



Illinois State Board of Education

James T. Meeks, Chairman
Tony Smith, Ph.D., State Superintendent

December 31, 2017

ESSA P-2 Indicator Working Group Report

Introduction

The P-2 Indicator Working Group was charged with recommending to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) an indicator or indicators to place weight on the P-2 years in Illinois' accountability formula. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to have a measure of school quality in their accountability system, and ISBE has chosen to include a measure of P-2 quality—which signals to districts the importance of those years. ESSA has strict requirements for indicators to be included in the formula. The working group's charge is to recommend indicators that comply with those requirements.

The P-2 Indicator Working Group consisted of district and school administrators, teacher leaders, support personnel, and members from Illinois education research, policy, and advocacy groups. The P-2 Indicator Working group was led by Elliot Regenstein. (See Appendix A for group members and schedule.)

The P-2 Indicator Working Group met monthly throughout the summer and fall of 2017. Group members participated in person in Chicago and Springfield locations that were linked together by video conference or they were able to participate by telephone conference. Meetings lasted an average of two hours each and meeting events, discussions, and decisions were captured in notes taken during each meeting.

Technical Criteria, Principles, and Values

ESSA Technical Criteria

The ESSA requirements for the technical criteria for the P-2 indicator include that it must be

- valid, reliable, and comparable across all local education agencies in the state;
- capable of being disaggregated for each student demographic group; and
- supported by research that high performance or improvement is likely to increase student learning or will aid in the meaningful differentiation of schools.

As specified in ESSA, academic indicators must be given considerably more weight than the school quality/student success indicators. ISBE currently recommends that 75% of the overall weight be placed on P-12 academic indicators while the remaining 25% be placed on school quality indicators. A specific breakdown of how this weight is distributed between P-8 and high school indicators is provided below:

- P-8 academic indicators 75%

- PARCC & DLM-AA (2018–19: ELA – 10%; Math—10%) (thereafter: ELA 7.5%; Math 7.5%)
- Growth: Linear Regression (50%)
- EL Proficiency (ACCESS) (5%)
- Science (2018–19: 0%) (thereafter: 5%)
- P-8 student quality indicators/student success indicators—25%
 - Chronic Absenteeism (10%)
 - Climate Survey (5%)
 - Fine Arts* (0%)
 - [P-2] (5%)
 - [Elementary/Middle Indicator] (5%)
- High school academic indicators—75%
 - SAT (2018–19: ELA—10%; Math 10%) (thereafter: ELA 7.5%; Math 7.5%)
 - Graduation (4-, 5-, and 6-year rate) (50%)
 - EL Proficiency (ACCESS) (5%)
 - Science (2018–19: 0%) (thereafter: 5%)
- High school student quality/student success indicators—25%
 - Chronic Absenteeism (7.5%)
 - 9th grade on track (6.25%)
 - College and Career Ready Indicator (6.25%)
 - Climate Survey (5%)
 - Fine Arts* (0%)

Principles

In addition to the ESSA technical criteria for indicators, the P-2 group and 3-8 group jointly considered the following principles to guide their recommendations:

- The accountability system represents a method of articulating what is important to us in defining a successful school. It will necessarily be incomplete—many things that define a successful school are not easily measured, particularly in a manner compliant with ESSA—but that value is critical. The state’s definition of a high-quality education should be as continuous as possible from birth through the workforce.
- No accountability measure should drive bad educational practice. We believe the best of educators, and believe it is important for accountability indicators to encourage best practices in school administration and teaching.

- Social-emotional development is critically important, but that does not inevitably mean that social-emotional development should be included in the accountability system; the measurements of that development may not be appropriate for accountability purposes.
- Data collection is a burden. The accountability system should be cognizant of that, and any proposed new data collection should include attention to whether there are other burdens that could be reduced to free up the needed capacity.
- We are in uncharted territory. We approach this work humbly, with the goal of doing the best we can with the information we have, learning from experience (ours and that of other states), and revisiting our decisions over time.

The P-2 Working Group also decided to focus its efforts on determining quality indicators for K-2 due to the special nature of the research and testing that are unique to preschool education. The P-2 group endeavored to uphold the following principles when considering effective K-2 indicators:

- The accountability system should support a focus on the K-2 years as a critical part of the education continuum.
- In keeping with the idea of a continuum of accountability, the accountability system's focus in K-2 should provide a thoughtful bridge between the accountability system for the birth to five years (ExceleRate) and the accountability system for the years from third grade and up.
- Third grade tests represent the start of growth measurement in the 3-8 years, but they also represent the culmination of growth in prior years. It is important that the accountability system create the right incentives for third-grade scores.

Values

The P-2 Working Group began its work by articulating 17 critical values in P-2 education, with the idea that measurements for those years should reflect those values. The working group then considered each value individually to determine whether there is a measurable indicator of that value appropriate for inclusion in an accountability formula. The attached table (see Appendix B) summarizes the values identified by the working group, and then briefly notes the working group's initial thinking about whether or not the value can be reflected in the accountability formula.

