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LETTER FROM THE VISION 20/20 PARTNERS

Education is an investment in our children’s future, our state’s future, and our nation’s future. It is our responsibility as educators to reflect upon the current state of education in Illinois and take action to create an education system that meets the needs of all students.

Many times statewide organizations are better known for what they oppose rather than those things for which they stand. In November 2012, the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) initiated a visioning process in partnership with the Illinois Principals Association (IPA), the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO), the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), the Superintendents’ Commission for the Study of Demographics and Diversity (SCSDD), and the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) to unite the education community and to develop a long-range blueprint for improving public education in Illinois. Together we stand for excellence in education for all Illinois children.

Education reform policies have created a divisive relationship between educators and policymakers. Blaming teachers and education leaders is not a solution to the challenges that education faces in our state. We are all part of the system and need to work in partnership to conquer these challenges to create meaningful and lasting change.

Vision 20/20’s policy platform reflects educators from across the state and is representative of opinions from the southern tip of Illinois through the northern Chicago suburbs. Although the City of Chicago operates under a separate school code, they face many similar challenges. This vision is the result of input from over 3,000 key stakeholders, discussions with field experts, and a review of current literature on best practices.

Conscious that no single legislative attempt at school improvement can be developed, implemented, or find success without the support, devotion, and hard work of all stakeholders, Vision 20/20 asks not just for state action, but also for local action and the support of educators across the state to fulfill the promise of public education. On behalf of the over two million school children in Illinois, we challenge the State Legislature, the Governor, and all stakeholders to take action.

Our organizations contributed their time, insight, and advocacy to the Vision 20/20 process. Together, we are committed to supporting and promoting the priorities of this vision.

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OUR VISION

The uniting purpose shared across zip codes and political party lines in Illinois is the overwhelming belief that public education plays a defining role in ensuring equal opportunity. It is our collective duty to do all we can to guarantee every student, no matter his or her demographic or geographic identity, has equal access to a quality education.

As public educators, we believe public education works. We reject the premise that education in Illinois has failed but recognize its impact has not been equitably delivered to all student populations and that there are opportunities for continuous improvement. Now is the time to act. Our vision forward is clear.

We believe the key to continuous improvement in public education relies on the wisdom and innovation of public educators who work with students every day. This is a continuous process. We are educators because we care about the future of each and every student and for the opportunity to teach and shape the next generation.

Through the Vision 20/20 process, four areas for prioritization emerged: highly effective educators, 21st century learning, shared accountability, and equitable and adequate funding.

**Highly Effective Educators**
The quality of teachers and school leaders is the greatest predictor of student achievement schools can influence. By attracting, developing, and retaining our state’s best educators, we can have a profound impact on student learning.

**21st Century Learning**
For success in life, students need more than a knowledge of math and reading. It is time to expand the definition of student learning, commit to the development of the “whole child,” and invest in policies proven to link all schools to 21st century learning tools.

**Shared Accountability**
A quality education for all Illinois students cannot be ensured without the collaboration, compromise, and hard work of both educators and legislators. With that in mind, it is necessary to expand educator responsibility in the legislative process, create a shared accountability model, and restructure mandates to allow more local district flexibility.

**Equitable and Adequate Funding**
All students in Illinois are entitled to a quality education. It is our duty to ensure our students have access to all necessary resources by improving equity in the funding model, appropriating adequate dollars for education, and allowing local school districts the autonomy needed to increase efficiency.

Educators understand the importance of statewide education policy. However, that policy should be crafted to provide districts the flexibility and autonomy to best meet the needs of the students they serve. Statewide, process-specific mandates in education, similar to over-regulation in the business world, do not result in the innovation needed to improve education and do not recognize the state’s diversity. We believe educators should be held to the highest standards and be given the flexibility to apply their experience and knowledge to match local needs in order to best support each individual student.

This document shapes a vision for public education in Illinois to guide educators, legislators, labor, businesses, parents, and community members as we work together toward the common goal of fulfilling the promise of public education in Illinois.
VISION 20/20 PROCESS

Vision 20/20 engaged representatives from IASA regions to unite the Illinois education community. Representatives from each of IASA’s 21 regions were active participants in the initiative, as were representatives from the Illinois Principals Association (IPA), the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO), the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), the Superintendents’ Commission for the Study of Demographics and Diversity (SCSDD), and the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS). Representatives from each IASA region and from each partnering organization were distributed equally across policy areas to ensure equal representation.

The Vision 20/20 process was facilitated and managed by ECRA Group, Inc., a third party educational consulting firm. On behalf of the Vision 20/20 initiative, ECRA administered a survey to key stakeholder populations regarding the current state and desired future direction of education across Illinois. Approximately 3,400 individuals participated, including 661 current and former Illinois superintendents.1

Vision 20/20 Committee Members

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Carolyne Brooks, Illinois Association of School Boards
Matt Brue, Porta Comm Unit #202
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THE STATE OF ILLINOIS EDUCATION

Despite being ranked nearly last nationally in state education funding, rising poverty affecting one in four students, and substantial increases in unfunded mandates, Illinois students continue to perform well.

Illinois Public Education Outperforms National Averages

Every two years the federal government administers a national standardized assessment, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), for the purpose of comparing state performance. Illinois students exceed the national average in both reading and mathematics according to the most recent NAEP results.

In addition, the performance of Illinois students has improved steadily on NAEP since 2007.

Large Inequities in Education Exist

An achievement gap remains at both the state and federal level.

Both the United States and Illinois face the challenge of closing the achievement gap among students from different backgrounds, including students with disabilities, students from low-income backgrounds, and English Language Learner (ELL) students. The proportion of Illinois students in each of these populations, as well as their achievement on NAEP, is comparable to the U.S. averages for the same grades and subjects.

Nonetheless, an achievement gap remains at both the state and federal level. It is this achievement gap that should be of primary concern.
Illinois Performs Well on College and Career Indicators

Students in Illinois receiving at least a core curriculum outperform their counterparts nationwide.

Beyond test scores, the 2012 Illinois graduation rate of 82 percent remains above the national average. Illinois is ranked 12th in the nation for its percentage of persons 25 years old and older with a bachelor’s degree or higher. Composite scores for Illinois students on the ACT college admissions test are comparable to national composite scores.

ACT identifies a student as prepared to take the ACT if the student took four years of English and three years each of mathematics, social studies, and natural science, which they define as the core curriculum. Students in Illinois receiving at least a core curriculum outperform their counterparts nationwide.

Across the United States, only 57 percent of eleventh grade students took the ACT, while in Illinois 100 percent of public school students took the test. Illinois students rank 2nd in achievement among the states that tested 100 percent of their public school student population (Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, and Wyoming).

A consistent, positive trend is observed in average Illinois students’ ACT scores starting with the graduating class of 2002, the first class to take the ACT universally in Illinois. Students requiring extended time accommodations are excluded from the analysis. At the same time, average national scores have remained relatively constant.
Achievement Gap Exacerbated by Illinois’ Funding System

Illinois cannot begin to address its achievement gap without first adequately funding education for all of Illinois’ children.

Current funding in Illinois public schools is inadequate and contributes to inequities in public education. Across the nation, Illinois is ranked 50th in state funding for education, with Illinois funding only 28 percent of public education costs compared to 43 percent across the nation. Every year the Education Funding Advisory Board (EFAB) establishes minimum funding recommendations for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to “provide the basic costs of educating a child who is not at risk for academic failure.” This minimum recommendation is routinely disregarded when appropriating funds, with the difference between appropriated and recommended funding levels increasing over time, as seen below.

In early 2011, due to Illinois’ current financial condition, the legislature decided instead of allocating adequate funds to support the General State Aid formula, to only provide school districts with a portion of those funds, disproportionately affecting districts with the least local wealth and the largest percentage of students living in poverty. The analysis below is for FY2012, where 95 percent proration was observed; the discrepancy has only increased as General State Aid was prorated at 89 percent in FY2013 and FY2014. Illinois cannot begin to address its achievement gap without first adequately funding education for all of Illinois’ children. The amount of state funding each district receives is important because it has the potential to create an environment of equal opportunity, where every student can have access to basic resources.

District characteristics are strongly correlated with student achievement. For instance, income status accounts for 66 percent of the variance in the percentage of students meeting Illinois standards in reading and math at the district-level. Illinois’ inadequate funding structure reinforces the disadvantages already found among children living in communities with low property values. Currently each Illinois district’s resources are closely associated with local wealth. This is different from other states across the nation where greater state funding dilutes discrepancies in funding between high and low property wealth districts. States to examine include Minnesota, North Carolina, Michigan, California, and Ohio.

Beyond the moral imperative and responsibility to close the achievement gap in Illinois, achievement gaps systemically impact the broader economy. A 2009 report issued by McKinsey and Company estimated the impact of the achievement gap on U.S. GDP to be 1.3 to 2.3 trillion dollars, similar to the effect of a national recession.

* The appropriation after prorating was not officially calculated for 2014.
Despite inadequate funding, national benchmarking shows a consistent picture of competitive achievement across Illinois, with competitive performance on college and career readiness compared to the nation. Nonetheless, an unacceptable difference in educational outcomes between students based on their zip codes remains, which is further exacerbated by the state’s funding system.

Armed with this knowledge, and with a sense of moral imperative, Vision 20/20 aims to address the inequality inherent in our state’s education system while enhancing the educational experiences of all students.
In districts throughout Illinois, there are concerns regarding equity, access, and opportunities for continuous improvement. Specifically, Vision 20/20 has identified four priorities for the State of Illinois in order to have the most immediate and profound impact on public education: highly effective educators, 21st century learning, shared accountability, and equitable and adequate funding. Specific policy proposals for each priority can be found in the following pages.

