

Executive Summary Illinois Community College System Transitions Report



Illinois Community College Board
Research and Policy Studies
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See <http://www.iccb.org/pdf/reports/TransitionsReport08.pdf> for the full report.

Executive Summary and Next Steps

Jobs in *all* of the middle-skill categories combined will generate about 21 million openings over the next decade, or nearly 40 percent of the total. Within this category, jobs specifically requiring postsecondary vocational awards or associate's degrees will grow at more than 20 percent, a rate above the growth in jobs requiring only a bachelor's degree or a bachelor's degree plus work experience.

Substantial demand remains for individuals to fill skilled jobs in the middle of the labor market, with many jobs there paying high wages. This is particularly true for jobs that require an associate's degree or some particular vocational training and certification. . . **Bureau of Labor Statistics projections indicate, at a minimum, that demand for mid-level skills and occupations will remain robust in the future, with jobs requiring postsecondary education or at least moderate-term training growing substantially over the next decade.** Demands for skilled labor in construction, health care, computer use, transportation, and elsewhere are projected to grow at above-average rates. Replacement needs for retiring workers will also be strong, generating even more job openings in the middle than the top of the skills spectrum. . . What all of these findings suggest is that the demand for postsecondary education and training in the U.S. labor market will remain strong. It will remain strong not only for workers with bachelor's and advanced degrees, but for those with more than high school, but less than a four-year degree. Greater public investments in education and skills training in all of these areas will likely generate important returns for the U.S. economy. Holzer, H.J. & Lerman, R.I. (November 2007). p. 19 & 29.

Community colleges play a pivotal role in developing the human capital and skilled workforce employers need to thrive in an increasingly competitive environment. Community colleges train individuals to fill important middle skills jobs that are a foundational component of the economy. Community colleges assist individuals in their efforts to improve their lives. The colleges provide individuals with accessible opportunities to gain skills and make transitions from secondary to postsecondary education; from pre-college to college level coursework; from two year institutions to four year colleges and universities; and from entry level employment into careers requiring higher level skills.

Demographic shifts are accelerating demands that transitions initiatives be strengthened. Baby boomers are aging and demographers project that the natural pipeline of replacement workers will not be sufficient to meet the need for skilled workers. According to Northern Illinois University P-20 Task Force (2006) related research, the relationship between the number of "entry age" workers (18-24 years of age) and the number of "exit age" workers (65+) is projected to remain relatively constant in Illinois through 2015. However, as more baby boomers reach the traditional retirement age, nearly twice as many citizens will be workforce "exit age" as "entry age". Hence, if the status quo is maintained, there will be fewer wage earners to support needed programs and services and keep Illinois competitive.

Addressing the worker shortage is expected to take creativity and the involvement of a more diverse cross section of the population including all traditional populations plus more: racial/ethnic minorities; individuals from low income families; first generation students; non-native English speakers; and adults who have not previously developed their skills to their full potential. Approximately three-quarters of the jobs of the future that can support a family will require postsecondary education and training and higher level skills. Hence, for the good of the individual and their family as well as to provide a competitive advantage for Illinois and the nation, higher levels of education and training should be promoted for the array of Illinoisans exhibiting an ability to benefit.

The Illinois Community College System's Transitions Report includes an array of measures that capture student progress at strategic points in the educational process and into the workforce. The focus of the report is the state level and the measures are organized around several student populations served by community colleges: Secondary, Adult Education, Developmental Education, Postsecondary Perkins Career and Technical Education, and the General student population. The years referenced in the measures vary and reflect the latest information for each particular indicator. The report also includes selected statewide transitions initiatives to strengthen transitions that are organized around the same categories. Information about Illinois' fiscal climate and Community College System funding is also provided. The report provides recommendations to advance the emerging transitions agenda.

The following section contains summary tables showing the measures by student population along with results and one and five year trends. Additional details on each measure appear in the body of the report. Highlights of results are also furnished.

Secondary

Illinois Secondary Measures Summary			
	Latest Results	Percent Change	Percent Change
Measure Name	(FY2007)	1 Year	5 Year
Recent High School Graduates Enrolling in Illinois Community Colleges	28,065	-4.5%	2.2%
Dual Credit Course Count	7,825	9.7%	59.8%
Dual Credit Student Enrollment (duplicated)	67,857	16.1%	84.4%
Dual Credit Average Class Size	8.7	5.8%	15.4%
Number of Students Served Through The P-16 Initiative Grant	21,398	0.1%	6.7%