Final Committee Recommendation

The P-2 Indicator Working Group's final recommendation focuses on three indicators: overweighting chronic absenteeism in the K-2 years, providing required services for K-2 dual language learners (DLLs), and participating in acceleration and enrichment:

- In schools without enough DLLs to meet minimum *n* size requirements, the group recommends that 5% of an elementary school's overall accountability be based on chronic absenteeism (as defined elsewhere in the ESSA plan) solely in the K-2 years, using the scoring method identified in the state's ESSA plan (pages 74–75).
- In schools that do have a sufficient number of DLL students to meet minimum *n* size requirements, 2% of the school's overall accountability should be based on an

overweighting of chronic absenteeism, and 3% should be based on whether or not the school provided needed services to DLLs. More detail on what is meant by “providing needed services” is included in a briefing paper prepared for the group by the Latino Policy Forum. (See Appendix C for a copy of the briefing paper.) The group’s recommendation is that schools receive all three points for providing required services to 90% of eligible DLLs, and 1 point for providing required services to 75% of eligible DLLs. Two important points discussed in the group:

- This indicator is meant to be a reinforcement of existing requirements on school districts, and not a new requirement.
- Districts and schools should have flexibility in providing required services through cooperative arrangements where appropriate. The group’s understanding is that required services can be provided in a variety of settings, not limited to district facilities; the fact that the district is required to ensure that services are provided does not mean that the services must be provided by the district itself.
- The group recommends that participation in acceleration and enrichment in the K-2 years be added to the plan as an indicator worth 0% of the school’s overall score. We respectfully request that the Illinois State Board of Education formally revisit this indicator after the 2019–20 school year after implementation of new state laws requiring the collection of data related to access to enrichment and accelerated placements to determine whether this indicator should be given greater weight.

When the P-2 Working Group determined that a value could not be included in the accountability formula, we, in most cases, made recommendations for next steps to ensure that the excluded value is reflected elsewhere in the ESSA plan or in some other important Illinois policy. We felt strongly that these values are important and hope that many of them will be expressed on data dashboards and in the school improvement process (both in rubrics and as part of state-provided supports).

We recognize that there may be challenges to including some of the data on dashboards—for example, formative or diagnostic data may be used as summative data—but hope that ISBE and other entities will continue to look for ways to ensure that these values are represented in the ESSA plan and can be acted upon at the local level. We acknowledge that we have made numerous recommendations regarding data use, and while some of those can be addressed with data that are already collected, we are also aware that new data collections can be burdensome for schools. We ask ISBE to be sensitive in implementation to the potential cumulative effect of our recommendations. Additionally, it will be essential for the state to protect sensitive student and teacher information to prevent any adverse impact on children and professionals.

As with other groups that have made recommendations in the ESSA process, the P-2 Indicator Working Group felt strongly that it was not appropriate to use indicators that are primarily a proxy for resources.

We would ask the state board to review recommendations across K-2, 3-8, and College and Career Readiness to ensure that there is alignment in the system and the goals of the overall accountability system are maintained.

Our results drive home the fact that the state of the art in P-2 indicators needs greater development. The group felt a strong mismatch between what it values in P-2 education and what ESSA allows into the accountability formula. While in time adjustments to the ESSA accountability formula might improve the situation, the more fundamental issue is the need for better measurements of what occurs in the P-2 years. We hope that ISBE will be a voice for the development of better measures in the years to come. Moreover, we hope that ISBE will ensure that the state is thoughtful about the ongoing implementation of the K-2 indicator. We are very grateful to ISBE for taking this bold step forward, and we hope that in the years to come, ISBE will evaluate the impact of the indicator and consider options for updating and changing it—including drawing on the experiences of other states, where applicable. We recommend that ISBE convene another study group after the 2019–20 school year to revisit the P-2 indicator by evaluating any newly available data or reviewing indicators adopted by other states. Our hope is that the experience of the coming years will demonstrate the importance of this indicator, and that in future years the weight placed on the K-2 years in the accountability system will grow beyond the 5% currently allocated.

More broadly, our conversations raise important questions about the future of kindergarten in Illinois. Our primary recommendation is focused on improving attendance in kindergarten, which research shows is an important contributor to long-term student success. But while the great majority of Illinois' kindergarten-aged children are in fact enrolled in kindergarten, it is not compulsory. The state's new funding formula and the implementation of a K-2 indicator might present an occasion for the State Board and other stakeholders to discuss important questions about the state's policies relating to kindergarten. As a group, we offer no specific recommendations on what the outcome of those discussions should be, but many of our members will be interested in participating in those discussions should they occur.

Appendix A.