**Vision 20/20 Priorities**

**Highly Effective Educators**
- Recruit and Retain High-Impact Educators
- Provide Relevant Professional Development

**21st Century Learning**
- Develop the “Whole Child”
- Preserve Instructional Time
- Invest in Early Childhood Education
- Link Students to College and Careers
- Expand Equity in Technology Access

**Shared Accountability**
- Expand Educator Role and Responsibility in State Governance
- Implement a Differentiated Accountability System
- Restructure Mandates

**Equitable and Adequate Funding**
- Fund Education Based on Local Need
- Stabilize State Funding for Education
- Enhance District Flexibility to Increase Financial Efficiency
Our Vision for Highly Effective Educators

Research continues to show that teachers and administrators have the largest in-school impact on student achievement. The best thing we as a state can do to improve public education is attract and develop highly effective educators. In particular, every effort must be made to draw minorities to the education profession as 2014 represents a shift in the U.S. student population to a majority-minority ethnic representation.

Accountability, professional development, and rigor are all essential to the development of high quality educational leaders across Illinois and are essential to ensuring there are highly effective teachers in our schools delivering exceptional instruction. Current educators should take a more active role in preparing future leaders through partnerships with higher education. Educators should also be encouraged and supported to take advantage of ongoing professional development.

Guiding Principles

We believe:

• High quality teachers and administrators have the most immediate, positive effect on student outcomes.
• Strong teachers and educational leaders are a key component of a high quality education for our students and our communities.
• Continuous professional development and opportunities for educator collaboration are proactive, research-based components of an effective continuous improvement process.
• More minority teachers and educational leaders are needed to serve Illinois’ increasingly diverse student population.
• Educators must hold other educators accountable to rigorous professional standards.

Rationale

Nationally, 72 percent of Americans have trust and confidence in public school teachers. Yet finding and hiring the best teachers and administrators is becoming more challenging as fewer individuals are entering the education profession. Of those who do choose to become an educator, eight percent of the nation’s teachers leave the profession every year. Illinois makes the task of locating the best talent ever more difficult as the current Illinois educator licensure system restricts the ability of highly qualified teaching candidates from other states to be selected for Illinois schools. The emergence of greater consistency of educational standards and experiences across states paves the way for expanding reciprocity agreements.

Illinois schools have an increasing need to find minority teachers and administrators. Approximately half of Illinois students are minority students, yet 83 percent of Illinois teachers are white. Alternative licensure programs have been proven to recruit a higher percentage of minority candidates, math and science teachers, and candidates with experience outside of teaching and education. The recruitment of minority candidates is of particular benefit to minority students, who experience greater academic, personal, and social success when taught by teachers who belong to the same ethnic group.

The field of education continues to evolve as best practices are identified and new policies implemented. Especially in light of recent changes to the education system, professional development remains an integral part of the teaching and learning process. As such, professional development deserves appropriate attention. The ongoing, relevant professional development of educators is a necessary resource to ensure high quality learning opportunities for our students. One particular form of professional development, mentoring for new teachers, principals, and superintendents, has a substantial impact on turnover reductions.
Recommended State Policy

Recruit and Retain High-Impact Educators

Create Education Licensure Reciprocity Agreements. In order to recruit and retain highly qualified teacher and administrator candidates, the state should allow and streamline education licensure reciprocity agreements with states across the United States to ensure Illinois districts have access to the best quality candidates regardless of the state in which they received their initial license.

Expand Alternative Teaching Licensure Programs. Similarly, alternative teaching licensure should be expanded so desirable teacher candidates without licensure can participate in professional development programs and, with adequate and high quality training, be allowed to teach at any school throughout the state with appropriate induction and mentoring. To have the most immediate, positive impact alternative teaching programs should recruit well-educated individuals, incorporate tailored coursework, and provide mentorship. Sufficient, high quality professional development prior to teaching and a long-term commitment beyond two years is necessary.

Provide Teacher Student Loan Forgiveness. Similar to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), and in order to ensure a more diverse teaching population, the state should continue to support and appropriate funds to expand teacher student loan forgiveness so minority teachers at all districts, not just low-income districts, can benefit. The support and expansion of loan forgiveness for teachers in underserved content areas (i.e., math, science, and special education) and those willing to teach in underserved parts of the state (i.e., high poverty and rural) should also be considered.

Establish Partnerships with Higher Education. ISBE and local districts should partner with higher education institutions to establish consistent admission and program criteria, as well as classroom experience requirements for colleges and universities offering teacher and administrator licensures in Illinois. Each institution should involve an advisory council made up of active superintendents, principals, teachers, and business officials in the design of preparatory programs.

Provide Relevant Professional Development

Fully Fund Mentoring for New Educators. ISBE currently requires mentoring for new teachers, principals, and superintendents. The development of new educators is a high-priority. As such, the state should fully fund mentoring for new educators.

Expand Educator Collaboration Opportunities. To create a culture of professional development, inclusive of teachers, staff, administrators, and Board members, sufficient time for collaboration must be allocated during each educator’s workday. Time for collaboration provides the time to observe, discuss best practices, and develop effective instructional materials and strategies.

Enhance ROE/ISCs’ Ability to Function as Regional Centers for Professional Learning and Innovation. Learning does not stop when an educator earns his or her degree; learning is a life-long process for educators. ISBE and the Regional Offices of Education/Intermediate Service Centers (ROE/ISCs), the Statewide School Management Alliance (IASA, IASB, IASBO, and IPA), and teachers unions (IEA and IFT) should collaborate to create consistent resources for professional development, starting with identifying what professional development is necessary. Across all forms of professional development, a focus on content, opportunities for active participation and learning, and alignment with other professional development leads to more successful learning experiences.
Our Vision for 21st Century Learning

Education in Illinois should modernize its approach by delivering 21st century instruction that provides all students access to modern learning environments. Education should allow students to learn and apply knowledge, think creatively, and be well-prepared for a global citizenry. The definition of learning should be expanded to include social and emotional development, creativity, innovation, and higher-level thinking where student inspiration, engagement, and motivation are goals of the education process. Learning is not limited to the classroom or school day.

A 21st century education must address the role of technology in the broad definition of learning. Technology is not the total solution, but technology as a tool can enhance and augment the teaching and learning processes in our schools by increasing efficiencies, encouraging higher-level thinking, increasing student engagement, and aiding in individualized instruction. However, there is currently a technology gap in Illinois schools, with less affluent schools unable to provide their students the benefits of technology in instruction. Partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and colleges can enhance student educational experiences, put more resources in the classroom, and expand instruction to better prepare students for college and the workplace.

Guiding Principles

We believe:

• Quality education requires high standards and expectations.

• All students have the right to be educated in quality facilities that are conducive to learning.

• The effectiveness of an education system is measured by all students’ equal access to a quality education.

• Creativity, critical thinking, innovation, and social and emotional intelligence must be infused in classroom instruction.

• A balanced assessment system is needed to inform instruction.

• Public education is responsible for preparing students for college and careers, as well as for global citizenship.

• Educators must be provided an environment conducive to innovation and cutting-edge education.

• Partnerships between school districts, non-profits, businesses, community colleges, and health and human service providers lead to healthier, better-educated children.

• Parent, family, community, and business engagement are vital to the education process.

• High-speed Internet access is a fundamental infrastructure component in providing students with a 21st century learning experience.

Rationale

Illinois schools are charged with developing young adults who are prepared to actively participate in society. Not only are social skills and wellness essential for healthy, happy, productive lives, a focus on the “whole child” has a positive impact on academic achievement. Teachers consider kindergarten students’ physical, mental, social, and emotional health as some of the most important prerequisites for academic success.32
As students grow, their emotional and social well-being continues to significantly impact learning and academic success. Students who feel supported by their parents, teachers, and peers experience increased motivation and engagement in school, resulting in enhanced student learning. Moreover, teacher encouragement, social support, and a sense of belonging are particularly instrumental for disadvantaged students.

Creativity and innovation are critical for our way of life. Care must be given to nurture the creative and innovative spirit of our students. Recent analysis of results from the Torrence Test for Creative Thinking show that scores for U.S. students have been on the decline for the last few decades. Several factors in the home, school, and society are suspected for the decline. However, overemphasis on standardized testing for accountability purposes has caused a narrowing of curriculum and educator risk-taking that has pushed out courses and instructional methods that encourage student creativity and innovation.

When families are involved in their children's education, students have higher academic achievement, enroll in more challenging courses, have higher attendance rates, have better social skills, and are more likely to graduate high school and go on to college. Despite positive outcomes, family involvement varies from school to school, with low-income students across Illinois less likely to have the benefit of direct family involvement.

The current, single end-of-year state assessment schedule provides information necessary for principal and teacher accountability measures without providing the ongoing assessment data necessary to have the greatest possible impact on student learning. Ongoing, formative assessments allow individual student data and feedback to be incorporated into instruction throughout the school year, encouraging a learning-focused environment. With proper professional development, teachers can learn to review and use ongoing, formative assessments to personalize instruction for each student based on their individual strengths, weaknesses, interests, and learning style.

One of the primary purposes of the public education system is to prepare students to be productive, successful members of a global society. High quality early childhood education is linked to improved social, economic, and behavioral outcomes, particularly for low-income students and other disadvantaged populations. A study tracking preschool students through the age of 27 found former preschool students had significantly higher earnings, economic status, educational attainment, and marriage rates as well as being less likely to be arrested. Nationally, a majority of Americans value early childhood education, to the point where 70 percent of Americans favor using federal money to make sure high quality preschool programs are available for all children.

