction program, many districts have their own programs. According to *Effective Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategies in the Midwest: Who Is Making Use of Them?*, a 2001 survey conducted by North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL), nearly 60% of Illinois school superintendents report having some form of induction program in their district. This figure is considerably lower than other states, however, such as Michigan and Ohio, in which more than 90% of superintendents report induction programs in place in their districts. www.ncrel.org/policy/pubs/html/strategy/

Retired Mentors Program – The Chicago Public Schools have partnered with the National Retired Teachers Association and GOLDEN Teachers to pair retired teachers with beginning teachers. The retired teachers work as mentors, spending half days for twenty weeks in the classroom with their partner teacher, observing, team-teaching and modeling. They are paid by CPS for their time. Both the retired and practicing teachers participate in ongoing discussion groups and workshops about issues they face in their work.

➤ Teacher Retention Continues to be a Challenge

In a field where as many as 40% of teachers leave during their first five years, teacher retention is a national concern, affecting students as well as districts. The most recent ISBE Supply and Demand Report (2003) states that 93% of teachers (138,119 of 148,515) stayed in the public schools from 2002-2003, while another 4% moved from position to position within the school system.

The IERC found in their *Teacher Supply in Illinois: Evidence From the Illinois Teacher Study* (December 2002) that teachers are influenced by their perceptions of school resources, student behavior, and safety in deciding where to teach. The study also found that many who leave the field intend to return: they are stopping out, not dropping out. According to their survey results, 78% of those who left to be homemakers, and 76% of those who left for another job within Illinois public schools intended to return to teaching for the public schools within five years. Additionally, 54% of those working for non-IPS schools and 43% of those working outside the field of education said they planned to return to IPS within the same timeframe.

Peer Assistance and Review

Peer assistance and review programs are gaining in popularity among schools and districts across the country. Their aim is to improve teacher quality and retention by supplying new teachers and struggling veterans with guidance from their peers. Peer assistance may resemble a mentoring program, while peer review is more formal – another teacher provides a formal review of one's teaching. In California, where such a program has been funded under state law since 2001, that review is then presented to a panel of teachers, who then make recommendations to the school board as to whether that teacher should continue working for the district.

In Illinois, there is no statewide program to promote peer review and assistance, but it is likely that it is happening at the local level. There is, to our knowledge, no statewide data on the extent of these programs.

Professional Development That Supports Sustained Growth

➤ Revised Rules for Recertification Allow for Expanded Professional Development Options

Certification requirements, discussed above, allow for teachers to move from initial to standard certification, as well as renew their standard and master certificates through a variety of pathways. One that is just taking shape after passage of SB1553 in 2004, revising the administrative code, is the use of Continuing Professional Development Units and Continuing Education Units.

Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDUs), are a way to recognize the professional development activities that occur in schools and districts on a regular basis. Units can be awarded for activities such as participating in a mentoring program (9-11 CPDUs per semester), being part of a school leadership team (5 CPDUs per semester), or conducting action research projects (8-11 CPDUs per project). Teachers seeking to renew their standard certificate must earn 120 CPDUs over the five years between renewals. Under the revisions made in 2004, teachers can generally earn CPDUs in any subject they choose, though 20% must relate to serving the needs of disabled students in the mainstream classroom. This is a provision relating to the 1998 “Corey H.” settlement regarding mainstreaming special education students in Illinois.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) involve more formal professional development, such as that received through a seminar, conferences or workshop. Credit is only given if the provider is certified through ISBE. To renew a standard certificate, teachers must

earn 24 CEUs. As with CPDUs, 20% must be in issues relating to special education.

Teachers can also receive credit towards their professional development obligations through graduate-level college coursework. College courses, CPDUs and CEUs can also be combined to provide a teacher’s total amount of professional development.

Effective Use of Time and Technology

➤ ISBE Technology is Working to Reduce Paperwork

In the past few years, ISBE has worked to create several databases to help teachers and administrators manage the paperwork involved in various school processes. The state has created several key web-accessible databases and tools to achieve this purpose. The following can all be found through ISBE’s website, www.isbe.state.il.us.