P-2 Indicator Working Group Members

Chair

Elliot Regenstein, Ounce of Prevention Fund
Paula Barajas, Teach Plus
Sara Boucek, Illinois Association of School Administrators
Lauren Burdette, Office of the Secretary of Education
Eric Calvert, Illinois Association for Gifted Children
Patricia Chamberlain, Early Childhood Committee of the Bilingual Advisory Council
Dave Deets, Illinois Principals Association
Roger Eddy, Illinois Association of School Boards, Statewide School Management Alliance
Shannon Ferholz, Illinois Association of Regional School Superintendents
Melissa Figueira, Advance Illinois
Jon Furr, Northern Illinois University
Aimee Galvin, Stand for Children
Becky Gill, Barrington Community Unit School District 220
Jennifer Garrison, Rural Schools Association
Jessica Handy, Stand for Children
Kurt Hilgendorf, Chicago Teachers Union
Charles Johns, Legislative Education Network of DuPage County
Melissa Kaczowski, Legislative Education Network of DuPage County
Jason Leahy, Illinois Principals Association Director
Ben Lee, Illinois Principals Association
Cathy Mannen, Illinois Federation of Teachers
Jim O'Connor, Advance Illinois
Kathy Olsen, ED-RED
Bethany Patten, Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development
Marleis Trover, Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools
Jaelyn Vasquez, Erikson Institute
Kelly Voliva, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education
Paige Williams, Advance Illinois
Pam Witmer, Illinois Network of Charter Schools
Carolyn Welch, Illinois Association for Gifted Children

Illinois State Board of Education

Claudia Quezada, Innovation System Supports
Phyllis Bliven, Early Childhood
Lynn Burgett, Early Childhood
Jason Helfer, Teaching and Learning
Marci Johnson, Teaching and Learning
Gil Sanchez, Teaching and Learning
Melina Wright, Innovation Systems Supports

Members, Groups that Consulted with P-2 Indicator Working Group

Cindy Kazanis, Jeff Breshears, Jacqueline Matranga, and Brent Malicote, California Department of Education

Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro, Latino Policy Forum

Eric Calvert and Carolyn Welch, Illinois Association for Gifted Children

The Council of Chief State School Officers and the Center on Enhancing Early Learning

Outcomes provided extensive assistance to the working group, producing discussion guides that were used to guide conversation on numerous specific potential indicators.

Midwest Comprehensive Center, AIR

Cheryl Harris, Project Lead

Jeremy Rasmussen, Notetaker

Dan Botting, Notetaker

Meredith Lukow, Notetaker

Corrin Pitluck, Notetaker

Meeting Dates

May 25 (Joint Meeting with 3-8)

June 22, 2017

July 6, 2017

August 10, 2017 (Joint Meeting with 3-8),

August 31, 2017

September 25, 2017

October 13, 2017

November 6, 2017

December 4, 2017

Appendix B

Table of Disposition of Values P-2 Working Group Considered for the Accountability Formula

Value	Recommend for Inclusion?	Rationale	Next Steps
Academic Achievement (Grades)	No	Including grades in the accountability formula would taint the grading process.	
Academic Achievement (Assessments)	No	Current K-2 assessments are not designed for accountability purposes, nor are they implemented in a manner appropriate for use in accountability systems. Schools do not want the burden of additional required assessments.	
Preschool Enrollment	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements.	Continue to support expanded enrollment in preschool statewide, and particularly in schools with a diagnosed need for students entering kindergarten
Access to Social-Emotional Development	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements.	Ensure that this value is reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric. ¹
Support for Kindergarten Transition	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements.	P-20 Council’s Kindergarten Transition Advisory Committee will make recommendations on this subject
Teacher Retention	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements; already included in Illinois Balanced Accountability Measures (IBAM) proposed school improvement rubric.	Ensure that this value is reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.
Teacher Mentorship Supports	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements; already included in IBAM-proposed school improvement rubric.	Ensure that this value is reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.

¹ Note: References to the “school improvement rubric” under “Next Steps” are to the version of the rubric ultimately adopted by ISBE to support its ongoing school improvement process (IL-EMPOWER), and reflect our goal that ISBE’s rubric reflect the values of the work group. References under “Rationale” to the “Illinois Balanced Accountability Measures (IBAM) proposed school improvement rubric” are to a draft rubric developed by IBAM that is currently being field-tested by ISBE.

Value	Recommend for Inclusion?	Rationale	Next Steps
Strong Leadership	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements; already included in IBAM-proposed school improvement rubric.	Ensure that this value is reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.
Access to Resources	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements; group specifically sought to avoid using metrics that were just a proxy for resource levels given long-standing inequities in Illinois school funding.	Ensure that this value is reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.
Child-Led Learning	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements.	Ensure that this value is reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.
Skilled Instruction	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements.	Ensure that this value is reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.
Inclusionary Practice	No	Could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements; measurement could potentially create the wrong incentives.	Ensure that this value is reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.
Well-rounded curriculum	No	Not well enough defined and could not be measured in a manner that is consistent with ESSA requirements.	The group would like to see the state consider defining a “well-rounded curriculum” and providing better support for its implementation; this issue goes well beyond K-2, and the group acknowledged other efforts to ensure that this topic is more fully addressed at the state level.
Teacher/ Student Ratio (Class Size)	No	Too much of a proxy for available resources.	The group would like to see this data continue to be reported publicly as representing an important value.
Access to wraparound services	No	Could not be measured in a manner consistent with ESSA requirements.	The group would like to see continued exploration of how to measure these essential services, and would like to see this value reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.