Opportunities for students to experience college and careers while in high school support classroom learning and prepare students for post-high school success. Research indicates participation in a dual-credit program (taking courses at a local college for both high school and college credit) results in improved college attendance rates, college grades, college persistence, and college completion rates. The decision to offer programming in conjunction with post-secondary institutions is currently voluntary, with students' ability to participate based on the district they attend. Minority and low-income students are less likely to attend a district that provides the opportunity to participate in these programs.

While dual-credit and comparable post-secondary programs allow students the opportunity to experience college prior to graduation, internship and apprenticeship programs allow students to explore career fields and gain real world skills and experiences. Young adults with meaningful work experiences are more likely to understand their career options and set attainable, well-informed career goals. This focus on careers is especially important as nationally 40 percent of students change their major during their first three years of attendance at a four-year institution, in many cases increasing the time and money spent on higher education and reducing persistence, particularly among lower income students.

Funding for many college- and career-related programs already exists. In 1996, Illinois made it possible for the participating students' local districts to receive funds based on average daily attendance for all courses taken at participating colleges. Therefore, districts can still receive full-time equivalent state aid for each participating student.
In addition, Accelerated College Enrollment (ACE) grants were developed to pay for some or all of the costs associated with dual-credit programs.49 Thus, many dual-credit, technical education, internship, and apprenticeship programs can be offered without reducing district funds or placing additional strain on state finances.

Broadband has become a fundamental infrastructure need for instruction and assessment and yet only 26 percent of Illinois districts have adequate infrastructure to administer the state test (PARCC) online. Access to adequate bandwidth provides students with direct access to a world of learning materials. The State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA) recommends an Internet connection of at least one Gbps per 1,000 students and staff in order to fully access all the education resources available online.50

Recommended State Policy

**Develop the “Whole Child”**

**Align Social and Emotional Standards.** As student outcomes expand from a pure academic focus to the “whole child,” the measures by which we evaluate school effectiveness should also change. Current social and emotional standards should be clarified and aligned with the new Illinois Learning Standards. Appropriate instructional resources should be made available to support districts interested in incorporating social and emotional learning best practices.

**Support Student Creativity and Innovation.** Every effort should be made to maintain and enhance educational opportunities that encourage student creativity and innovation. Students should be provided the flexibility to follow their own pursuits and passions that will motivate them to be life-long learners.

**Promote Individualized Learning.** Children learn in different ways and at different speeds. Attention should be paid to each student’s learning through individualized learning plans, student goal setting, and differentiated instruction. Additional time and resources are necessary to support teachers in providing individualized instruction and experiences to support each individual student’s learning.

**Engage Parents, Family and Community.** In order for students to achieve at high levels, families must be involved in the learning process. To encourage effective family-school partnerships, districts should welcome all families into the school community, communicate effectively, and support student learning both at home and at school.51

**Preserve Instructional Time**

**Develop a Balanced State Assessment System.** Educators need the state assessment to produce real data that can effectively inform instruction and support innovative instructional practices. A robust and balanced state testing program that meets the needs of local districts would allow districts to forgo local assessments, decreasing the overall time spent administering standardized assessments during the school year. This, in turn, would decrease costs associated with testing and eliminate the challenge of testing mobile student populations.
A balanced state assessment system should be aligned, consistent, flexible, fully funded by the state, based on realistic and effectively communicated timelines, and offer relevant professional development. The assessment system should also be expanded to include multiple optional iterations every year instead of continuing a system that demands additional assessment supplements that are not directly aligned to the end-of-year state assessment or the new Illinois Learning Standards. By committing to the implementation of a robust state assessment system, teachers can track students throughout the school year, identifying students who are struggling or need assistance early in the school year.

**Invest in Early Childhood Education**

**Offer Incentives for Expanding Preschool and Full Day Kindergarten Education.** In order to capitalize on the benefits of early childhood education, the state should continue to increase funding for the Early Childhood Block Grant and create better incentives for districts to invest in early learning. Districts have successfully offered preschool programs and partnered effectively with other early childhood providers in their communities, and the state should continue efforts to support districts in that work. Additional incentives to support full-day kindergarten, parent education, and support services should also be explored.

**Link Students to College and Careers**

**Promote Partnerships with Post-Secondary Institutions.** Promoting district and student participation would increase the number of students, particularly low-income and minority students, reaping the long-term benefits of programs offered in conjunction with post-secondary institutions. Greater strides should be made to offer a wide-range of quality dual-credit and technical education programs consistently throughout the state, so all students can benefit. For instance, the state could allow students completing college level coursework to substitute the course for core graduation requirements to promote participation. In addition, high school course progressions and testing should be aligned with community colleges and other post-secondary institutions.

**Encourage Career Exploration.** To encourage local partnerships with businesses, the state should increase graduation requirement flexibility for students who participate in internships or apprenticeships. To increase outcomes, districts should focus on business-sponsored experiences, which are more likely to provide meaningful learning opportunities, limit options to only those companies with a plan to integrate students in a manner that enhances their education experience, and require the assignment of a mentor at the worksite.52

**Expand Equity in Technology Access**

**Provide High Speed Internet Connectivity to Every School and Community.** Large investments in technology infrastructure to meet SETDA Internet connection recommendations are needed to ensure adequacy and equity. Infrastructure investments should be pursued through funding partnerships with higher education, health and human services, and government entities for both school and community Internet access to ensure learning continues beyond the school building and can enhance local economic opportunities.

**Incorporate Technology in State Learning Standards.** The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) should consolidate the state technology standards in a meaningful manner with the new Illinois Learning Standards. At the same time, districts should align instructional plans, professional development plans, technology plans, and school improvement plans with the revised state learning standards in a way that satisfies both compliance requirements and enhances grant opportunities.
Our Vision for Shared Accountability

Effective governance structures are essential to ensuring a high quality education enterprise across the state. For governance and accountability systems to be effective there must be a balance between state-mandated oversight structures and local governance. By allowing greater flexibility in local decision-making, individual districts can innovate and best impact student performance. Greater current educator input and representation on the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) can support, involve, and advocate for local districts and their students, leading to results-driven legislation and policy that benefits the student learning process.

Guiding Principles

We believe:

• Student learning should be the number one priority of the education system.
• Educators should be held to the highest professional standards and be accountable for student learning.
• Accountability for student learning rests in the local school district.
• Educators’ experiences and voices are essential to crafting effective education policy.
• Unfunded state mandates and regulations limit school effectiveness.

Rationale

A majority of Americans believe local governing authorities, versus the state or federal government, should have the largest influence on what public schools teach. Educators work with students every day, teaching students and managing schools. In addition to hands-on work experience, teachers and administrators have completed extensive coursework both prior to and throughout their careers. Among Illinois teachers, 62 percent hold a master’s degree, and a master’s degree is required for nearly all administrator positions. Educators’ experience is invaluable to legislators, and they should be consulted in crafting education policy, specifically regarding current strengths and weaknesses of the education system, feasibility, unintended consequences, and implementation planning.

Teacher and administrator accountability is an important tool to assist teachers and administrators in continuously improving their profession. However, in order to achieve desired outcomes, accountability must measure districts against historical performance, focusing on continuous improvement versus the comparison of diverse districts to a single standard or to each other. Multiple measures must also be utilized to provide a comprehensive view of performance and take a deeper look at outcomes.

When educator accountability occurs, there is a reduced need for strict oversight. Currently, the state has a large scope of guidelines established for everything from requiring districts to provide drivers’ education to requiring the use of upgraded biodiesel fuel and green cleaning products. Mandates and other burdensome regulations necessitate additional cost and bureaucracy for compliance, which may result in decreased resources for student learning. Improved student outcomes and student experiences in the classroom must remain the priority of Illinois’ public education system. Any mandate that does not directly support that mission should be reconsidered.
Recommended State Policy

Expand Educator Role and Responsibility in State Governance

Allow Current Educators Representation on the Illinois State Board of Education. Illinois state policy should be revised to allow current educators to serve on the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Allowing practicing educators to serve on ISBE provides professional expertise that would help guide the implementation of state initiatives and help ensure that oversight and regulatory efforts positively impact student learning.

Implement a Differentiated Accountability System

Adopt a Differentiated Accountability Model. The state should adopt a differentiated accountability model to focus on continuous improvement, recognize the diversity of struggling schools, and eliminate achievement gaps across the state. A differentiated accountability model would allow local flexibility, promote shared accountability, and be sensitive to local district improvements.

Multiple measures should be used to develop a dashboard for each district inclusive of student performance, adherence to best practices, and contextual evidence of continuous improvement at the local district level. The dashboard should provide the data necessary to determine the process by which schools and districts are reviewed in an effort to improve student outcomes, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve instructional quality. The model should include a series of incentives and disincentives at the district-level based on a district’s initial results and subsequent performance.

Restructure Mandates

Distinguish Between Essential and Discretionary Regulations. Schools are required to abide by numerous funded and unfunded mandates and regulations. To promote flexibility and local decision-making, as well as address financial and operational hardships, legislative and ISBE regulations should be the subject of renewed discussion to assign mandates into one of two compliance categories:

- Essential (focused primarily on fully funded, federal, student safety, and civil rights related mandates)
- Discretionary (focused primarily on unfunded, non-federal, educational process related mandates)

A task force of broad representation would be assembled to determine the categorization. School districts would be required to conduct board hearings and request input from the public and local bargaining units prior to approving decisions related to discretionary regulations. This process provides transparency and allows local public input and opportunity to respond to any proposed changes in compliance with discretionary regulations. The ISBE/Regional Offices of Education/Intermediate Service Centers Compliance Probe would serve as a tool to review applicable regulations to measure school district accountability and distinguish between essential and discretionary mandates.

