



## Illinois General Assembly

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Sen. Barickman announces evidence-based education funding reform

**Springfield** - State Senator Jason Barickman (R-Bloomington) and the Vision 20/20 coalition have announced new legislation to reform the broken system used to fund schools in Illinois. The legislation ties school funding to actual educational outcomes and true district costs. State Senator Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill) joined the effort, lending his support to advance the education funding reform discussion, and will co-sponsor the legislation.

“If we’re ever going to end the funding disparity between school districts and replace the clearly broken funding mechanism that is in place now, we have to look to real, evidence-based solutions,” said Senator Barickman. “This legislation will allow us to truly understand how every dollar spent affects our children’s education, so that we can get the best possible results for every single district.”

Senator Barickman was joined by Senator Manar, members of Vision 20/20, representatives from local school boards, and parents at a February 12 press conference introducing the legislation.

“I want to compliment the work that has been done on Vision 20/20,” said Senator Manar. “I’m committed to working in concert with Sen. Barickman and school management officials as they continue to bring real and tangible ideas to the table. As Senate Bill 1 advances, I am more confident than ever that we can improve the bill with bipartisan solutions that address both the equity and adequacy of school funding in Illinois.”

The Vision 20/20 backed plan will study the needs of every Illinois school district, leading to an evidence-based funding model for each school district. Once in place, lawmakers will have a scalable method to establish funding levels. Vision 20/20 is a coalition representing superintendents, school board members, principals, school business officials, the regional superintendents and the Superintendents’ Commission for the Study of Demographics and Diversity.

“Vision 20/20 is a blueprint to fulfill the promise of public education to the more than 2 million schoolchildren in Illinois, and having an adequate and equitable evidence-based school funding model is a key element to accomplishing that goal,” said Brent Clark, executive director of the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA). “Educators from around the state look forward to working with Senators Barickman and Manar to make that promise a reality.”

An Evidence-Based Professional Judgment Panel would update by December 1, 2015 a study completed in 2010 by the Illinois School Finance Adequacy Task Force that already developed an evidence-based model for Illinois. The Panel also would determine the minimal level of local and state funding for each district and provide recommendations on how to address the state’s neediest districts first in a multi-year plan to phase in the adequacy model in an equitable manner.

Senator Barickman served on the bipartisan Education Funding Advisory Committee, which was chaired by Senator Manar. The panel studied the current system of school funding in Illinois, and the impact on student learning. Their findings indicated that the system was failing to provide equitable and adequate funding for schools.

Senator Manar passed a rewrite of the current formula, Senate Bill 16, based on findings from EFAC, through the Senate in 2014. While that legislation did not achieve passage in the House, he has continued his work and filed new legislation, Senate Bill 1, in 2015.

Both Senators Barickman and Manar remain committed to working together to improve education for all students in Illinois.

“I’d like to commend Senator Manar for the hard work he has put into education funding reform,” said Senator Barickman. “We can and must find common ground; I don’t think this is a one or the other proposition. I’m excited about this legislation, and the opportunity it provides us to work together in a bipartisan fashion to craft comprehensive education funding reform.”

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