Value	Recommend for Inclusion?	Rationale	Next Steps
Survey data	No	Survey data are already in the formula. The group considered recommending overweighting the K-2 years but did not believe that survey participation was an important enough value to warrant overweighting.	
Access to Enrichment and Acceleration	Yes, as a zero-weight indicator	<p>The Illinois Association for Gifted Children proposed the following indicator: Student Participation in Acceleration and/or Enrichment, with at least 5% of children K-2 participating in either acceleration or enrichment.¹ The group felt strongly that improved access to enrichment and acceleration is a value, and many members of the group appreciated that the indicator provided an avenue for low-resource schools to meet the needs of children who are capable of acceleration. Proponents of the indicator cited a desire to put pressure on districts and schools to engage in behaviors that would remedy a significant gap in access to enrichment. Opponents argued that the state does not have adequate data to assess the scope of this issue, and that there is still a possible correlation with poverty.</p> <p>The group also discussed the fact that the potential impact of this indicator will be affected by related conversations about the need for a broad curriculum and stronger arts education.</p>	<p>New state laws require the collection of data relating to access to enrichment and accelerated placements. The group reached a consensus that the new data should be included in the formula but that no weight should be attached to it at this time. Before reaching that consensus, the group was roughly evenly divided between proponents of including this indicator immediately as a weighted indicator and opponents of including the indicator.</p> <p>The group agreed that the issue of including this indicator in the accountability formula should be revisited in two years (after the 2019–20 school year) to discuss whether there are improvements needed in the data collection, and whether the indicator should then be included in the accountability formula.</p>
Dual language learners	Yes	The K-2 years are an extremely important developmental period for dual language learners, and data shows that DLLs are disproportionately represented in early childhood and the younger grades. Districts and schools are already required to provide specialized services to DLLs meeting certain established	The group recommends that the provision of required services to DLLs (as described above and in Appendix C) be included as 3% of the overall weight in districts and schools with an adequate <i>n</i> size of DLLs.

¹ The full proposal is available here: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1JwJwKfXpVSL3lbgvJoGvZZnRUUFG3tyAsfWHx9jpdVw/edit#slide=id.g2a7f47f211_0_112.

Value	Recommend for Inclusion?	Rationale	Next Steps
		<p>criteria, and to track data about that service provision. Including the indicator in the accountability formula will create added incentive for districts and schools to meet their obligations.</p>	<p>Districts/schools should receive the maximum possible score for providing service to more than 90% of DLLs, and 1 point for providing service to more than 75% of DLLs.</p> <p>Other indicators for DLLs may be reflected on data dashboards and in implementation of school improvement rubric.</p>
Chronic absenteeism	<p>Yes (Note: the IFT does not join in this recommendation, on the ground that chronic absenteeism is already included elsewhere in the state’s ESSA plan.)</p>	<p>Research shows that reducing chronic absenteeism in the early grades is correlated with improving numerous longer term outcomes valued in the ESSA plan.</p> <p>Strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism include activities that are consistent with key values identified by the group (such as wraparound services and family engagement).</p> <p>Overweighting K-2 chronic absenteeism places an additional focus on the K-2 years, which is particularly important given the absence of other indicators for those years.</p> <p>The group is aware that there are challenges with chronic absenteeism as a metric and hopes that ISBE will continue to study the impact of its inclusion in the accountability formula, and make any necessary adjustments in the future.</p>	<p>The group’s recommendation is to overweight chronic absenteeism in the K-2 years. In schools without enough dual language learners to meet the minimum <i>n</i> size for including that indicator, we recommend that 5% of an elementary school’s overall accountability be based on chronic absenteeism (as defined elsewhere in the ESSA plan) solely in the K-2 years, using the scoring method identified in the state’s ESSA plan (pages 74–75). In schools where the DLL indicator is in use, we recommend that the DLL indicator count for 3% and chronic absenteeism for 2%.</p>

Appendix C

Addenda Submitted by Groups

**K-2 Quality Indicator for the Illinois ESSA State Plan
Considerations for English Learners, Prepared by the Latino Policy Forum**

The youngest of Illinois learners are increasingly more linguistically and culturally diverse. Per Illinois census data, close to one-in-four public school children speak a language other than English in their homes. The number who identify as English Learners—close to one-in-ten students—has grown an astonishing 83 percent over the last 15 years and these students now reside in 85 of Illinois’ 102 counties. As the ESSA plan reduces the number of students necessary to form a subgroup from 30 to 20 students in a school, now 53% of Illinois schools will have an English Learner subgroup and be held accountable for their academic progress.

These students are overwhelming concentrated in early childhood and elementary grades. Research contends that early support for English Learners, in both their home language and the English language, is pivotal for long-term academic success. The K-2 quality indicator could be critical for ensuring that the state’s English Learners are receiving the necessary services as stipulated by Article 14C of the school code.

Recommendation:

- ✓ Develop an indicator that would report on the percentage of k-2 ELs receiving an adequate level of service according to English language proficiency assessment data. A school would receive points if at least 90 percent of their ELs are receiving adequate amount of service in k-2. (Note: ISBE requires all schools to report the number of EL students that are enrolled and the number of periods of instruction those students are receiving.) This indicator will incentivize schools to review MODEL and ACCESS data when determining the amount of service so that a student can make adequate progress in his/her English language development.

Kids receiving adequate level of EL services

Kids eligible for EL services = % of kids receiving recommended level of EL services based on test data (whether MODEL or ACCESS data).

(Full-time services includes 10 or more periods per week. This information is already uploaded to the Student Information System.)