Allow Districts to Opt Out of Mandates and Regulations. Legislation should be passed to allow school districts that forego state funding or demonstrate high performance to operate with greater flexibility from state-level regulations, consistent with existing policies and the original intent of charter schools. Legislation should be passed to allow districts that meet the criteria described above to submit a flexibility request. If approved, the district would be granted a four-year opt out from identified mandates consistent with the statutory freedoms afforded to Illinois charter schools. By allowing districts operating without state funds, or exceeding desired student outcomes, to opt out of process-specific mandates, the state can focus on supporting and improving the districts that need assistance the most while reducing state education costs.
Our Vision for Equitable and Adequate Funding

Central to the mission of education in our democracy is providing equal educational access and opportunities to all students. To accomplish that end, it is time to update the state's funding system, which cyclically fails to fund our poorest schools. It is our state's moral duty to do all we can to ensure adequate funding is distributed for every student through increased state fiscal stability and greater flexibility in funding decisions based on local need. It is also to our state's economic advantage for its educational systems to develop a highly educated citizenry and a prepared workforce for the future.

Guiding Principles

We believe:

• The distribution of state education funds should be proportional to the percentage of high-need students in each district.

• The state is responsible for equity and adequacy in education funding, ensuring every student across the state a quality educational experience in an instructional setting conducive to learning.

• The “Five Funding Principles” of Adequacy, Simplicity, Transparency, Equity, and Outcomes-Focused (ISBE) are relevant and should be primary considerations in the development of a new funding plan.

• Investing in education now is fundamental to job creation and improving the general state economy, reduces the risk of incarceration, lowers the potential costs of welfare, therefore making it beneficial to all stakeholders including small business, large business, and all taxpayers.

• Providing autonomy and flexibility to local districts allows them to match resources most effectively with local needs.

Definitions

Terms referenced in school funding discussions are often undefined, leading to confusion and varied understanding of intended meaning. To that end, we define the following:

Adequacy: Refers to the level of funding sufficient for every child in a school district to have access to a high quality education.

Equity: Assumes that every school district will receive adequate funding from a combination of local, state, and federal sources to provide a program of instruction where every child has the access and support to achieve a high quality education. Local support is based on a minimum expectation of taxpayer effort and state support compensates for the difference between the cost of an adequate program and the amount of local support.

Evidence-Based Funding Model: Identifies how much money per pupil is needed in each district to educate all students according to research and best practices. To determine this per pupil need, the model:

• Draws from research and evidence-based best practices to identify those educational delivery strategies and their resource needs that are linked to student learning gains

• Attempts to “back” each resource recommendation with references to research and/or best practices

• Draws from several comprehensive school reform models, which are based on research-based practices

• Draws from a synthesis of the best professional judgment panels
Rationale

As an industry, education is one of the largest employers in the state. School leaders run a business, in many cases one of the largest businesses in their communities. At their core, school leaders are business managers as well as educators. School districts are not-for-profit businesses, but still strive for the same goals of all businesses: better outcomes through greater efficiency. Districts need the autonomy and reliable financing to operate effectively according to sound business practices.

Nationally, Americans consider lack of financial support as the biggest problem facing public schools in their community. Investments in public education not only contribute directly to local economies, but also result in an average 10 percent return on investment in income across a student’s life. The addition of non-financial benefits to society for each dollar spent on education result in an even greater return on investment. As states across the nation struggle to increase the competitiveness of their economies, research indicates expanding access to quality education is the single best thing a state can do to improve their economy, with increases in educational attainment linked to increased worker productivity and a reduction in reliance on state and federal aid.

One funding model that addresses these concerns is the Evidence-Based Model developed as part of the Illinois School Finance Adequacy Study in 2010, which provides a logical, research-based approach to account for equity in educational funding. The evidence-based model is built to align funding with research-proven techniques for improving student achievement. As a result, the model accounts for diversity in student populations instead of proposing funding guidelines that are consistent across student populations.

Illinois’ current financial condition creates a challenge to ensuring adequacy of funding for all Illinois students. Illinois struggles with a structural deficit, meaning costs for basic human services, adjusting only for inflation and population growth, increase at a faster rate than revenues. Therefore, systemic modifications are essential for the sustainability of our state and education system.

Recommended State Policy

Fund Education Based on Local Need

Adopt an Evidence-Based Funding Model. An evidence-based funding model, such as the model developed as part of the Illinois School Finance Adequacy Study, takes into account the cost associated with delivering quality, research-based programming, including allotments for teacher salaries and small class sizes. An evidence-based model should be used to assign the appropriate foundation level for each district individually, taking into account geographic conditions and student needs. Fully funding districts based on the model would ensure adequate funding for districts to locally determine and deliver appropriate and effective educational experiences to every student. For greatest efficiency, districts should be allowed flexibility to allocate state funds throughout their local district allowing them to better align resources to student needs. Resource accountability and transparency are also achievable with this model, especially for districts that have high student needs and do not produce adequate student outcomes or maintain financial stability.

* The Illinois School Finance Adequacy Study Evidence-Based Model incorporates the following research-based elements in their calculations: specialist teachers (20 percent of number of core teachers for elementary and middle, 33 percent for high school), instructional facilitators (1 per 200 students), summer school and extended day class size (15:1 for K-3, 25:1 for 4-12, and 7:1 for alternative and small schools), tutors (minimum of 1 or 1 for every 100 low income students), English Language Learner (ELL) teachers (1 per 100 ELL students), special education teachers (1 per 150 students), special education aides (0.5 per 150 students), one principal, one assistant principal, one secretary, clerical staff (1 per elementary and middle, 3 per high school), non-instructional aides (2 per elementary and middle, 3 per high school), guidance counselors (1 per 250 students in middle and high school), pupil support staff (1 per 100 low income students), one library and media tech (1 per 600 students above 1,000). In addition, money is set aside for supplies, technology, student activities, gifted and talented education, professional development, assessments, and central office costs on a per student basis.
Stabilize State Funding for Education

Enhance State Spending. Enhanced state funding should be identified and secured to meet the needs of students and the continually expanding services that public schools are counted on to deliver. Educational leaders understand school finances can only be healthy with state assistance and that providing adequate and equitable school funding for children is a primary responsibility of state government. At the same time, districts should continue to pursue efficiencies, including but not limited to shared service agreements and other cooperative arrangements.

Restructure State Revenues to Match the 21st Century Economy. Revisions to the current state revenue structure are necessary to match our 21st century economy, better serve all Illinois taxpayers, and ensure sufficient funding for education. Legislation should be passed to both eliminate the Illinois state deficit and provide necessary funds for essential services, including education.

Enhance District Flexibility to Increase Financial Efficiency

Create a Two-Year Funding Cycle with Year Ahead Budgeting. In the spirit of shared interest and to support long-range planning, Illinois school districts support a two-year budget cycle. Public schools desire the ability to function according to sound business practices. Education has been forced by the state budgeting process to make expenditure decisions before state funding decisions are final. State budgeting has to support local decision-making, especially in regards to personnel decisions, which account for 80 percent of district budgets.

The origin of the budget should begin with an adequate funding level. Creating a two-year funding cycle increases fund stability from year-to-year while reducing state bureaucracy. Once solvency and appropriate budgeting are achieved, the state should provide “year ahead budgeting,” so districts can plan two years into the future when budgeting and allocating funds for programs and personnel.
MOVING FORWARD

Vision 20/20 is a process that will lead to meaningful and lasting change by serving as a blueprint for public education policy and is intended to be a decision-making framework to guide ongoing advocacy and align public educators around a common vision for the future. In collaboration with lawmakers and other stakeholders, the policies outlined in this document can be enacted as part of a continuous improvement process to improve the education experiences and outcomes of all Illinois students for the benefit of the entire state of Illinois.

Vision 20/20 is a long-term plan that challenges the State Legislature and Governor, along with all stakeholders, to take action to fulfill the promise of public education in Illinois by the year 2020.

39 See note 18 above.
54 See note 18 above.
57 See note 53 above.
FINANCE SOLUTIONS
An Evidence-Based School Finance Solution for Illinois

Michelle Turner Mangan, Ph.D.
What is the Evidence-Based Approach?

- Identifies how much money per pupil is needed in each district for every child to have access to a high quality education.

What is the methodology behind the evidence-based approach?

- Draws from research and evidence-based best practices to identify those educational delivery strategies and their resource needs that are linked to student learning gains.

- Attempts to “back” each resource recommendation with reference to research and/or best practices.

- Draws from several comprehensive school reform models, which are based on research-supported practices.

- Can also draw from a synthesis of the best professional judgment panels.
How is this approach different from previous attempts in Illinois?

• Costs out strategies based on rigorous research.

• Objective, transparent model that allows schools and districts to see what staff their allocated resources should buy them.

• Focuses the conversation on what it takes to sufficiently support students and teachers (not just a dollar amount).
What are the advantages?

• Produces detailed staffing for prototypic schools to address all key educational issues, with all proposals having a research and/or best practices base
  > Each element has an “evidence” rationale

• Provides resources to enable schools/districts to determine most effective educational strategy

• Draws from previous research and adequacy studies already conducted around the country

• Generally, additional costs are less than other approaches
What are the disadvantages?

• Should not “stand alone”
  > Needs a state panel of leading educators and policymakers to review and tailor to the Illinois state context
  > Implementation should be overseen so that key research-based elements are specifically targeted to fund those strategies
    >> State, regional, district & school leadership around these strategies
What are some of the key resources in the evidence-based model?

