

Vision 20/20: What's Been Done? What's Next?

Five years after Vision 20/20 was created, a number of the critical issues identified in the public policy platform have been addressed through legislative action. But, there is more work to be done. So what's been accomplished, and what's left to do before the year 2020? Here is a closer look...



EQUITABLE AND ADEQUATE SCHOOL FUNDING

WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

Far and away the biggest success of Vision 20/20 came in August 2017, when the Illinois General Assembly passed the historic education funding reform bill, SB 1947, into law, creating the first roadmap for equitable and adequate funding for schools in Illinois.

The legislation is intended to put new money for education into the state's poorest and neediest districts—and to try to ease the state's reliance on local property taxes to pay for schools.

Here are a few of the highlights of the legislation:

- For the first time, school funding in Illinois is tied to evidence-based best practices proven by research to enhance student achievement in the classroom.
- Each school district is treated individually, with an adequacy target based on the needs of its student body. The greater the student need, the higher the adequacy target.
- New dollars will be distributed to the neediest districts first, or those furthest from their adequacy target.
- Treats students in Chicago with parity to every other school district in the state by getting rid of block grants and reconciling pension payments.

Federal sequestration, state proration, followed by drastically declining EAV were gradually leading school districts as ours into financial distress. Cuts in state aid hurt districts like ours more than districts that do not rely as much on state aid.

—Dr. Creg E. Williams, superintendent
Thornton Fractional High School District #215

WHAT'S NEXT?

Although the evidence-based funding legislation passed last year, schools have only received their base funding minimum from September through March. That is set to change this week.

On April 10th, the Illinois State Board of Education says public school districts will start to receive the new tier funding now that the trailer bill passed to clean up the loose ends. Districts will receive their new tier funding in April, May and June.

Our goal for the 2018–19 budget is for at least \$350 million in new tier funding for K–12 education.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS

2010

JUNE VISION 20/20 FORMED

2010



LEGISLATION DRAFTED

2014

JULY HB 2657 SIGNED INTO LAW

2015

“ For the first time, every step taken will close the gap to adequacy; we will no longer lose state revenue through the GSA formula as a result of our growing EAV. ”

—Gary Tipsord, superintendent
Leroy Community Unit School District #2

While the extra funding is significant, there is still a long way to go to bring each school district in Illinois up to their adequacy targets. However, the passage of the funding model provides a roadmap for how to get there.

The goal for Vision 20/20 is for each school district to reach 90 percent of their adequacy target in 10 years—an investment that will require at least \$5 billion. Therefore, the state is already behind in reaching that goal and can only catch up by increasing funding.

“ The evidence-based model is the biggest anti-poverty piece of legislation that has passed the General Assembly in the last 20 years. ”

—Dr. Brent Clark, executive director IASA



WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

The efforts of Vision 20/20 have yielded two significant pieces of legislation that improved teacher reciprocity for Illinois and began to address the ongoing teacher shortage.

In July 2015, HB 2657 became law and streamlined educator licensure reciprocity agreements with other states.

Here are highlights of HB 2657:

- In emergency situations, school districts can employ for up to 120 days substitute teachers who hold a professional educator license or license with stipulations that is endorsed for the grade level of instruction.
- Teachers that have completed an evidence-based assessment of teacher effectiveness or a test of basic skills in another state do not have to complete additional Illinois assessments upon initial licensure.

- Out-of-state teachers seeking licensure that have completed the same required coursework as in-state candidates need only verify program completion to receive a professional educator license.
- Endorsements for out-of-state applicants for a principal endorsement or superintendent endorsement are available to individuals who have completed an out-of-state approved education program to become a principal or superintendent, met state exam requirements and received a certificate or license endorsed in a teaching field.
- Endorsements for out-of-state applicants for a chief school business official endorsement are available to those individuals with a master's degree in school business management, finance, or accounting; completed an internship in school business management or have two years of experience as a school business administrator; met all state exam requirements; and have completed modules in reading methods, special education and English learners.

In January 2017, SB 2912, which aimed to address the teacher shortage by making it easier for educators trained outside Illinois to work here became the law.

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IBAM
COMMITTEE MEETS

JANUARY
SB 2912 SIGNED
INTO LAW

AUGUST
SB 1947 SIGNED
INTO LAW

MARCH
TRAILER BILL
SIGNED INTO LAW

2016

2017

2018

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Vision 20/20: Educators...cont'd.

Here are highlights of SB 2912:

- Reduced the license fee for substitute teachers from \$100 to \$50.
- Created a one-year grace period for retired teachers with lapsed licenses to bring their license into good standing without fines or coursework, allowing them to substitute.
- Prevented educators who retired mid-cycle from having their licenses lapse, allowing them to substitute.
- Allowed educators licensed in other states to obtain an Illinois license through a more streamlined process, enabling Illinois State Board of Education to grant licenses based on comparable out-of-state licenses instead of comparing preparatory programs from other states.
- Applied content area tests from other states for out-of-state licensees seeking an Illinois license.
- Created a provisional in-state endorsement on a provisional educator license with stipulations to allow candidates who have met all other requirements except passage of edTPA. This would allow candidates one additional year to pass the assessment while teaching.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The teacher shortage in Illinois remains a critical problem and will be at the forefront in 2018.

Passing legislation that increases the applicant pool of qualified full-time and substitute teachers will be a top priority this legislative session.

—Diane Hendren
IASA Director of Governmental Relations

Before Vision 20/20 pushed to address the teacher shortage, we lost a lot of out-of-state candidates because they were required to take additional tests or courses to teach in Illinois. If we're going to try and be competitive and recruit teachers out-of-state, reciprocity is vital.