- The recommendation is supported by longitudinal research which contends that language models that support or build the home language (i.e. dual language one-way or two-way or Transitional Bilingual Programs) outperform ESL pull-out interventions or programs where no English Learner services are provided. An English Learner can best benefit from services provided by dual language, Transitional Bilingual Programs, or Transitional Program of Instruction. In Transitional Program of Instruction programs can add resources in the native language, such as paraprofessionals, native language tutors, community volunteers, books in the native language, or digital resources.¹
- According the Illinois School Code, schools are responsible to provide TPI even if there is only one student enrolled. If there are no ELs enrolled in the school, then the school should receive full points.

¹ Collier, V. and W.P. Thomas (2004), “The Astounding Effectiveness of Dual Language Education for All,” NABE Journal of Research and Practice, 2:1. Accessed on October 24, 2017:

http://hillcrest.wacoisd.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_345/File/Publications/ELL/Dual%20language%20survey.pdf

Collier, V. and W.P. Thomas (2007) “Predicting Second Language Academic Success in English Using the Prism Model.” Chapter 22 in Springer International Handbook of Education. Accessed on October 24, 2017:

<http://www.thomasandcollier.com/Predicting%20Second%20Language2.PDF>

- ISBE currently collects this student-level data by indicating the number of EL periods per week a student receives. A student is considered full-time if they receive ten or more classes per week. Adding this information to the accountability system would not require ISBE to change their current data collection processes.
- The data also corresponds with ESSA requirements: collected annually, valid and reliable, and can be disaggregated by subgroups. Illinois could use this data to determine which schools are providing the necessary levels of supports and services to English Learners.

FAQs

- **What existing data can give us a sense of the current landscape?**

All students entering Kindergarten coming from a home where a language other than English is spoken must be screened with the MODEL Assessment to determine eligibility for EL Services. The MODEL scores are uploaded to the ISBE Student Information System on a regular basis and are archived as part of the individual student assessment record. The amount of required EL services are determined by the MODEL Score (See DELL guidelines 2015). Children who do not require EL services are those who score as English proficient. (According to ILSC Article 14C a student must be assessed within 30 days after enrollment and scores must be uploaded.)

In addition, the Division of English Language Learning extracts EL student demographic data to generate the grant application for each school district. Each student generates funding for the district on a per pupil basis given the amount of service they receive, either full- or part-time. With the new EBM EL funding, ISBE will have to review whether part-time service is still an option. (EBM does not discuss part-time service.)

Given that ISBE will still continue to generate the EL allocations for each district under the EBM Model, based on EL enrollment, the data will be available. ISBE should consider how the data might be configured to generate the percentage of students receiving adequate services in K-2 based on their MODEL and subsequent ACCESS scores.

- **Is this indicator too much of a proxy for district resource levels (i.e. is this too correlated to a school's SES)?**

The services ELs receive in K-2 will directly affect their ability to make adequate growth to attain English proficiency within 5 years, which is already an ESSA indicator. The SES of the students has little to do with a school's ability to deliver instructional supports. This is especially true when the new EBM Model is implemented and allows even more funding for every EL child. In addition, ELs are entitled to federal Title I and Title III funding.

- **How can the formula account for schools and districts that do not have an adequate n size of ELs?**

According to statute, even if a school enrolls one EL student, that child is entitled to services based on his/her English proficiency. In cases of enrollments under 20, schools typically implement a TPI program, which is taught by an ESL endorsed teacher. In recent years IHE's have embedded the ESL endorsement in pre-service programs or have partnered with districts to offer graduate cohort classes for the licensed teachers. This has helped to boost the number of available qualified staff.

- **How will the indicator work for schools that do not have an EL population or less than 20?**

Schools without sufficient n size will not have that indicator included for the calculation of a summative designation.

Illinois Association for Gifted Children

Statement on Proposed P-2 and 3-8 School Quality Indicators

IAGC applauds the inclusion of the school quality indicator related to participation in enrichment programming and accelerated learning settings. The indicator sets basic targets for school districts that are consistent with ESSA's requirements that state plans address the needs of advanced students. Combined with planned changes to Illinois' academic growth model, the inclusion of this school quality indicator will help connect academic interventions for advanced students with learning outcomes, helping to shine a light on successful local practices.

IAGC believes that ISBE can further enhance the impact of this indicator by immediately giving it a "weight" of 2% in the overall school rating framework. The original intent of including indicators of school quality beyond test scores in the accountability framework was to present a more holistic view of schools and districts.

By only giving weight at grades 3-8 to an indicator based on chronic absenteeism, the school quality indicators for this grade band miss an opportunity to connect quality indicators for grades 3-8 with the focus on college and career readiness at grades 9-12. The path to college and career readiness does not begin in high school. Unfortunately, bright students from low-income and diverse backgrounds who lack access to appropriately challenging curriculum and talent-development oriented enrichment opportunities in the elementary and middle grades are at severe risk of underachievement and of placing into less rigorous coursework in high school compared to equally bright non-disadvantaged students. However, sustained participation in enrichment programming in elementary and middle school has been shown to increase likelihood of student participation and success in advanced high school coursework (VanTassel-Baska, 2007). The high school college and career readiness indicator includes a focus on participation in advanced coursework. The 3-8 school quality indicators should align with this concept, and the proposed indicator of participation in enrichment and accelerated placement would provide that alignment.