- CeRTS – The Certificate Renewal Tracking System provides teachers with all the forms they need to renew their certificate online. Administrators such as Local Professional Development Committees and Regional Superintendents, can also access the information. Teachers can enter their professional development activities as they complete them, and ensure that when their certificate is up for renewal, they have completed all the necessary steps.
- OTIS – The Online Teacher Information System provides a way for both teachers and administrators to track a teacher’s credentials and certification status. Teachers can access their own information, and can request duplicate certificates, view their current certification status, and confirm the positions for which they are highly qualified under NCLB. Administrators can verify teacher certification and manage and evaluate teacher placements.

➤ TQE Experimented with Creating Online Modules

A recent federal middle-level Teacher Quality Enhancement grant focused on using technology to enhance teacher training. The four Illinois public universities and their local community colleges that participated in the grant each attempted to develop modules for professional development, and several were designed and added to the institutions' websites.

Better Pay and Better Pay Systems

➤ Illinois Ranks Competitively in Teacher Salaries

ISBE reported that Illinois paid its teachers in 2003-2004 an average salary of \$53,820, according to National Education Association figures. This places the state at #8 in the nation. The highest average teacher pay was in California, at \$58,000, and the low was South Dakota, at \$33,000.

As noted above, National Board for Teacher Professional Standards certification currently results in bonuses for teachers of \$3,000 or more annually from ISBE, though that amount may drop as the budget for this program fails to keep up with the growing number of NBPTS certified teachers in the state.

NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS (NBPTS): THE LINCHPIN IN CAREER STAFFING PLANS

"As teachers become more accomplished, they should be recognized and given opportunities for new roles based on their expertise. The Commission continues to view the standards developed by the NBPTS as the benchmark for truly accomplished teaching, as do many districts and states." (pg. 31).

➤ The Number of NBPTS Teachers in Illinois is on the Rise

As outlined above, NBPTS certification is the only way to receive a Master Teaching Certificate in Illinois. An increasing number of teachers are seeking this type of certification. In 2004, 413 Illinois teachers received NBPTS certification, as compared to 255 in 2003. Since NBPTS began certifying teachers in 1993, 1238 Illinois teachers have received certification.

Nationally, more than 40,000 teachers have been NBPTS certified. Illinois ranks #8 in the country for total number of board certified teachers, but still is quite far behind #1 North Carolina, with 8280. The number of Illinois NBPTS certified teachers is increasing, however. In 2004, the state ranked #6 in terms of the number of new certificants. Of 886 school districts in the state, 230 have at least one board-certified teacher.

Illinois Teacher Salaries and Benefits

Average teacher salaries in Illinois rank high compared to other states - 8th nationally and 1st in the Midwest in 2003-04. But salaries vary widely by district. For the period 2003-2004, the range for beginning teachers in Illinois with a bachelor's degree was \$20,890 to \$42,681, depending on their district.

The median scheduled salary for the State in 2003-04 was \$53,820. Median district salaries vary by enrollment. Districts of larger enrollment size tend to adopt higher scheduled salaries than smaller districts. The median of the highest scheduled salaries for districts with less than 500 students enrolled was \$46,724, whereas the corresponding median for districts with 12,000 or more students enrolled was \$81,117. The Northeast districts paid the highest median salaries to all categories of teachers.

Teachers' benefits have been improving. In 1994-95, for example, 34.8% of districts had sick leave banks, compared to 48.8% in 2003-04. Reimbursement of college expense went from 55.2% to 68.5%, and sick leave accumulated beyond 180 days went from 61.7% to 85.9% of districts. Only about 2.1% of districts use merit salary. Districts that offered early retirement beyond the statutory requirement dipped to 34% in the 1990s [1996-97 & 1997-98], but were back up to 47.1% in 2003-04.

Source: Illinois Teacher Salary Study 2003-2004. ISBE, Springfield, Illinois, 2004.