• Intensive teacher training
  > Trainers
  > More professional development days for teachers
  > Instructional coaches in all schools, all levels

• Extended learning strategies
  > Tutoring, extended days, academic summer school, ESL help for ELL students, special education

• Full day kindergarten

• Smaller classrooms in K-3: 15

• Critical pupil support/parent outreach

• Technology for schools
Conclusion

• The evidence-based adequacy model does not cap spending at an adequate amount; local districts are free to spend above the adequacy amount if they choose.

• The intent of the evidence-based adequacy model applied to Illinois is to provide a level of fiscal resources to enable all students to perform at high levels.

Contact Information

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EFFECT SIZES
## Estimated Effect Sizes of Major Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Program</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Day Kindergarten</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Size of 15 in Grades K-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income and Minority Students</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-age Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-grade Classrooms</td>
<td>-0.1 to 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-age Classrooms</td>
<td>0.0 to 0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development with Classroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Coaches</td>
<td>1.25 to 2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring, 1-1</td>
<td>0.4 to 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Language Learners</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended-Day Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured Academic Focused Summer School</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded Technology</td>
<td>0.30 to 0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifted and Talented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated Instruction or Grade Skipping</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment Programs</td>
<td>0.4 to 0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No consistent impact due to variation in program focus and quality.
MANDATES ENACTED
MANDATES ENACTED SINCE 1992

Compiled by the IASB Governmental Relations Department

PA 87-0626  Requires schools to use recycled paper (if economically feasible).

PA 87-0652  Requires schools to install sprinkler systems in new buildings or when remodeling.

PA 87-1265  5 + 5 Early Retirement – requires employer to pay 20% of the employee’s highest annual salary per year purchased (over $50 million over the two year program).

PA 88-0612  Requires fingerprint check for school bus drivers.

PA 89-0610  Requires remediation plan for certain students failing in school; Requires new “Prairie State Achievement Exam.”

PA 90-0108  Requires crossing control arms on school buses.

PA 90-0146  Requires the use of soybean ink in school publications (if economically feasible).

PA 90-0425  Requires employers to report newly hired employees to the Department of Employment Security.

PA 90-0548  Requires schools to have a policy on “social promotion”; Requires schools to have a policy on “no pass, no play”;

PA 90-0582  TRS 2.2 flat rate pension formula – requires school districts to pay a .58% contribution of TRS payroll (over $30 million statewide in the first year).

PA 90-0620  Requires teachers to teach pupils “discipline and respect” for others.

PA 90-0688  Requires public agencies to develop and implement an investment policy.

PA 91-0099  Requires schools to have a registry of parents of children who want to receive notification before pesticides are applied on school grounds.

PA 91-0525  Requires schools to adopt an integrated pest management plan (if economically feasible).

PA 91-0102  Requires each school district to establish a Local Professional Development Committee to review teacher re-certification plans.
PA 91-0518  Requires school districts to implement an enhanced 911 telephone system. 
   (Average cost estimated at $65,000 per district.)

PA 91-0785  Requires all school bus emergency exits to be outlined with reflective tape by 
   August 1, 2000.

PA 92-0497  Requires that the course of instruction given in grades 10-12 concerning the 
   Illinois Vehicle Code must include instruction on special hazards existing at, and 
   required extra safety and driving precautions that must be observed at, highway 
   construction/maintenance zones and in emergency situations.

PA 92-0260  Requires a school board, in consultation with its parent-teacher advisory committee 
   and other community-based organizations, to include provisions in the student discipline 
   policy to address students who have demonstrated behaviors that put them at risk for 
   aggressive behavior, including bullying. Also requires the provisions to include procedures 
   for notifying parents or legal guardians and early intervention procedures based upon 
   available community based and district resources.

PA 92-0027  Adds Hispanics to the list of specific ethnic groups who are required to be studied in the 
   teaching of the history of the United States.

PA 92-0438  Requires a school district to post its current budget, itemized by receipts and expenditures, 
   on the district’s Internet web site if the district has a web site, and requires the district to 
   notify its students’ parents that the budget has been posted.

PA 92-0505  Requires school districts to contribute to the Teachers’ Retirement System .5% of the teacher 
   payroll to cover the cost of the Teachers Retirement Insurance Program (TRIP). 
   (First year cost approximately $40 million.)

PA 92-0604  Requires school districts to transfer a student from one attendance center to another within 
   the district upon the request of the student’s parent or guardian if the student is in a school 
   that does not meet adequate yearly progress.

PA 92-0631  Requires school districts to add to the school district report card the amount of money that 
   the district receives from all sources.

PA 92-0663  Requires school boards to adopt and implement a policy that prohibits any disciplinary 
   action that is based on the refusal of a student’s parent to administer psychotropic medication. 
   The policy must require in-service training for teachers every two years.

PA 92-0763  Requires public schools to incorporate activities to address intergroup conflict and for all 
   school boards to adopt a policy for this instruction and to make information available to 
   the public that describes the manner in which the board has implemented the anti-bias 
   education provisions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0088</td>
<td>Requires sex education materials and instruction to advise pupils of the provisions of the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0355</td>
<td>Requires school districts to develop, establish, and implement a new teacher induction and mentoring program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0406</td>
<td>Requires public schools to include a unit of instruction in the U.S. History class that studies the role and contributions of Asian Americans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0426</td>
<td>Requires school districts to do additional standardized testing in math and science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0470</td>
<td>Requires schools that do not make adequate yearly progress to file a school improvement plan, a district restructuring plan, provide supplemental services for students, and allow for the transfer of students from one school to another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0523</td>
<td>Requires school boards to make a verbatim audio or video recording of all closed meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0591</td>
<td>Requires employers (including school districts) to provide an employee who is a victim of domestic or sexual violence an unpaid leave from work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0581</td>
<td>Raises the minimum wage for workers (including those in school districts) to $6.50 per hour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0803</td>
<td>Requires school districts to identify, track, and report on the educational progress and outcomes of dropouts who have re-enrolled in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-858</td>
<td>Raises the compulsory school attendance age from 16 to 17 years of age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0909</td>
<td>Requires a school district to submit a teacher applicant’s fingerprints to the State Police when requesting a background check.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0910</td>
<td>Requires school districts to have a policy on medical emergencies, to have an automated external defibrillator in each indoor physical fitness facility, and to have a trained AED user in each facility during school-sponsored activities. (Estimated first year cost $10-12 million.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0946</td>
<td>Requires school districts to receive proof of a dental exam from students entering kindergarten, second, and sixth grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 93-0966</td>
<td>Requires school districts to provide information related to student obesity to the Department of Public Health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 94-0014</td>
<td>Requires school districts to provide steroid abuse prevention education to students who participate in interscholastic athletic programs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PA 94-0028  Requires public bodies that have a website that is maintained by full-time staff to post on its website the agenda of any regular meetings and a notice of the schedule of regular meetings.

PA 94-0151  Requires school districts to meet specific criteria if offering gifted education.

PA 94-0219  Requires school districts or regional superintendent of schools to perform a check of the Statewide Sex Offender Database for each applicant for employment with the school district.

PA 94-0285  Requires school districts to provide instruction on the slave trade.

PA 94-0346  Requires school districts to use 2% bio-diesel fuel in their buses.

PA 94-0410  Requires school districts to meet specific criteria if offering gifted education.

PA 94-0478  Requires school districts to provide instruction on genocide.

PA 94-0600  Requires school districts to complete an additional fire drill each year and requires that at least one of these include participation by the local fire department. It also requires school districts to invite all emergency response units to a yearly meeting in order to evaluate the school's emergency response plans and to file a report stating the results of the evaluation.

PA 94-0676  Requires school districts to increase the high school graduation requirements for science, math, and English.

PA 94-0714  Requires school districts to file as an attachment to its annual budget a report indicating for the prior year the name of the vendor, the product or service provided, and the actual net revenue and non-monetary remuneration from each of the contracts or agreements. It also requires the report to indicate for what purpose the revenue was used and how and to whom the non-monetary remuneration was distributed.

PA 94-0792  Requires school districts to permit the self-administration of medication by a pupil with allergies by the use of an epinephrine auto-injector.

PA 94-0845  Requires school districts to prohibit a school bus from idling its engine for more than 10 minutes within any 60 minute period in certain counties.

PA 94-0881  Requires newly elected school board members to take an oath of office.

PA 94-0916  Requires the clerk or secretary of the school board to furnish quarterly reports to the Regional Superintendent and the Secretary of State that includes the names of pupils who withdraw from high school because of extraordinary circumstances. Also requires the school district to establish, in writing, a set of criteria for use by the superintendent in determining whether a pupil's failure to attend school is the result of extraordinary circumstances, including but not limited to economic or medical necessity or family hardship.
PA 94-0929  Requires that, as a part of consumer education in high school, the instruction must include an understanding of the basic concepts of financial literacy.

PA 94-0945  Requires school districts, before hiring applicants for employment, to check the newly created Statewide Child Murder and Violent Offender Against Youth Database, in addition to the statewide sex offender data base.

PA 94-0994  Requires the principal or teacher of a public or private elementary or secondary school to notify the parents of children attending the school during school registration or during parent-teacher conferences that information about sex offenders is available to the public.

PA 94-1039  Requires school districts to establish a new principal mentoring program and principal evaluation plan.

PA 95-0058  Requires that school districts have the designated Integrated Pest Management person attend a training course.

PA 95-0084  Requires school districts to establish a green cleaning policy and to only purchase and use environmentally-sensitive cleaning products (if economically feasible).