ESSA is, fundamentally, legislation focused on educational equity. Unlike NCLB, which focused on equity almost exclusively through a deficit-based lens, ESSA challenges states to address equity across the spectrum of achievement. There was broad consensus on the workgroup that expanding access to advanced learning opportunities should be a state priority. Weighting the proposed indicator at 2% would help close gaps in access to enrichment and acceleration by incentivizing schools to address equity holistically. On the flip side, many schools serving diverse and predominantly low-income populations already provide quality enrichment and acceleration opportunities. The accountability framework should help these schools tell their stories.

Further, giving weight to the indicator for participation in enrichment and acceleration is fair to schools. During school accountability workgroup meetings, members heard testimony from school leaders representing low-income communities, small rural schools, and large, diverse metropolitan districts who indicated the goals incorporated in this indicator were achievable and that the indicator would present a more well-rounded view of their schools to state and local stakeholders. Providing students with opportunities for acceleration and enrichment is arguably more within a school's zone of control and less correlated with poverty than is remedying chronic absenteeism. While schools may have limited opportunity to influence certain risk factors associated with chronic absenteeism, schools can take direct action to provide access to enrichment and

accelerated learning opportunities, especially given that there is often little cost to acceleration beyond initial assessment of student need. The indicator also allows for flexibility in developing enrichment options that meet local priorities.

While IAGC acknowledges that chronic absenteeism negatively influences academic and intellectual growth, the association believes that weighting chronic absenteeism as 10% of the overall district rating sufficiently recognizes its importance without also giving it the full additional weight of the elementary and middle school quality indicator (for a total of 15% of the summative rating at grades 3-8.)

Therefore, IAGC encourages ISBE to weight the acceleration and enrichment indicator, assigning 2% of the 5% reserved for 3-8 school quality indicator to this indicator. Weighting participation in enrichment and acceleration at 2% of the 3-8 school quality indicator initially leaves 3% for chronic absenteeism (for a total of 13% of the summative rating at grades 3-8). Down the road, that 3% represents room for future indicators that could be developed to operationalize the ESSA Plan goal of ensuring access to a “broad and rich curriculum” across the state. IAGC strongly supports the immediate weighting of the participation in acceleration and enrichment indicator at grades 3-8 due to the body of evidence demonstrating the positive outcomes of these interventions for advanced students in these grades. Additionally, including the enrichment and acceleration indicator supports the commitment of those involved in the ESSA accountability framework development process to incorporate additional important factors within the accountability system that allow schools to tell their stories and that capture appropriate opportunities being provided to students.

While IAGC also supports the immediate weighting of the P-2 indicator at 2%, it could be initially unweighted as recommended in order to gather more information at these early grades. However, if the indicator were to be weighted immediately at 2%, this would still allow room at grades P-2 to weight access to services for English learners at the level recommended by the P-2 workgroup. (IAGC, as an organization advocating for diverse students with exceptional learning needs, supports the recommendations of the P-2 workgroup and the Latino Policy Forum to give weight to the indicator related to access to appropriate services for dual language learners.)

With the passage of Illinois laws requiring districts to allow accelerated placement and providing for data collection around enrichment and acceleration, along with the availability of state and federal funds to support local efforts to meet the needs of advanced students and provide related professional development for teachers, the time is right for Illinois’ accountability framework to recognize schools for providing more appropriate instruction for advanced learners. Therefore, IAGC supports the weighting of the acceleration and enrichment component of the 3-8 school quality indicator at 2%.

IAGC would also like to express its gratitude to Elliot Regenstein, chair of the P-2 School Quality Indicator workgroup, Karen Sullivan, chair of the 3-8 School Quality Indicator workgroup, and to ISBE for providing opportunities to give input into this important work on behalf of Illinois students.

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SCHOOL QUALITY INDICATORS: Access to Acceleration and Enrichment

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IL Opportunity and Excellence Gaps

Illinois' "opportunity gaps" have grown in the NCLB era

- In 2003, 85% of IL school districts offered programs for gifted and advanced students in elementary grades, and 78.9% of districts offered programs in middle school (ISBE). In 2016, only 27% of districts reported providing such programs (Dwyer & Welch, 2016).
 - Districts serving predominately low income students were least likely to provide programming. Families least able to provide enrichment outside of school are currently least likely to have access to enrichment in school.

As a result, Illinois' "excellence gaps" are among the widest in the nation

- 15% of 4th graders and 12% of 8th graders who did not qualify for free or reduced price lunch in Illinois scored at the advanced levels on the 2013 NAEP math test, while only 2% of students who qualified for free or reduced price lunch scored at advanced levels (Plucker, 2016).
- White students are 9X more likely to score at this level than Black students, 3X more likely than Hispanic students.

One-third of Illinois students are already at or above "proficiency" thresholds and need further challenge.