➤ **The National Board Resource Center at ISU is Working to Increase Board Certification**

The National Board Resource Center at Illinois State University was founded by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in 1999 as one of the five national centers charged with aiding teachers in receiving NBPTS certification. The National Board Resource Center:

- Promotes the use of National Board Standards as a professional development tool for in service educators
- Supports diverse groups of teacher candidates seeking National Board Certification
- Collaborates with National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs), local school districts, professional organizations, and community groups to further school improvement

- Builds the capacity of Illinois NBCTs to improve teaching and learning in their respective schools and districts
- Partners with Illinois universities to align courses and degree programs with National Board Standards

➤ **Chicago Public Schools is Seeking to Increase Its Pool of NBPTS Teachers**

The Chicago Public Schools began 2005 with 380 NBPTS certified master teachers. By 2007, the goal is to have 1,200 such teachers. Arne Duncan, the chief executive officer of the district says that the effort to increase the number of master teachers is central to the district's plans for improvement. To help with this effort, the Chicago Public Education Fund has raised \$2.4 million for the project. www.cpef.org

How the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) Measures Student Progress Toward the Illinois Learning Standards¹ (ILS)

(Effective 2004-2005, Writing and Social Science will not be tested.)

PSAE Tests	What the Standards Require ²	How the PSAE Measures the Standards	What Is in Each Test ³
Reading	Ability to read with fluency and understanding and to comprehend a broad range of reading materials (ILS 1A – C), including literature representative of various societies, eras, and ideas (2A, B). Ability to evaluate and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems, and communicate ideas (5A – C).	Provides comprehensive assessment of reading skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic reading passages that include prose fiction, humanities, social science, and natural science • Work-related informational pieces, such as policies, bulletins, letters, manuals, and governmental regulations • Multiple-choice questions that require students to reference the text and think critically 	ACT Reading + Work Keys Reading for Information
Writing	Ability to communicate in writing for a variety of purposes (ILS 3B, C) and to compose coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences using correct grammar and mechanics (3A).	Assesses writing skills in more than one way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple-choice questions that target editing for conventions of written English (including punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure) and for effective writing (including strategy, organization, and style) • One expository or persuasive essay written on a given topic and assessed for clarity, coherence, and the extent to which ideas are developed 	ACT English + ISBE-Developed Writing
Math	Understanding and ability to apply knowledge of number sense, estimation, and arithmetic (ILS 6A – D; 7A, B; 8C); algebra (8A – D); geometry and trigonometry (9A – D); measurement (7C); and data organization and probability (10A – C).	Provides comprehensive assessment of mathematics knowledge and skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assesses mathematical skills acquired in courses taken through grade 11 • Academic and work-related content assessed through increasingly complex tasks • Multiple-choice questions require mathematical reasoning to solve practical problems • Approved calculators may be used, and complex formulas are provided 	ACT Mathematics + Work Keys Applied Mathematics
Science	Understanding and ability to apply knowledge of experimental design (ILS 11A) and technological design (11B), including how to conduct controlled experiments and analyze and present the results; life sciences (12A, B), chemistry (12C), physics (12D), Earth science (12E), and space science (12F); laboratory safety, valid sources of data, and ethical research practices (13A); and historical interactions between science, technology, and society (13B).	Measures scientific knowledge and its application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills • Science inquiry; life, physical, and Earth and space sciences; and science, technology, and society • Multiple-choice questions that assess the ability of students to use critical thinking skills to evaluate information provided on the test 	ACT Science Reasoning + ISBE-Developed Science
Social Science	Understanding of U.S. political systems, including the basic principles, and structure and functions of government (ILS 14 A – F); of economic systems (15 A – E); of world geography and the effects of geography on society (17 A – D); of how social systems develop, including cultural traditions and the roles of individuals and groups (18 A – C). Comprehension of the events, trends, individuals and movement that shape the history of the United States and the world (16 A – E).	Provides comprehensive assessment of social science knowledge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government, economics, geography, U.S. history, and global perspectives • Interpretation of maps, charts, and original documents, such as newspaper articles, treaties, and pictures • Multiple-choice questions that assess social science concepts and principles as well as problem-solving skills necessary for effective citizenship 	ISBE-Developed Social Science

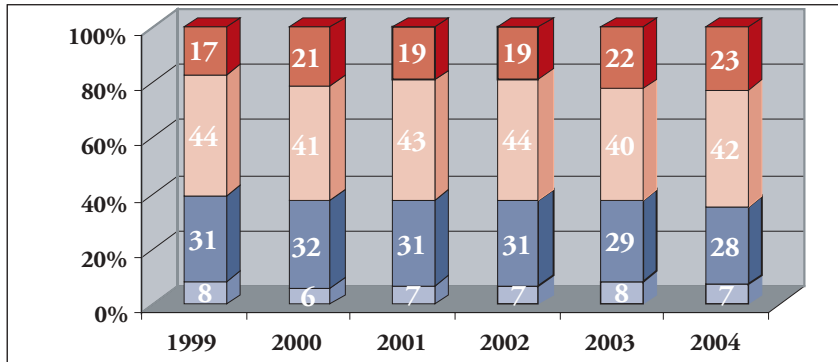
¹Copies of *Illinois Learning Standards* are available from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Call the ISBE Information Desk, 217/782-4321, or access the ISBE Web site at www.isbe.net.

