

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable JB Pritzker, Governor
The Honorable Emanuel “Chris” Welch, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Tony McCombie, House Minority Leader
The Honorable Don Harmon, Senate President
The Honorable John Curran, Senate Minority Leader

FROM: Dr. Tony Sanders 
State Superintendent of Education

DATE: June 8, 2026

SUBJECT: 2024-2025 Strategic Plan Status Report

The Illinois State Board of Education respectfully submits a status report on ISBE’s Strategic Plan to the Governor and General Assembly to fulfill the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/2-3.47a.

This report is transmitted on behalf of the state superintendent of education. For additional information, please contact the Governmental Relations Department at 217-782- 6510.

cc: Secretary of the Senate
Clerk of the House
Legislative Research Unit
State Government Report Center

Illinois State Board of Education

Strategic Plan 2024-25 Annual Status Report



Introduction

As required in 105 ILCS 5/2-3.47a, the State Board of Education shall develop and maintain a continuing comprehensive strategic plan for elementary and secondary education. The 2024-2027 Strategic Plan was approved by the State Board of Education on January 24, 2024. The plan consists of goals for equity, student learning, learning conditions, and elevating educators. The plan acknowledges that every district contains unique assets and requires different approaches to support and develop these assets.

The Strategic Plan leverages the wide range of talents and interests of ISBE staff, practicing educators, and stakeholders and considers how best to support agency work.

This report provides an update on the status of the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025.

The goals identified in the 2024-2027 ISBE Strategic Plan are:

Equity Goal 1 – An Equity Impact Analysis Tool will guide all programmatic decisions and communications provided to stakeholders with special attention given to confronting and resolving historical inequities.

Equity Goal 2 – An Equity Journey Continuum will be used to publicly indicate where each Illinois school district is on its equity journey



**Goal 1:
Student
Learning –**

All students will receive a high-quality education with access to appropriate resources and supports to increase their knowledge, skills, and opportunities so they graduate equipped to pursue a successful future.



**Goal 2:
Learning
Conditions –**

In partnership with its stakeholders, ISBE will advocate for the necessary resources to create safe, healthy, and welcoming learning environments that meet the unique academic, social, and emotional needs of every student.



**Goal 3:
Elevating
Educators –**

Illinois' diverse student population will have educators who are prepared through multiple pathways and supported in and celebrated for their effectiveness in providing every child a high-quality education that meets their needs.

Goal
E.1

Equity Impact Analysis Tool

An Equity Impact Analysis Tool will guide all programmatic decisions and communications provided to stakeholders with special attention given to confronting and resolving historical inequities.

Internal Objectives

E.1.1

By the end of fiscal year 2025, every ISBE exempt and non-exempt employee will be trained on how to use and document usage of the Equity Impact Analysis Tool.

E.1.2

By the end of FY 2025, the Equity Impact Analysis Tool will be built into all new Contract Authorization Forms (CAF) and Grant Authorization Forms (GAF), so all major financial decisions take into consideration historical inequities.

E.1.3

By the end of FY 2025, the Equity Impact Analysis Tool will be built into all Board memos, so all official actions by the agency take into consideration historical inequities.

FY25 Accomplishment

Annually, ISBE trains staff at all-agency meetings on the usage of the [Equity Impact Analysis Tool](#) on policies, programs, and practices.

Language was added to the Contract Authorization Form to align with the Equity Impact Analysis Tool.

Goal
E.2

Equity Journey Continuum

An Equity Journey Continuum will be used to publicly indicate where each Illinois school district is on its equity journey.

Internal Objectives

E.2.1

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE staff will use the Equity Journey Continuum to guide the distribution of resources.

E.2.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE staff will begin a continual cycle of reviewing data produced by the Equity Journey Continuum.

External Objectives

E.2.3

By the end of FY 2025, the Equity Journey Continuum will be added to the School Improvement Needs Assessment.

E.2.4

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop a suite of resources to assist schools and districts in integrating their Equity Journey Continuum results into their continuous improvement planning.