Key Points

- A continuum of advanced coursework and support at K-8 is needed to align with the advanced coursework component of the 9-12 college and career readiness indicator. (College and career readiness begins in kindergarten, not high school.)
- An access to acceleration and enrichment indicator is needed to encourage equitable access to opportunities and begin narrowing economic and racial excellence gaps. Quality indicators should reward less resourced schools that seek to close excellence gaps, not just proficiency gaps.
- More focus on inputs is needed to allow schools to tell their stories and help the state to connect effective practices to student outcomes, especially at K-8
- School quality indicators will set priorities as to what resources and supports are provided through IL-EMPOWER.
- Data collection on access to acceleration and advanced learning opportunities will begin in the 2018-19 school year. An acceleration and enrichment metric would meet ESSA criteria for disaggregation by student subgroup.

Evidence: Acceleration Works

- A meta-analysis synthesizing 100 years of research, covering 172 empirical studies, found that, when high-ability students were accelerated, they exceeded the academic achievement of their non-accelerated, but similar high-ability peers by nearly one-year on a grade-equivalent scale (Steenbergen-Hu, Makel, & Olszewski-Kubilius, 2016)
- Despite popular beliefs, acceleration has not been found to be detrimental to students social and emotional well-being or growth and, in fact, has small to moderate benefits (Steenbergen-Hu & Moon, 2011)
- Acceleration is an intervention shown to work in schools of all sizes and populations (Southern & Jones, 2007) and that aids teachers in differentiating more effectively.

Evidence: Quality Enrichment Opportunities Work

Meta-analysis findings on the impact of enrichment programming (Kim, 2016):

- Effect sizes of positive impact on academic achievement:
 - middle school (1.37)
 - elementary school (0.57)
- Effect sizes of positive impact on social emotional development:
 - middle school (0.93)
 - elementary school gifted students (0.44)

Excellence Gaps Can't be Closed by Focusing on High School Alone

- **“Waiting until [students] are in high school for college readiness is as crazy as starting parenting when a kid is 13. You miss the opportunity. For kids who live in poverty, it will take a childhood to break down myths about college and get the child to a place where they can see college in their future.” (Hanover, 2017)**
- **Grant-funded research has shown that access to advanced curriculum and participation in talent development (non-remedial) enrichment can:**
 - Dramatically increase readiness of minority students to successfully participate in college prep-level curriculum in high school (Project Excite)
 - Be a catalyst for schoolwide gains in achievement in low income elementary schools (Project Athena)

Proposal Overview

- **Recognize districts for providing access to quality opportunities for academic acceleration and enrichment**
 - Support *acceleration* options to ensure appropriate challenge and maintain student engagement for advanced learners
 - Support quality *enrichment* options to better ensure access to a broad, appropriate curriculum and incentivize the creations of opportunities, especially for students with *emerging* ability. (Reduce opportunity gaps now to reduce excellence gaps tomorrow.)
- **Create infrastructure to help identify effective models**
 - Better achievement and growth measures can only help effective local models spread when *outcomes* can be connected to *inputs*
- **Option: Raise expectations for % of students participating in acceleration and enrichment gradually over time (phase-in)**

Proposed Indicator

Student Participation in Acceleration and/or Enrichment	K-8: Initially, at least 5% of students per grade level are participating in one or more of the following:
Acceleration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A documented accelerated placement (e.g., early admission to kindergarten/first grade, single subject acceleration, or whole grade acceleration) in a setting with older students• A course to which students are assigned based on advanced cognitive ability or advanced achievement compared to local age peers and in which curriculum is substantially differentiated from the general curriculum to provide appropriate challenge and pace (e.g., an accelerated math class)
Enrichment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An enrichment program featuring advanced academic content for a minimum of 90 minutes per week during the regular school day (on average across the school year) taught by a teacher who holds a gifted education endorsement, master's degree in gifted education, or who has received at least 15 documented clock hours in professional development in gifted education

Goals are Achievable

- Accelerative options can be provided at low cost
 - Effective evaluation processes used to determine accelerated placements can leverage assessment data most districts already collect
 - Over the course of a K-12 education, acceleration can actually save money vs. moving students through school in lockstep based on birthdate.
- Proposed enrichment options support quality but are minimally prescriptive regarding structure to allow for district customization to meet local priorities
- Recommendations include broadly achievable thresholds for reaching benchmarks and can incorporate realistic ramps that promote excellence while recognizing current conditions

Support is Available to Build Capacity

- Illinois higher education institutions and the Illinois Association for Gifted Children already offer a wide array of research-based professional development, resources, and models. Scalable capacity exists to support teachers and districts if incentives are in place.
- ISBE has previously supported creating professional development materials related to advanced students. These can be updated for the ESSA era and provided through IL-EMPOWER as a low-cost path for all districts to meet proposed indicator criteria
- ESSA presents an opportunity to address opportunity gaps in access to adequately trained educators for gifted and talented students:
 - Title II reforms in ESSA *require* states to address gifted education professional development in implementation plans
 - Title II funds may be used to support gifted education professional development

Including Enrichment and Acceleration in Accountability Leads to Change

- Ohio includes identification and services for gifted students in its school accountability framework (beginning prior to ESSA)
 - Since gifted education indicators became a factor in overall school ratings:
 - The number of minority and low income students identified as gifted has increased
 - A multi-year trend toward fewer students receiving services has been reversed
 - These improvements can be attributed to changes in the school accountability framework. There have been no funding model changes and no changes in how data is collected.