² Not all standards are assessed by the PSAE. Some are difficult or impossible to test using statewide, paper-and-pencil tests. For example, ILS 4A, "Speak effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience," is readily and most appropriately assessed at the classroom level.

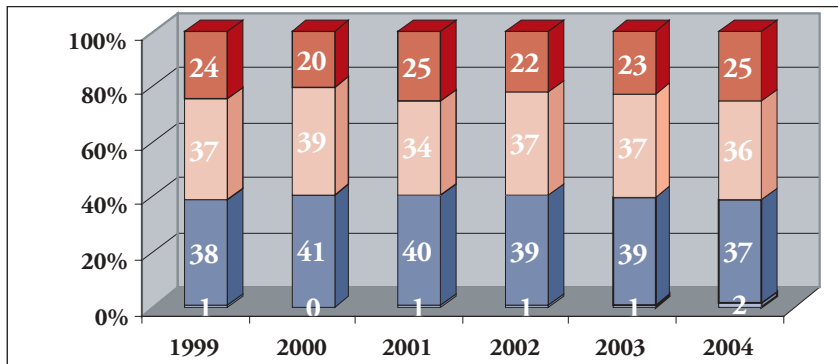
³ The PSAE is constructed using three components: (1) ISBE-developed writing, science, and social science assessments; (2) the ACT Assessment, which includes reading, English, mathematics, and science reasoning; and (3) two Work Keys assessments (*Reading for Information and Applied Mathematics*)

