

ICCB Press Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Illinois Community College Board among four Illinois policymakers to receive national 2009 Leadership Award

Washington, DC — Jan. 29, 2010 — Geoffrey Obrzut, president of the Illinois Community College Board, represented one of the three Illinois education agencies honored by the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) as this year's State Policymakers of the Year. Illinois received its award today during the DQC's Annual Meeting and Progress Report in Washington, DC. The DQC is a national partnership to improve the quality, accessibility, and use of data in education.

The award recognized the winners for their critical leadership role in changing the culture around data use for improvement of education policy. Recipients of the award also included the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois State Board of Education, and State Senator Heather Steans. Sen. Steans sponsored legislation in 2009 that created the P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act.

"One of the most important priorities for Illinois community colleges is empowering students to make successful transitions. Our community colleges work with students to help them transition across all levels of education and into the workforce," said Obrzut.

The new Illinois law requires state education authorities to collect student records and integrate the data with educational management from a student's first entrance into public education. This combined data collection will ultimately improve instruction and enhance educational decision-making. The law also requires the protection of students' individual records and identities in the use of the data.

Illinois' inclusive process brought together the state education boards and advocacy groups such as Advance Illinois and ensured that experts, including the Consortium on Chicago School Research and major stakeholders such as unions and the higher education community, were heard throughout the discussions. These state data champions were able to successfully bring K-12, postsecondary, unions, and advocacy groups together to craft this important legislation, overcome obstacles, and pass it unanimously through both chambers of the General Assembly.

More about the award winners can be found at the DQC's website: www.DataQualityCampaign.org.

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