FY25 Accomplishment

Annually, ISBE trains staff at all-agency meetings on the usage of the Equity Impact Analysis Tool on policies, programs, and practices.

In partnership with the Data Strategy and Analytics team and other ISBE departments, the Equity Journey Continuum data elements are reviewed on annual basis.

ISBE's School/District Improvement Department incorporated the three key areas of the Equity Journey Continuum into the School Improvement Needs Assessment.

ISBE's Organizational Development and School/District Improvement departments have added Equity Journey Continuum resources to support continuous improvement planning.

- [Integrating Equity Journey Continuum Data into the School Level Needs Assessment](#)
- [How to Use the Equity Journey Continuum](#)
- [How to Craft Your Equity Journey Narrative](#)

Goal
1.1**Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan**

ISBE will work with stakeholders to curate resources and develop instructional guides using evidence-based strategies to support the teaching of literacy in two or more languages.

**Internal Objectives****1.1.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE staff will be trained on the literacy plan.

External Objectives**1.1.2**

By the end of FY 2024, ISBE, in partnership with stakeholders, will develop and post the following:

- A rubric to evaluate and select evidence-based, culturally inclusive core reading curriculum.
- A comprehensive, district wide literacy plan template.
- A guidance document on evidence-based practices for training and deploying equity-oriented literacy coaches.

FY25 Accomplishment

The ISBE Literacy Team provided tiered support to ISBE staff, specifically tailored to each department, in order to effectively support the implementation of the [Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan](#) in school districts throughout Illinois.

ISBE, in partnership with stakeholders, provided the following resources to support the [Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan](#):

- [Local Literacy Plan Template](#)
- [Coaching Guidance Presentation](#) and [Literacy Coaching Checklist](#)
- [Literacy-Specific Addendum to the Curriculum Evaluation Tool](#)

Goal
1.2**Statewide System of Support**

ISBE will work with stakeholders to develop a continuous improvement model and make resources available to support its implementation for all schools in Illinois.

**External Objectives****1.2.1**

By the end of FY 2024, ISBE will work with stakeholders to develop a continuous improvement model.

1.2.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will promote the continuous improvement model through a road show modeled after the state literacy plan rollout.

1.2.3

By the end of FY 2025, in collaboration with the Illinois Association of School Boards, ISBE will develop training on continuous improvement and student outcomes for district school board members, available to anyone on demand.

1.2.4

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will develop a menu of continuous improvement resources that are responsive to the unique needs of schools.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE in partnership with the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, Illinois Principals Association, Illinois Association of School Administrators, and Illinois Association of School Boards, aligned on a unified model called the [Statewide Framework for Success](#).

ISBE, in collaboration with the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, the Illinois Principals Association, the Illinois Association of School Administrators, and the Illinois Association of School Boards, has developed a [tiered set of resources](#) to support the Statewide System of Success. These resources are designed to meet the needs of schools across all levels of performance and include a fully accessible, no cost option for any school or district.

ISBE, in collaboration with the Illinois Association of School Administrators and the Illinois Association of School Boards, developed a no cost online training module for school board members focused on school improvement and student outcomes.

- [Video](#)
- [Presentation](#)
- [School Board Monthly Topics and Tasks](#)

Goal
1.3**Regional Offices of Education (ROEs)/Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs)/Rural Leadership Development**

ISBE and ROEs/ISCs will partner to develop a statewide plan to support all districts in school improvement efforts.

**External Objectives****1.3.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE, in partnership with ROEs/ISCs, will provide instructional coaches to schools in improvement status.

1.3.2

By the end of FY 2026, a plan will be developed to provide various resources through ROEs/ISCs to support improvement in all districts, with a special emphasis on increasing support to schools in Targeted status.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE provided 1-2 instructional coaches for each ROE/ISC to support schools in improvement status (e.g., summative designation of targeted, comprehensive, or intensive).

Goal
1.5**ISBE Culture
of Learning**

ISBE will promote equitable professional learning opportunities in support of an environment where shared decision-making and accountability are grounded upon the diverse perspectives and expertise of staff.