READING

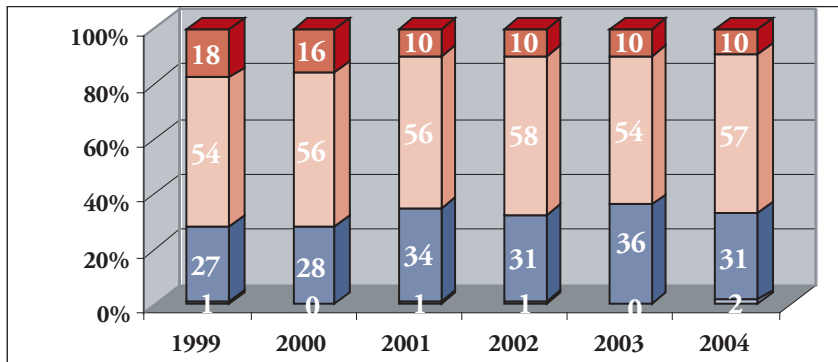
Grade 3



Grade 5

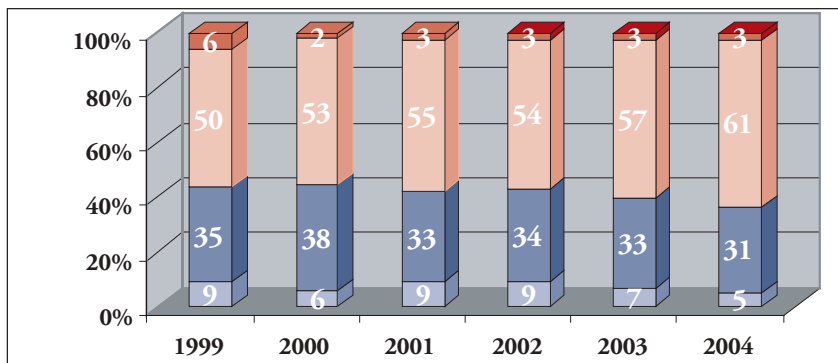


Grade 8

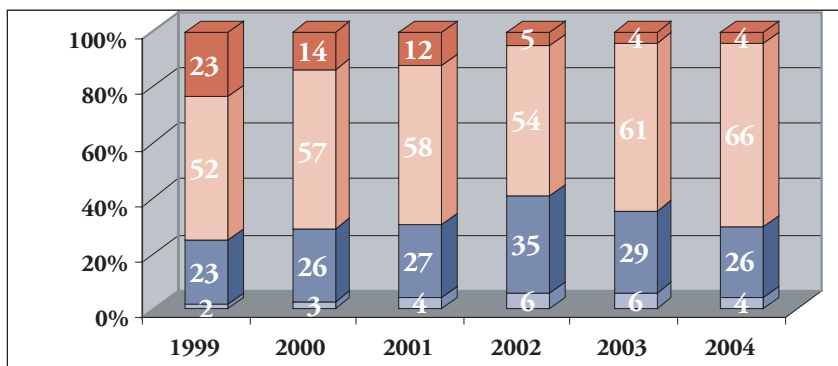


WRITING

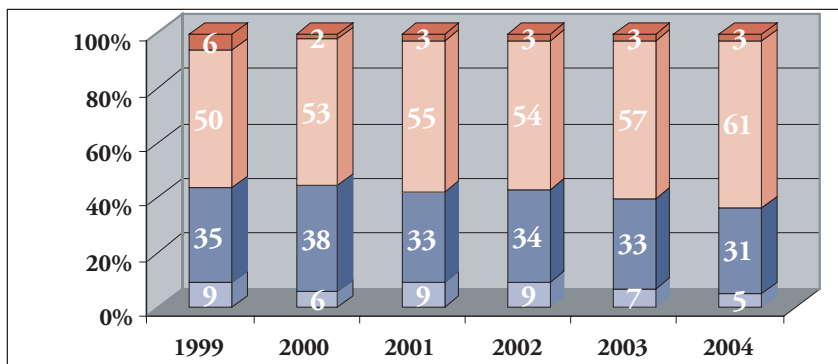
Grade 3



Grade 5

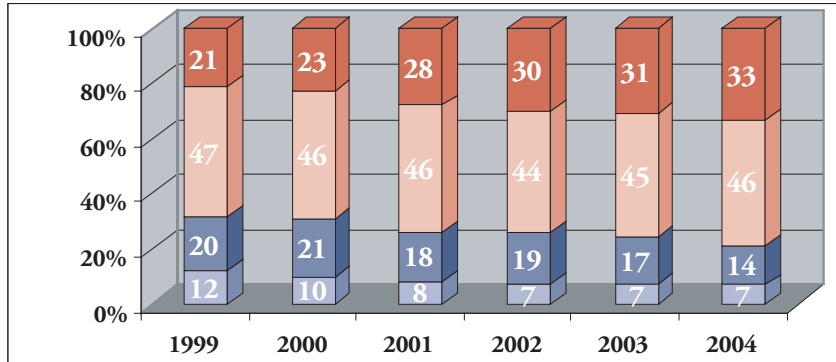


Grade 8

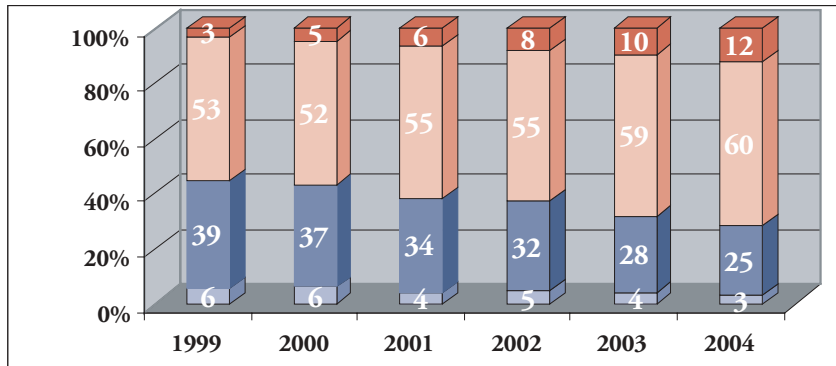


MATHEMATICS

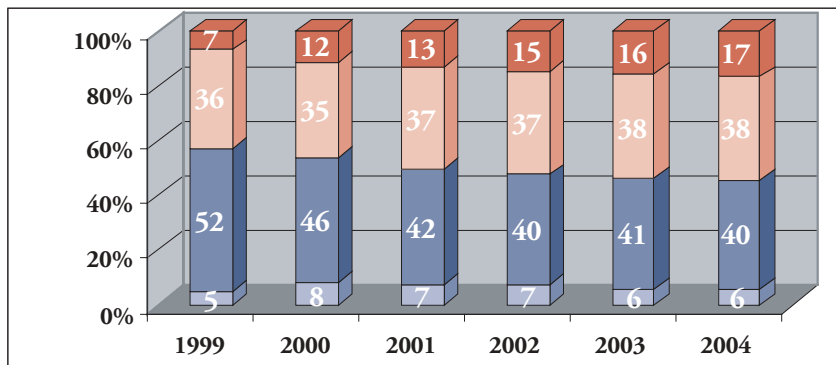
Grade 3



Grade 5

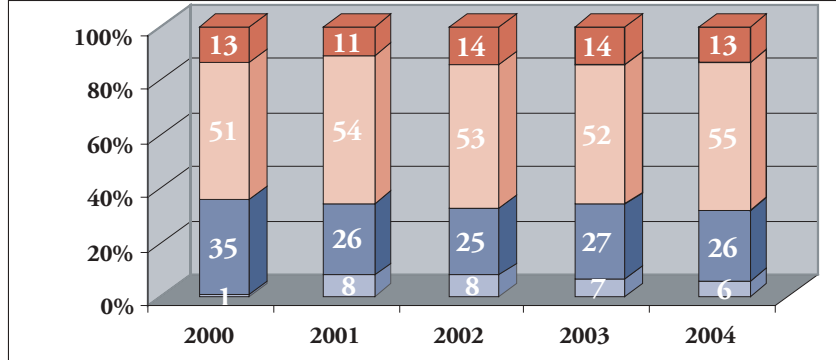


Grade 8

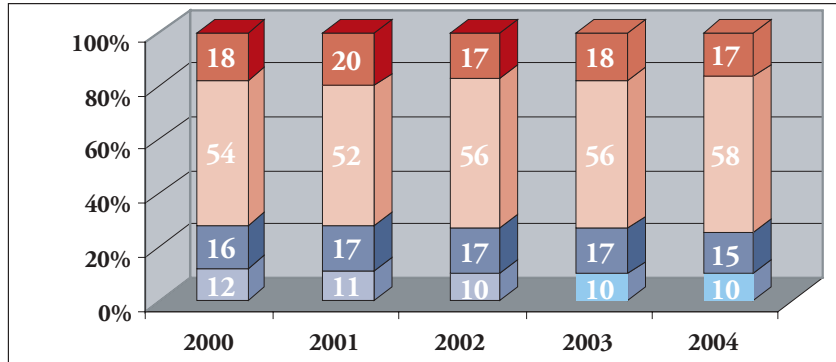


SCIENCE

Grade 4

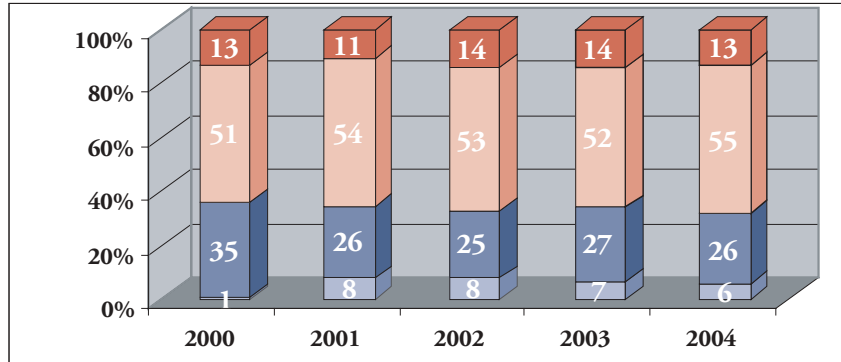


Grade 7

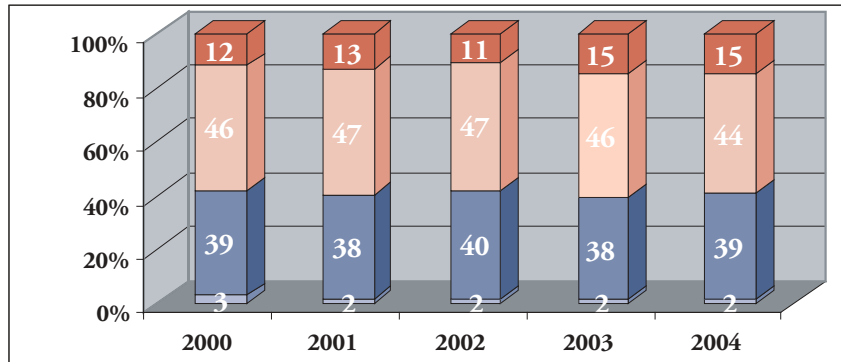


SOCIAL SCIENCE

Grade 4



Grade 7



2004 PERFORMANCE ON SELECTED STATE ASSESSMENTS

ILLINOIS STANDARDS ACHIEVEMENT TEST (ISAT)

Meets or Exceeds Standards

3rd Grade

	Reading	Mathematics	Writing
White, non-Hispanic	77%	90%	72%
African American, non-Hispanic	39%	54%	45%
Hispanic	56%	76%	58%
Asian/Pacific Islander	85%	95%	81%
Native American	60%	79%	54%
Multiracial/Ethnic	72%	86%	66%
Low Income	46%	25%	50%
Not Low Income	78%	60%	73%
Total	64%	79%	64%

5th Grade

	Reading	Mathematics	Writing
White, non-Hispanic	72%	83%	77%
African American, non-Hispanic	37%	44%	50%
Hispanic	50%	67%	65%
Asian/Pacific Islander	80%	92%	87%
Native American	66%	76%	71%
Multiracial/Ethnic	63%	69%	74%
Low Income	42%	54%	55%
Not Low Income	74%	84%	80%
Total	61%	72%	70%

2004 PERFORMANCE ON SELECTED STATE ASSESSMENTS

ILLINOIS STANDARDS ACHIEVEMENT TEST (ISAT)

Meets or Exceeds Standards

8th Grade