Questions?

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A Union of Professionals

Position Statement

ESSA Accountability

Context

President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015, requiring states to develop new school accountability systems. Throughout Illinois's stakeholder engagement process, the Illinois Federation of Teachers and the Chicago Teachers Union have sought every opportunity for our members' voices to be heard on these issues impacting their day-to-day work with students. We have represented our 103,000 members during three rounds of public comment on the ESSA plan, as well as attending over 100 meetings convened since early 2016 by the Illinois State Board of Education, the state P20 Council, the Illinois Early Learning Council, and the Illinois Balanced Accountability Measures Committee. We are greatly concerned that, while ISBE continues to solicit practitioner feedback, the input of our members is ignored. Separately, many of the new accountability measures may be valuable indicators of general school quality under normal conditions of education. However, when these measures are combined and are used to differentiate school performance, they potentially lose their value as indicators of quality and distort the educational process similar to the undesirable impact high-stakes testing has had on classrooms over the past fifteen years. ESSA provides an opportunity to move away from the failed policies of NCLB, and there is still time for Illinois to get ESSA right, basing school accountability on fair, meaningful multiple measures and differentiated supports with a commitment to resource equity and sufficiency.

Issue: Proposed accountability indicator to overweight chronic absenteeism at both grades P-2 and 3-8

CTU-IFT Position

CTU and IFT oppose the overweighting of chronic absenteeism as an accountability indicator.

Rationale: During development of the state ESSA plan in 2016, we supported the inclusion of an indicator measuring chronic absenteeism. As participants in the ISBE P-2 and 3-8 workgroups in 2017, however, our members spoke against overweighting chronic absenteeism, because research shows it to be an indicator of student poverty, which is clearly linked to student health considerations, including asthma, oral health, behavioral health, exposure to violence and trauma, and acute health issues. While chronic absenteeism is a good "trigger" for identifying students in need of additional supports, overweighting this indicator will once again stack the deck against the schools serving our most vulnerable students. Instead, the state should focus on truly advancing equity, by providing necessary and sufficient inputs and then measuring student access to social and academic services and supports, inclusivity of a broad and rich curriculum, and access to wraparound services, all of which would help schools intervene early with students and families who are on-track to be considered chronically absent.



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Issue: Proposed accountability indicator to measure participation in acceleration and enrichment at both grades P-2 and 3-8

CTU-IFT Position

CTU and IFT oppose the inclusion of an accountability indicator that measures participation in acceleration and enrichment.

Rationale: We wholeheartedly agree that acceleration and enrichment opportunities are vital components to a well-rounded educational experience. However, our members equally value their students having access to fine arts, foreign languages, daily P.E., fully staffed libraries, career and technical education, wraparound services, and other social and academic support services. All of these opportunities contribute to a rich educational experience. As we have asserted throughout public comment periods in 2016, and during stakeholder meetings in 2017, we believe an all-encompassing, inclusive indicator is necessary to focus on the various inputs that create a well-rounded educational experience. Stakeholder discussions have focused on measuring participation rates in acceleration and enrichment, and we believe this type of metric could be applied to all inputs. Rather than single out one component, we again take this opportunity to advocate for an indicator that measures all aspects of a well-rounded education—which would include, but not be limited to, acceleration and enrichment—for all students.

Resources

- [IFT ESSA webpage](#)
- [Healthy Schools Campaign – chronic absenteeism](#)
- [Darling-Hammond et al, Pathways to New Accountability Through the Every Student Succeeds Act](#)

December 15, 2017

Appendix D

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ESSA P-2 Indicator Working Group: Report Summary

The P-2 Working Group recommends that ISBE consider the following three indicators for their accountability formula: (1) overweighting chronic absenteeism in the K-2 years, (2) providing needed services for K-2 dual language learners (DLLs), and (3) participation in acceleration and enrichment in the K-2 years, worth 0% of a school's overall score. For schools that do not have enough DLLs to meet the minimum *n* size requirements, we recommend that 5% of the elementary school's overall accountability be based on chronic absenteeism. For schools that do have a sufficient number of DLL students to meet minimum *n* size requirements, we recommend 2% of the school's overall accountability should be based on an overweighting of chronic absenteeism, and 3% should be based on whether or not the school provided needed services to DLLs. The latter indicator is meant to be a reinforcement of existing requirements on school districts, and not a new requirement. We also believe that districts and schools should have flexibility in providing required services through cooperative arrangements where appropriate. Finally, the group recommends that ISBE convene another study group after the 2019–20 school year to revisit the P-2 indicator by evaluating any newly available data or reviewing indicators adopted by other states.

The P-2 Working Group also hopes that ISBE will consider their recommendations on how to reflect the critical values outlined in this report in the ESSA plan or in some other important Illinois policy. We felt that these values are crucial to P-2 education and hope that many of them will be expressed on data dashboards and in the school improvement process (both in rubrics and as part of state-provided supports). Although we recognize that there are challenges to including some of the data on dashboards, we hope that ISBE and other entities will continue to look for ways to ensure that these values are represented in the ESSA plan and can be acted upon at the local level.