PA 95-0148  Requires school districts that consolidate or reorganize to hire educational support personnel (ESP) based on the seniority of those ESPs previously working for the school districts involved in the consolidation.

PA 95-0155  Requires school districts to have a plan to offer a summer breakfast or lunch program for the duration of their summer school program in each school that has at least 50% of the students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

PA 95-0168  Requires the inclusion of the consequences of alcohol consumption and the operation of a motor vehicle in “safety education” instruction.

PA 95-0176  Requires that each school bus display at the rear of the bus a sign with the telephone number of the owner of the school bus and requires procedures for accepting and documenting phone calls to the number.

PA 95-0232  Requires school districts to adopt a policy before collecting biometric information (fingerprints, retina scans, etc.) from students.

PA 95-0241  Requires school districts to give a 90 day written notice to educational support personnel (ESP) before being laid off because of a third party contract; requires a public hearing to discuss the proposal to contract with a third party; and requires the school board to provide a cost comparison of using current ESPs versus entering into a third party contract.
PA 95-0260  Requires that each school district have a policy to ensure that the school bus driver is the last person leaving every school bus and that no passenger is left behind.

PA 95-0305  Requires that school districts hire a licensed person to inspect and test fire sprinkler systems and control equipment.

PA 95-0310  Requires school districts to provide in drivers’ education courses six hours of driving – in a car with an instructor – with no use of proficiency examinations for practice driving or driving simulators.

PA 95-0339  Requires school districts to include in classroom drivers’ education classes, instruction on distracted driving as a major traffic safety issue.

PA 95-0349  Requires school districts to create and maintain a policy on bullying. The policies must be filed with the State Board of Education, and must be updated every 2 years and re-filed.

PA 95-0396  Requires school districts to give written notice to educational support Personnel (ESP) when the employee’s work hours are reduced.

PA 95-0416  Requires school districts that apply for a school construction grant to receive certification for their project from a “green building” rating system.

PA 95-0558  Requires school districts to provide an in-service training program for employees conducted by persons with expertise in domestic and sexual violence and the needs of expectant and parenting youth at least once every 2 years.

PA 95-0712  Requires school districts to provide automated external defibrillators at all outside athletic facilities.

PA 95-0741  Requires school districts to have a procedure for recycling materials (if economically feasible) and to develop a comprehensive waste reduction plan.

PA 95-0756  Requires a driver of a school bus to open the service door and driver’s window before crossing a railroad track or tracks.

PA 95-0763  Requires employers (including school districts) to grant unpaid leave to its employees who are civil air patrol members performing a mission.

PA 95-0764  Requires high schools to include sexual assault awareness in the comprehensive health education program.

PA 95-0863  Requires instruction in home-buying and mortgages in high school consumer education courses.
PA 95-0869 Requires instruction in schools regarding Internet safety.

PA 95-0958 Requires employers (including school districts) to provide insurance coverage to students who have taken a leave from college courses because of an illness or injury and to continue coverage of all dependents up to age 26 (age 30 for veterans of the armed forces).

PA 95-0969 Requires teachers' institutes to provide instruction regarding chronic student health conditions.

PA 95-0972 Requires employers (including school districts) to provide insurance coverage for marriage therapists.

PA 95-0973 Requires employers (including school districts) to provide insurance coverage for eating disorders.

PA 95-0978 Requires employers (including school districts) to provide insurance coverage for the shingles vaccine for persons over 60 years old.

PA 96-0073 Requires that State-funded construction projects meet all energy and environmental standards set by LEEDS.

PA 96-0084 Requires schools to hold a moment of silence if school is in session on Veteran's Day.

PA 96-0099 Requires that schools present the Congressional Medal of Honor film to history classes in the 7th grade and in high school.

PA 96-0119 Requires school districts to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the local Head Start agency within three months of receiving a Pre-School For All Children grant.

PA 96-0128 Requires instruction on cancer in school and requires athletes to complete a preparticipation questionnaire regarding a family history of cancer.

PA 96-0132 Requires a random steroid drug testing program for athletes and requires coaches to receive training on steroid abuse prevention.

PA 96-0191 Requires instruction on people with disabilities and the disability rights movement.

PA 96-0266 Requires school districts to report annually the salary and benefits of all administrators and teachers.

PA 96-0281 Requires school districts to use 5% bio-diesel fuel in their buses.

PA 96-0349 Requires school districts to adopt and implement a policy regarding students with food allergies.
PA 96-0357 Requires school districts to grant 20 additional days of sick leave for any employee that serves as a trustee on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund.

PA 96-0424 Requires school districts to adopt a policy to comply with the Lawn Care Products Application and Notice Act and the Structural Pest Control Act, and to designate a staff person to be responsible for compliance with the Acts.

PA 96-0434 Requires school districts to annually report, present at a board meeting, and post on the web, the salary and fringe benefits of all school administrators.

PA 96-0513 Requires that each unit of local government ensure that the U.S. flag flown at the building is manufactured in the U.S.

PA 96-0542 Requires school districts to designate a Freedom of Information Officer and requires the person to receive training on FOIA requirements.

PA 96-0629 Requires instruction on illegal deportation of Mexican-American U.S. citizens.

PA 96-0655 Requires a change in the message on the signs on the rear of school buses.

PA 96-0657 Requires access to schools and classrooms for “expert witnesses” for children with an IEP.

PA 96-0861 Requires school personnel who perform teacher evaluations to receive training on performing such evaluations; requires school districts to incorporate the use of data and student growth indicators in teacher evaluations; requires school districts to establish a new teacher evaluation plan; and requires school districts to perform teacher evaluations at least annually for non-tenured teachers.

PA 96-0951 Requires school social workers to attend the same in-service workshops as teachers regarding the instruction of the identification of the warning signs of suicidal behavior in students.

PA 96-1082 Requires all sex education courses that discuss sexual intercourse to teach pupils about the dangers of alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

PA 96-1473 Requires all public bodies (including school boards) to approve meeting minutes within 30 days after the meeting takes place.

PA 96-1485 Requires all school districts to have a diabetes care plan in place for students, requires delegated care aides to perform necessary duties, and requires that employees receive training in the basics of diabetes care.

PA 97-0008 Requires all school board members to receive four hours of training; requires school districts to administer a survey to teachers and students at least every two years; and requires school districts to establish a joint committee regarding RIFing requirements.
PA 97-0087  Requires school districts to provide instruction in violence prevention and conflict resolution education in grades K-12 (previously just grades 4-12).

PA 97-0204  Requires all school boards to adopt a policy on student/athlete head injuries and concussions and for the district to provide information to parents and students on concussions.

PA 97-0357  Requires school districts to complete a form added to the annual financial report which discloses shared services options being used.

PA 97-0429  Requires school districts that submit an Annual Financial Report that shows a deficit to submit a deficit reduction plan to the ISBE.

PA 97-0437  Requires employers (including school districts) to provide insurance coverage for treatment of serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders.

PA 97-0504  Requires all elected officials (including school board members) to successfully complete training on the Open Meetings Act.

PA 97-0609  Requires all employers of employees who participate in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF), including school districts, to post on their websites the total compensation package of employees earning more than $75,000 per year.

PA 97-0742  Requires school districts to hold classes for at least five clock hours on the first and last days of school.

PA 97-0910  Requires school districts to make publicly available immunization data by November 15 of each year.

PA 97-0956  Requires school districts to allow into schools any “service” animal, instead of only guide dogs. Service animals include miniature horses.

PA 97-1025  Requires additional information to be posted for waiver hearings regarding drivers’ education, requires school districts to prove that an entity awarded a contract to provide drivers’ education employs only persons with valid teaching certificates, and requires additional inspections for drivers’ education cars.

PA 97-1147  Requires that age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education be included in grades pre-kindergarten through 12.

PA 98-0048  Requires school districts to annually hold a “shooting incident” drill with law enforcement participation.

PA 98-0059  Requires principals to utilize resources of law enforcement agencies when the safety and welfare of students and teachers are threatened by weapons or gangs.

PA 98-0063  Requires school principals to report to the State Police when a student is determined to pose a clear and present danger (under the Concealed Carry Act).
PA 98-0129 Requires school districts to publish policies on the “Expectations” for Students regarding social networking websites and providing passwords.

PA 98-0166 Requires school districts to provide catastrophic accident insurance for student athletes with benefit limits of at least $3 million or five years of coverage.

PA 98-0190 Requires school boards to adopt a policy regarding teen dating violence and incorporate instruction on the issue in grades 7-12.

PA 98-0305 Requires school districts to notify parents and staff about the video posted on the IHSA website regarding CPR and AEDs.

PA 98-0393 Requires school officials to report hazing or face a Class B misdemeanor charge.

PA 98-0408 Requires school employees who are mandated reporters of child abuse to receive training.

PA 98-0470 Requires a new two year evaluation plan be established if a first year principal evaluates a tenured teacher on a two year basis.

PA 98-0471 Requires school administrators, teachers, and counselors to receive in-service training on mental illness.

PA 98-0544 Requires school districts to enroll six-year-old students (now 7) by lowering the compulsory school attendance age.

PA 98-0632 Requires school districts to provide training to students on administering CPR and using AEDs in health education classes.

PA 98-0648 Requires school districts to recall certain teachers after a Reduction in Force (RIF) depending on teacher evaluations.

PA 98-0669 Requires school districts to revise bullying policies to include new reporting information, investigation procedures, specific interventions and other items.

PA 98-0674 Requires school districts to pay $85 million of the State’s TRS obligation for teachers paid with federal funds.