	Reading	Mathematics	Writing
White, non-Hispanic	76%	67%	70%
African American, non-Hispanic	48%	25%	46%
Hispanic	51%	39%	57%
Asian/Pacific Islander	82%	81%	82%
Native American	72%	55%	62%
Multiracial/Ethnic	67%	46%	62%
Low Income	50%	33%	49%
Not Low Income	77%	67%	74%
Total	67%	54%	64%

PRAIRIE STATE ACHIEVEMENT EXAMINATION (PSAE)

Meets or Exceeds Standards

11th Grade

	Reading	Mathematics	Writing
White, non-Hispanic	65%	63%	68%
African American, non-Hispanic	32%	20%	33%
Hispanic	35%	31%	38%
Asian/Pacific Islander	65%	75%	75%
Native American	53%	44%	57%
Multiracial/Ethnic	51%	45%	54%
Low Income	33%	26%	33%
Not Low Income	64%	61%	68%
Total	57%	53%	60%

Additional results are available at www.isbe.state.il.us/ for the following categories:

- Gender
- Migrant
- Students with disabilities

Schools need to make Annual Yearly Progress (see pg. 5) on each subgroup of students.

Source: 2004 Illinois State Report Card, www.isbe.state.il.us/

1. Content Knowledge

The teacher understands the central concepts, methods of inquiry, and structure of the discipline(s) and creates learning experiences that make the content meaningful to all students.

2. Human Development and Learning

The teacher understands how individuals grow, develop, and learn and provides learning opportunities that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students.

3. Diversity

The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.

4. Planning for Instruction

The teacher understands instructional planning and designs instruction based upon knowledge of the discipline, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

5. Learning Environment

The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

6. Instructional Delivery

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

7. Communication

The teacher uses knowledge of effective written, verbal, nonverbal, and visual communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

8. Assessment

The teacher understands various formal and informal assessment strategies and uses them to support the continuous development of all students.

9. Collaborative Relationships

The teacher understands the role of the community in education and develops and maintains collaborative relationships with colleagues, parent/guardians, and the community to support student learning and well-being.

10. Reflection and Professional Growth

The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates how choices and actions affect students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community and actively seeks opportunities to grow professionally

11. Professional Conduct

The teacher understands education as a profession, maintains standards of professional conduct, and provides leadership to improve student learning and well-being.

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Talking Tough Issues . . . Catalyzing Change

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ILLINOIS

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