—Jeff Vose, past president
Illinois Association of Regional School Superintendents

The Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance (IASA, IASBO, IASB and IPA) has identified eight general ideas it would like to see become law to address the teacher shortage. Those are:

- Full licensure reciprocity with other states
- Allow 60 hours of college credit for substitute teaching
- Expansion of and flexibility for alternative licensure programs
- Relax licensure requirements for career and technical teachers
- Do away with the basic skills test
- Put the edTPA in the curriculum instead of a pass or fail test
- Create a short term and long term substitute teaching license
- Bring back alternative licensure for teachers

The alliance is supporting seven bills this legislative session regarding the teacher shortage. To learn more about what bills we're supporting, click [here](#).

“ A quality education today absolutely includes high-speed internet access. We need to attract businesses and compete in the global economy. The one-time cost of upgrading to use free online resources, teach coding, and integrate technology across the curriculum is essential to preparing all students for the jobs of tomorrow and



WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

In December 2017, Illinois State Board of Education released a notice of funding opportunity/request for proposals for pending state funds to expand internet connectivity in schools.

The funds would reimburse school districts for the cost of upgrading their broadband infrastructure to fiber optic technology.

The effort is part of The Illinois Classroom Connectivity Initiative, which works with school districts across the state to accelerate bandwidth upgrades through a partnership with state agencies and Education Super Highway.

So far, it has helped 756 Illinois school districts, which educate more than 1.2 million students, meet the 100 kbps per student minimum connectivity goal, according to the state education board.

WHAT'S NEXT?

According to the national nonprofit organization, Education Super Highway, 2017 State of the States report, more than 630,000 students in 97 school districts in Illinois still need to be connected to the minimum recommended bandwidth goal.

Legislation, SB 2312, has been filed by Senators Andy Manar, Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant, Chuck Weaver and Sam McCann to request \$16 million from the state to run fiber cables to each of the school districts. The money would come from the school infrastructure fund, which is funded by telecommunication and gaming fees.

“ High-speed internet has become an absolute necessity for providing students the type of education that will offer them the best chance at future success. Rural students shouldn't be at a disadvantage simply because of their zip code. Access to reliable high-speed internet will allow school districts to efficiently strengthen the educational opportunities available to their students. ”

—State Sen. Chuck Weaver, R-Peoria

“ There's federal money on the table that we can take advantage of, and we want to make sure we do that on behalf of school districts that can benefit from this state-

Importantly, the funding would be matched nearly three to one by the federal government to cover the installation costs, which often are cost-prohibitive for school districts in hard-to-reach areas of the state.

The federal money has to be claimed by 2020.

**ed to cultivate a skilled workforce for Illinois to
rading to fiber opens up limitless opportunities
e curriculum. The state's investment today is
fueling our growth as a state. ¶¶**

—Dr. Tony Smith,
State Superintendent of Education

**federal partnership,” Manar
said. “Rural schools need to be
a priority in Illinois. The digital
divide is another example of
the inequities among school
districts that we have to
work to address. ¶¶**

—State Sen. Andy Manar, D-Bunker Hill

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Vision 20/20...cont'd.



WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

In August, 2015, the second piece of legislation sponsored by Vision 20/20, HB 2683, was signed and created the Illinois Balanced Accountability Model.

The new accountability model for schools stated that, in addition to using standardized test scores, schools should have flexibility to use an evidence-based framework to demonstrate student improvement and growth.

The legislation preceded Illinois' Every Student Succeeds Act plan. Some of the framework in HB 2683 was adopted in Illinois' ESSA plan, although the federal plan places more emphasis on standardized assessments.

Another focus of the Shared Accountability pillar included unfunded mandate relief. The passage of the evidence-based funding model provided some help in this area, including:

- School boards can determine the frequency of physical education as long as it is a minimum of three days per five-day week (the state previously required daily PE). Also, allows districts to exempt on a case-by-case basis 7th through 12th graders who participate in sports.
- School districts can contract with third party drivers education vendors without requesting a waiver from the General Assembly.

**¶¶ This is the biggest shift in
Illinois school accountability
since the federal No Child Left
Behind Act was implemented
16 years ago. Unlike NCLB,
which only took test scores
into account, this is truly a
balanced accountability model
that looks at those scores and
achievement gaps, but also
takes into consideration a
school district's professional
practice to improve student
performance. It will be ultimately
the responsibility of the district
to tell your own story. ¶¶**

—Dr. Brent Clark, executive director of IASA

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Schools now have a more streamlined process to request waivers from the General Assembly from other state mandates.

“This is a totally new approach, as previously a school building was only judged on student performance on a standardized test,” Grimm said. “Accountability is not something we should be afraid of. We are putting the system in place to allow us to demonstrate public education is succeeding and not failing.”

—Ralph Grimm, director of Vision 20/20

WHAT CHANGES:

The Illinois Balanced Accountability Model is still technically the current law in Illinois, but it is being replaced with a new accountability model that conforms to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) as outlined by the US Department of Education. This model changes how school buildings are held accountable for student performance, with new academic and student success indicators. As required by the federal ESSA law, beginning with the 2018 Illinois School Report Card, each school building will receive one of four designations. Those are:

- Exemplary School
- Commendable School
- Underperforming School
- Lowest Performing School

In addition, school buildings will also receive a letter grade, A, B, C, D or F on student growth from the previous year.

Certain details of ESSA are still being worked out and vetted by the Illinois State Board of Education.