PA 98-0801 Requires school districts to revise cyber-bullying policies to include a process for investigations and to provide a list of service providers for students.

PA 98-0859 Requires school districts to implement a new P.E. assessment and to report fitness information to the ISBE.

PA 98-0883 Requires all new school construction to include storm shelters that meet minimum requirements of the ICC/NSSA Standard for the Design and Construction of Storm Shelters.

PA 980930 Requires school districts to post on the their websites a mechanism for members of the public to electronically communicate with school board members.
PA 98-1011  Requires all high school coaching personnel to complete an online certification on concussion awareness.

PA 98-1102  Requires school districts to submit information to the ISBE on suspensions and expulsions; certain districts would be required to submit a plan to identify ways to reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions. Curricular mandates adopted in 98th G.A. (2013-14).
CURRICULAR MANDATES
Curricular mandates adopted in 98th G.A. (2013-14)
Instruction on delivering CPR and using an AED
Instruction on teen dating violence

Curricular mandates adopted in 97th G.A. (2011-12)
Instruction on violence prevention and conflict resolution in grades K-12 (previously just 4-12)
Instruction on sexual abuse and assault awareness

Curricular mandates adopted in 96th G.A. (2009-10)
Presentation of the Congressional Medal of Honor film in history classes
Instruction on cancer
Instruction on people with disabilities and the disability rights movement
Instruction on illegal deportation of Mexican-American U.S. citizens
Instruction on the dangers of alcohol consumption during pregnancy in sex education classes

Curricular mandates adopted in 95th G.A. (2007-08)
Instruction on Internet safety
Instruction on mortgages and home-buying
Instruction on sexual assault awareness
Instruction on distracted driving
Instruction on danger of alcohol consumption
Instruction for drivers' education must all be "behind the wheel", no simulators or proficiency

Curricular mandates adopted in 94th G.A. (2005-06)
Instruction on financial literacy
Instruction on genocide in Armenia, Famine-Genocide in Ukraine, and atrocities in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan
Instruction on the history of the slave trade
Extra year of instruction in math, science, and English
Instruction on steroid abuse prevention
Adds criteria for gifted education instruction
Instruction in sex education on provisions of the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act
Adds specific unit of instruction regarding Asian Americans in American History

Curricular mandates adopted in 92nd G.A. (2001-02)
Instruction in drivers’ education on special hazards and construction zones
Adds specific instruction regarding Hispanics when teaching American History
Instruction on intergroup conflict


Instruction on discipline and respect for others
TIME TO ENGAGE WITH LEGISLATORS
Time to Engage with Legislators

Decisions are made every day the Legislature is in session that directly or indirectly impact school districts. As a school official, your voice is needed in Springfield to help keep unintended consequences of legislation out of the classroom.

As you prepare to engage with your Legislators, keep these tips in mind.

1. Be mindful of when you communicate—Ask about their communication preferences during sessions. Be persistent but also understand the timing of the issue you’d like to discuss.

2. Know your issue and the process—Understand the process (see the attached How a Bill becomes a Law in Illinois) and keep track of the status of the bill.

3. Understand the need for give and take—Like every good relationship this one has two sides. Making the extra effort to support your legislator goes a long way.

4. Take advantage of the “off-season”—When the legislators are not in session (typically June—October) is a great time to meet in person and open up the lines of communication.

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**DO**

- **BE FIRM**—Bring along facts and figures to support your case and be clear in your position.
- **LEAVE SOMETHING IN WRITING**—A single page, bulleted version of your argument they can refer back to.
- **COMPROMISE**—It’s better to get some things you want even if you can’t get everything. If you can’t defeat a bill, dilute it.
- **PERSONALIZE**—Understand how the issue specifically affects your district and say it in your own words.
- **KEEP YOUR WORD**—If you promise to provide information, drop everything and get it to them. This builds trust.
- **KEEP TRACK**—Follow the legislation through the process and update bill numbers and positions accordingly.
- **KNOW THE OTHER SIDE**—Understand the opposing view and give specific and factual rebuttals.
- **SAY “THANK YOU”**—If they helped your position, let them know. Show them your support by attending events when the legislature is not in session.

**DON’T**

- **BE ARGUMENTATIVE**—You can never win an argument with a legislator, so don’t start one. Never threaten or lose your cool.
- **WRITE A BOOK**—Your legislator doesn’t have time to read a 10 page historical document, rather they need common sense and simple arguments.
- **GIVE UP**—Be persistent in communicating your views. At the same time, don’t waste time lobbying opponents who are publicly opposed to your position.
- **WASTE THEIR TIME**—With form letters and mass mailings that don’t give new information.
- **PROMISE SOMETHING YOU CAN’T DELIVER**—This is a quick way to lose credibility in the relationship.
- **COME UNPREPARED**—Be respectful of your legislators’ time, especially during busy in-session times.
- **EXPECT TO ALWAYS GET YOUR WAY**—Be willing to forgive, but not forget.
- **BURN BRIDGES**—Thank your legislator for considering your position. Restate your position and say you look forward to future discussions.
How A Bill Becomes Law in Illinois

FIRST HOUSE
- Bill drafted by Legislative Reference Bureau
  - Introduced
  - Read 1st time (perf.), referred to Rules Committee
    - Assigned to substantive committee
      - Hearing; Amendment(s) may be added
        - Recommended "do pass" or "do pass as amended"
          or not recommended
        - Full house votes to discharge
          - Bill dead
        - Full house doesn't discharge
          - Read 2nd time, floor amendment(s) may be proposed
            - Read 3rd time, voted on
              - Fails
                - Bill dead
              - Passes
                - Sent to second house
  - Bill dead

SECOND HOUSE
- Bill drafted by Legislative Reference Bureau
  - Introduced
  - Read 1st time (perf.), referred to Rules Committee
    - Assigned to substantive committee
      - Hearing; Amendment(s) may be added
        - Recommended "do pass" or "do pass as amended"
          or not recommended
        - Full house votes to discharge
          - Bill dead
        - Full house doesn't discharge
          - Read 2nd time, 3rd reading, sent to 3rd reading with
            committee amendment(s) or floor amendment(s)
          - Read 3rd time, voted on
            - Fails
              - Bill dead
            - Passes
              - Sent to Governor
  - Sent to first house for concurrence with second-house amendment(s)
    - Refuses to concur in second-house amendment(s)
      - Returns to second house
    - Refuses to receive from amendment(s)
      - Conference committee appointed
        - Conference committee recommends a compromise
          version of bill. If both houses agree with it bill goes
          to Governor.
      - Recedes from amendment(s)
        - Sent to Governor
        - Conference committee recommended a compromise
          version of bill. If both houses agree with it bill goes
          to Governor
  - GOVERNOR
    - Places any kind of veto on bill
      - Approves bill
        - Bill becomes law
      - Returns to first house
        - Total veto
          - Doesn't override
            - Bill dead
          - Overrides amount cut
            - Bill becomes law in form Governor wanted
          - Item or reduction veto:
            - Doesn't restore amount cut
              - Bill becomes law in form Governor wanted
            - Restores amount cut
              - Sent to other house
      - Amendatory veto:
        - Stan either
          - amt. cut
            - Bill becomes law in form Governor wanted
          - Does neither
            - Bill becomes law in form originally passed
        - Concurs
          - Returned to Governor
          - Governor states that concurrence meets
            his objections
          - Bill becomes law in form Governor wanted
        - Takes same action as first house

*Amendments proposed on the floor must go to the Rules Committee for approval before being considered.
HOW A BILL REALLY BECOMES A LAW

What you learned in your school classroom will only get you so far in Springfield. Take an insider look at how the system really works from start to finish... and all the shenanigans that can happen along the way.
POINT OF VIEW

By Ben Schwerm
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
IL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS (IASB)

"I'm just a bill.
Yes, I'm only a bill.
And I'm sitting here on Capitol Hill.
Well, it's a long, long journey
To the capital city.
It's a long, long wait
While I'm sitting in committee,
But I know I'll be a law some day
At least I hope and pray that I will,
But today I am still just a bill."

For the most part, the legendary (at least for folks my age) "I'm just a bill" skit from Schoolhouse Rock in the 1970's is pretty accurate here in Illinois. A bill must make it through two legislative chambers and be signed into law by the Chief Executive whether in Congress in Washington, D.C. or in the Illinois General Assembly in Springfield. But, oh, the shenanigans that can happen on the way. That Schoolhouse Rock bill never came to Springfield to get mugged by a Rules Committee, stuffed into a "shell bill," and tacked onto a provision in a 1,000 page "BIMP" bill that was voted on virtually sight unseen.

WHAT YOUR TEXTBOOK WILL TELL YOU
Section eight under Article IV of The Constitution of the State of Illinois succinctly expresses what must happen for the passage of bills in our state. A bill may originate in either the Senate or the House of Representatives, must be "read by title on three different days" in each chamber and must have approval of a majority of the members elected in each chamber before being sent to the Governor for his consideration. Sounds simple enough.

Beyond the Constitution there are a few other hurdles for legislation to navigate. Both the Illinois House of Representatives and the Illinois State Senate have their own "General Assembly Rules" that they adopt and that must, generally, be followed. This includes the use of committees and certain timelines that must be met. The exception, of course, is when the legislators decide that they don't want to follow their rules, which is always an option too. But I digress and will explore that a little later.

For the vast majority of bills that are introduced, the usual course is followed. A bill in a spring legislative session in Springfield will be:

- Introduced in either the House or Senate.
- Read into the record on three separate days.
- Considered by a committee.
- Sent to the chamber floor.

If approved, sent to the opposite chamber to repeat the same drill there.