**Internal Objectives****1.5.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop new professional learning offerings in support of employees' professional responsibilities. ISBE will review the offerings annually.

1.5.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop training aligned to best practices for adult learning for new and existing supervisors, directors, and executive directors on core operational duties and systems (e.g., GAF, CAF, grant management, MIDAS, Request for Sealed Proposals). The training will be required as a part of new manager onboarding.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE developed and delivers monthly foundational and application training for newly hired staff to support their professional responsibilities.

Goal
2.1**Student Safety
and Wellness**

ISBE will work with external stakeholders to create a developmentally appropriate Resiliency Toolkit.

**External Objectives****2.1.1**

By the end of FY 2024, ISBE, with assistance from external stakeholders and in partnership with ROEs/ISCs, will pilot the Resilient Schools Certification program.

2.1.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will work with external stakeholders to create a developmentally appropriate Resiliency Toolkit for students and educators.

2.1.3

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE, in consultation with external stakeholders, will develop resources to support the implementation of mental health screenings in schools.

2.1.4

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE, in partnership with external stakeholders, will update the Illinois Learning Standards for Social-Emotional Learning.

FY25 Accomplishment

In FY 2025, ISBE, in collaboration with external stakeholders, supported nearly 400 Illinois schools in participating in the pilot Resilient Supportive Schools Illinois while collecting and regularly sharing survey data to sustain school engagement.

[The Resiliency Toolkit](#), published in 2024, was reviewed and updated in 2025.

Goal
2.2**Statewide
System of Support**

ISBE will work with ROEs/ISCs to develop and deliver professional learning opportunities promoting the implementation of the Resiliency Toolkit.

**External Objectives****2.2.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE, in collaboration with ROEs/ISCs, will hold an annual wellness conference.

2.2.2

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE, in collaboration with ROEs/ISCs, will increase the number of school personnel who receive professional learning about resilience-related topics.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE held the First Wellness Conference April 7-9, 2025.

Goal
2.3**Operations**

ISBE will develop a tool to model equitable practices in day-to-day operations, recruitment, retention, hiring, promotion, and evaluation.

**External Objectives****2.3.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will partner with an external vendor to identify and administer an employee feedback survey.

2.3.2

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will design and implement a program in response to employee feedback surveys.

2.3.3

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will design and implement an equitable program that allows exposure to different departments and roles to enhance capacity and provide internal coaching to help people advance within the agency.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE, in partnership with Illuminative Strategies, launched an employee survey and collected employee feedback on culture and climate.

Goal
2.4**Budget
Systems**

ISBE will model a budgeting process aligned with agency priorities and inclusive of inter and intra-departmental needs.

**External Objectives****2.4.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will work with stakeholders as necessary to complete an assessment that identifies target processes, current state understanding of each process and associated systems, and opportunities to improve. ISBE will make recommendations for future implementation related to financial systems as a whole.

2.4.2

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will prioritize a second group of processes and associated systems and will work with stakeholders as necessary to complete an assessment that identifies the processes, current state understanding of each process and associated systems, and opportunities to improve. ISBE will make recommendations for future implementation. ISBE will implement new systems and processes within allowable timelines.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE, in partnership with Illuminative Strategies, analyzed current state processes, identified improvement opportunities, and delivered recommended future state enhancements, with staff feedback collected and reviewed by August 2024 and final reports completed in September 2024.

Goal
2.5**IT/Infrastructure
Investment**

ISBE will analyze current systems to improve efficiency and collaboration while prioritizing and investing in an IT infrastructure equipped to support the needs of districts, partners, and the agency.

**External Objectives****2.5.1**

By the end of fiscal year 2024, ISBE will conduct an internal assessment to identify redundancies and opportunities for improvement.

2.5.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop a report that identifies redundancies and opportunities for improvement.

2.5.3

By the end of FY 2027, ISBE will have completed the first phase of a comprehensive business mapping process that will provide pathways to improve efficacy and efficiency within our systems.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE, in partnership with Illuminative Strategies, continues to identify opportunities for system improvement.

Goal
3.1**Higher
Education**

ISBE will work with institutions of higher education to develop professional learning communities of practice to promote the use of resources for literacy instruction.

**External Objectives****3.1.1**

By the end of FY 2025, in collaboration with institutions of higher education, ISBE will develop Communities of Practice promoting effective literacy instruction in educator preparation programs.

3.1.2

By the end of FY 2027, ISBE will conduct a program evaluation to determine the extent to which instruction in educator preparation programs aligns to literacy preparation standards and the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

FY25 Accomplishment

The Standards & Instruction Department and Educator Effectiveness Department collaborated to provide three Communities of Practice meetings to promote effective literacy instruction in educator preparation programs.

Goal
3.2**Professional Learning**

ISBE will work in collaboration with stakeholders to research, identify, and pilot innovative models of education preparation.

**External Objectives****3.2.1**

By the end of FY 2024, based on continuing research of educator preparation programs in other states, ISBE and stakeholders will recommend additional innovative educator preparation models.

3.2.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will support apprenticeship pilots for institutions of higher education.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE advanced Illinois' educator pipeline by submitting legislation to enable community colleges to partner with institutions of higher education with approved educator preparation programs to support the transfer between institutions as well as articulation of 'Paraprofessional to PEL' programs through which individuals working as paraprofessionals can obtain a PEL to serve as a teacher of record. ISBE also engaged in a multi state community of practice to adopt effective preparation strategies, advertised other models of innovative models of educator preparation on the [ISBE website](#), and launched a grant to pilot teacher apprenticeship programs.

ISBE, in partnership with the National Center for Teacher Residencies and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, supported higher education apprenticeship pilots through coordinated office hours, training series design academies, FAQs, and technical assistance webinars to support program development, compliance readiness, and successful pilot implementation.

Goal
3.3**Teacher Vacancy Grant**

ISBE will partner with districts in need to highlight equitable practices in recruitment and retention of educators.

**External Objectives****3.3.1**

By the end of FY 2024, ISBE will continue to support districts participating in the Teacher Vacancy Grant with the implementation of equitable, evidence-based strategies through Communities of Practice.

3.3.2

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will research effective practices among districts participating in the Teacher Vacancy Grant.

3.3.3

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will share information on effective practices with districts throughout the state.

3.3.4

By the end of FY 2027, ISBE will provide evidence of a stronger teacher pipeline, as evidenced by the 2026 Educator Supply and Demand report.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE coordinated regular Communities of Practice and a Teacher Vacancy Grant Summit in support of participating districts. The summit and Communities of Practice provided opportunities for grantees to collaborate in real time. Recordings and resources are posted on the [Teacher Vacancy Grant website](#).

ISBE partnered with the Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative to evaluate the grant program and release two studies:

- [How Illinois Districts are Addressing Teacher Shortages: An Evaluation of the Teacher Vacancy Grant Pilot Program](#)
- [Early Teacher Staffing Trends: An Evaluation of the Teacher Vacancy Grant Pilot Program](#)

Goal
3.4**Succession
Planning**

ISBE will work collaboratively to develop a template for succession planning utilized by every department.

**Internal Objectives****3.4.1**

By the end of FY 2025, ISBE will develop a template that each department will complete to document protocols, processes, and procedures.

3.4.2

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will develop department onboarding manuals, timelines, and relevant programmatic information for new employees.

FY25 Accomplishment

ISBE provided a workstream platform where all agency employees document protocols, processes, and procedures for assigned projects.

Goal
3.5**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Professional Learning**

ISBE will model professional learning opportunities focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

**Internal Objectives****3.5.1**

By the end of FY 2025, based on continuing research, ISBE will expand its internal resources focused on DEI.

3.5.2

By the end of FY 2026, ISBE will expand DEI professional learning offerings.

FY25 Accomplishment

The Organizational Development Department met at least six times to conduct lunch and learns and book studies to build the capacity of ISBE staff focused on DEI.