The process without any expeditious treatment will take about three months.

But who wants to hear about that boring process?

WHERE DOES A BILL REALLY COME FROM?
Sometimes the idea for a piece of legislation actually comes from the legislator who introduces it. Mostly, though, the idea has come from a constituent who has had a problem navigating the State's bureaucracy, from an interest group or lobbyist, or from some other think tank or organization that the legislator belongs to. My favorite is when a legislator says "this is much more common to hear from a Congressman in D.C. that I wrote the bill that . . ." In my 27 years working in and around the Capitol, I've never known a legislator that actually "wrote the bill." Legislators certainly make legislation happen, but it is staff, lawyers and lobbyists that usually do the actual writing. And in Springfield, truly only the lawyers at the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) write the official bill that is considered in the Capitol.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES AND RULES AND HOW TO GET AROUND THEM
The General Assembly Rules in both the House and Senate versions allow for the use of committees. Standing committees are named in each chamber generally by subject matter. So, for instance, a bill that proposes to change the provision in the School Code regarding high school graduation requirements would likely be sent to the Education Committee in the Senate or the Elementary and Secondary Education Committee in the House.
The real problem with the General Assembly Rules is that they are just that, rules. They’re not in the Constitution, or in state statute, but in a resolution adopted by each individual chamber.

When a bill is drafted and introduced, it will be “read into the record” in the chamber of origin. In the Senate, for example, there will be a day when the Secretary of the Senate (an appointed position selected by the Senate President) actually stands at the podium (the “well” as it is called by insiders) and reads the title of hundreds of newly introduced bills into a microphone before a usually totally empty chamber. “SB 230, a bill regarding education, SB 231, a bill regarding transportation” and so on. The Clerk of the House does the same thing in that chamber.

After the initial reading, the bill is sent to the Committee on Assignment in the Senate — in the House, they call it the Rules Committee. This committee decides which substantive committee to send a bill. Sometimes a bill is never assigned to a “real committee” and languishes forever in “Rules” or “COA.” This is the first ironclad gatekeeping device for the majority party.

The General Assembly Rules also require that a new bill be “posted” for a committee hearing at least six days before the bill will actually be considered by the committee. This is an attempt at transparency and for the public to become aware of legislation before the first vote is taken. And, really, this works pretty well.

Amendments, however, only need a one-hour posting notice before a committee hearing. Things can start to get a little sketchy about this point as legislation can be “fast-tracked” by deliberately attaching legislative language to a bill by amendment, thus avoiding the “sunshine” of the six-day posting requirement.

The real problem with the General Assembly Rules is that they are just that, rules. They’re not in the Constitution, or in state statute, but in a resolution adopted by each individual chamber. So, upon occasion, the chamber can just vote to “waive the rule requirement” if a majority of the chamber doesn’t want to follow that particular rule that day. For instance, they might want to consider a bill in committee that has not met the six-day posting requirement, or better yet, they just want to send a bill directly to the chamber floor that has never had a committee hearing. If a majority of the members vote to do it, it is done. That is the power of the majority party.

“I’m just a bill
Yes I’m only a bill,
And I got as far as Capitol Hill.
Well, now I’m stuck in committee
And I’ll sit here and wait
While a few key Congressmen discuss and debate
Whether they should let me be a law.
How I hope and pray that they will,
But today I am still just a bill.”

SECOND READING AND LEGISLATIVE TIME TRAVEL
After a bill is discharged from a committee, it goes back to the chamber floor and is read into the record for a second time. Second Reading is the amendment stage — the only time a bill can be amended. Many times the proposed amended language has already been agreed to in the committee hearing, but officially, the amendment is added on Second Reading on the chamber floor. Bills that the sponsor knows still needs some additional work could sit on the “calendar” (the House/Senate agenda) for weeks waiting to be amended.

But here again is a time ripe for questionable antics. The reason for the three separate readings of a bill is to ward against someone jamming through an idea all in the same day. Theoretically, if a bill is amended on Second Reading, it couldn’t be voted on for final passage until the next day at the earliest (when the bill would have its Third Reading). But the suspension of time and time travel is a regularly occurring phenomenon in the State Capitol.

Many times a bill will be moved from Second Reading to Third Reading properly, on separate days. But maybe a week later the sponsor decides the bill needs another amendment so the bill is “brought back to Second Reading.” Now it can be amended. However, and I am not making this up, the House Clerk merely announces that
the bill “has been read a second time previously” and the bill can be amended on Second Reading and called for a vote on Third Reading – final passage stage – not only the same day but in a matter of minutes. The tactic in most cases is benign and simply correcting a small glitch in the legislation. But the practice can allow for a deliberate skirting of the rules by tacking on a new or controversial amendment and get an immediate floor vote before allowing the public to comment.

**SHELL BILLS AND OTHER QUESTIONABLE PROCEDURES**

Sometimes the entire process is ignored from the start. Since there is a procedure for amendment and this requires a shorter hearing notice posting and therefore an opportunity for less people to see language before it is adopted, there are legislators who deliberately opt for this route. They will introduce a “shell bill” a piece of legislation that contains no substantive language but is moved through the process for later use. It might change the word “the” to “a” or “10” to “1” in the Pension Code. Say the bill is approved by a House committee and then the full House and is sent to the Senate. It is discharged by the Senate committee still in the non-substantive form. Then on the Senate floor, an amendment is added to raise the retirement age in TRS to age 75. The bill is more than halfway through the process before anyone knows what the bill would ultimately do. Granted, it would need a couple of more votes but in this scenario those votes could be taken in a matter of hours instead of days or weeks.

**WHAT DOES THE GOVERNOR DO?**

This is not a rhetorical question. Once a bill is approved by both chambers the house of origin has 30 days to send the legislation to the Governor. The Governor, then, has 60 days to take action on the bill. So generally, a bill is introduced in January, the legislature meets in March and April to hold its committee hearings and adjournment is the end of May when most bills are called for final passage. The bills are sent to the Governor in June and he has until August to
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Vision 20/20?

Vision 20/20 is a student-centered vision for the future of education in Illinois. It focuses on four policy priorities: highly effective educators, 21st century learning, shared accountability, and equitable and adequate funding. The initiative was developed based on the input and efforts of educators from across the state, based on unprecedented collaboration among the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA), the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO), the Illinois Principals Association (IPA), the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS), the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), and the Superintendents’ Commission for the Study of Demographics and Diversity (SCSDD).

How is Vision 20/20 different from other reform proposals?

Vision 20/20 is an education policy brief drafted by educators based on the experiences and input of thousands of educators from every corner of the state. This is the first time educators have ever proposed a policy platform with this level of collaboration, consensus, and commitment. To ensure action, Vision 20/20 is building a grassroots coalition across the state.

Vision 20/20 is seeking the support of educators, businesses, parents, and other education reform groups from every region across the state to advance the policies of Vision 20/20.

What are the three priorities Vision 20/20 wants to introduce initially for legislative action?

(1) current educator representation on ISBE,
(2) teacher reciprocity agreements with surrounding states, and
(3) the promotion of 21st century technology.

How does Vision 20/20 propose to pay for the policies outlined in Vision 20/20?

Vision 20/20 exists to advocate for children. The public education system was created to develop productive citizens that contribute to the economic prosperity of our state. Vision 20/20 provides broad policy direction to realize that goal. While Vision 20/20 is concerned with both equity and adequacy of school funding, the goal of Vision 20/20 is not to advocate for any specific revenue policy to solve the state’s larger structural deficit challenges but rather to advocate for investment of new state revenues toward public education.

Does Vision 20/20 address Senate Bill 16?

Vision 20/20 does not directly address Senate Bill 16. Vision 20/20 believes Illinois children deserve both an equitable and adequate funding model for public education. As such, Vision 20/20 recommends an evidence-based funding plan that addresses both equity and adequacy.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does Vision 20/20 impact Chicago?
An effective public education system impacts all Illinois children, regardless of geographic location. Although Chicago Public Schools (CPS) operates under a different school code, Vision 20/20 views Chicago legislators and CPS educators as allies in enacting policy to fulfill the promise of public education in Illinois.

What does opting out of mandates look like? Will allowing districts to opt out decrease the quality of education?
Opting out of mandates does not imply opting out of accountability. Vision 20/20 proposes relief from certain mandates not tied to student learning. Vision 20/20 believes the role of the state is to hold schools accountable for outcomes but not to dictate a universal approach or process for how to operate schools statewide. Vision 20/20 envisions a task force to determine which mandates are essential and which should be discretionary.

What does differentiated accountability mean?
The proposed differentiated accountability model modernizes the Illinois accountability system in a manner that satisfies federal requirements under the state's flexibility waiver. The proposed differentiated accountability model recognizes the diversity of Illinois schools by focusing on continuous improvement and district outcomes rather than exclusively on comparisons of diverse schools to a single standard.

What is your stance on standardized testing? Do you have an opinion on PARCC?
Vision 20/20 believes first and foremost that assessment should be used to inform instruction. Vision 20/20 is concerned about the trend toward more state and local testing and proposes a more balanced approach. The Vision 20/20 position on standardized testing is not related to PARCC. PARCC will need to establish its own credibility with educators. The Vision 20/20 proposal of a balanced assessment system reduces the amount of time devoted to assessment by developing a state testing program that meets the needs of local districts, allowing districts to forgo local assessments while creating consistency and alignment across the state.

When will the plan have specifics?
This document is a vision for the future. It is built on guiding principles and includes broad policy statements that Vision 20/20 hopes to advance through legislation over the next five years. Specifics will be communicated in the future in the form of legislative proposals.