A series of five Secondary measure outcomes are provided. The number of recent high school graduates transitioning directly to community colleges has been estimated at between 27,500 to 30,000 students over the last five years. This measure includes students 17 & 18 years of age not identified as current high school students. During fiscal year 2007 a total of 28,065 recent high school graduates enrolled in an Illinois public community college which is a decrease of 4.5 percent from last year and an increase of 2.2 percent from five years ago. In FY2007 community colleges served an estimated one in five 2006 graduates (28,065 enrolled in community colleges in FY2007

out of 127,349 FY2006 high school graduates). http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/eoy_graduates05-06.pdf

In Illinois Community Colleges, the number of dual credit courses offered, the number of students enrolled (duplicated), and the average class size have been increasing over the last five years. A high of 7,825 courses were offered in fiscal year 2007. This is an increase of 9.7 percent from fiscal year 2006 (N = 7,131) and 59.8 percent from fiscal year 2003 (N = 4,896). In fiscal year 2007, 67,857 students (duplicated) were enrolled, an increase of 16.1 percent over fiscal year 2006 (N = 58,441) and 84.4 percent over fiscal year 2003 (N = 36,806). The average class size in fiscal year 2007 was 8.7 students. This is a 5.8 percent increase over fiscal year 2006 (N = 8.2) and a 15.4 percent increase over fiscal year 2003 (N = 7.5).

The number of students served through the P-16 Initiative Grant in dual credit/dual enrollment coursework in fiscal year 2007 was – by a slim margin – the highest over the last five fiscal years (N = 21,398). This represents a slight 0.1 percent increase (N = 29 students) over fiscal year 2006. From fiscal year 2003 to 2007, the number of students served through the P-16 Initiative Grant increased 6.7 percent.

Overall among the Secondary measures dual credit and dual enrollment are growing. Recent high school transitions into community college show short term decreases and longer term gains.

Adult Education

Illinois Adult Education Measures Summary			
	Latest Results	Percent Change	Percent Change
Measure Name	(FY 2007)	1 Year	5 Year
Number of Level Advancements in Adult Education (ABE/ASE)	9,777	19.1%	2.4%
Number of Level Advancements in English as a Second Language	24,115	16.8%	19.8%
Completers Entering Employment for the National Reporting System for Adult Education (Percent Achieving Outcome)	48.1%	2.8%	-2.0%
Completers Retaining Employment for the National Reporting System for Adult Education (Percent Achieving Outcome)	82.3%	-0.8%	-4.8%
Entered Postsecondary Education or Training for the National Reporting System for Adult Education (Percent Achieving Outcome)	19.9%	-0.4%	3.1%
GED Attainment	3,987	-35.4%	-55.7%

A series of six adult education measures are highlighted. In Illinois, 9,777 adult education students advanced in fiscal year 2007. The number of advancements has increased 19.1 percent from last

year (N = 8,212) and 2.4 percent from five years ago (N = 9,550). The ICCB-approved test to measure ABE/ASE level advancement is the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Level advancements are defined as advancing from one educational functioning level to the next based on pre- and post-test results.

In the community college system, 24,115 English as second language (ESL) students advanced in fiscal year 2007. The number of advancements has increased 16.8 percent from the previous year (N = 20,652) and 19.8 percent from five years ago (N = 20,135). The ICCB-approved tests to measure ESL level advancement are the BEST (Basic English Skills Test) Literacy Skills Test, BEST Plus, and the CELSA (Combined English Language Skills Assessment). Level advancements are defined as advancing from one educational functioning level to the next based on pre- and post-test results.

In fiscal year 2007, 48.1 percent of the completers entered employment (N = 11,621). The latest placement in employment performance is a three percent increase over fiscal year 2006 (45.3 percent) and a two percent decrease over fiscal year 2003 (50.1 percent). The measurement approach taken on the employment measure was modified in fiscal year 2007 in collaboration with federal officials. Illinois registered the highest achievement in the nation for adult education participants who entered employment (48.1 percent in fiscal year 2007) according to the last NRS comparison.

In fiscal year 2007, 82.3 percent of the completers were retained in employment (N = 9,565). The percentage of completers retaining employment is a 0.8 percent decrease over fiscal year 2006 (83.1 percent) and 4.8 percent decrease over fiscal year 2003 (87.1 percent). Employment retention is calculated for those students that entered employment in the first or second quarter and then still had earnings in the Unemployment Insurance Wage Records two quarters later. The methodology for the measure was modified in 2007 in collaboration with federal program officials. According to NRS comparative information, Illinois has the highest achievement counts in the nation for adult education participants who were retained in employment.

In fiscal year 2007, 11,396 Adult Education participants separated from their program. Of those, 19.9 percent (N = 2,265) entered postsecondary education or training. Compared to fiscal year 2006, the number of completers entering postsecondary education or training decreased by 616 (-21.4 percent). The measurement approach taken on the entered postsecondary education or training measure was modified in fiscal year 2005 in collaboration with federal officials. The entered postsecondary education or training outcome is measured for Low Adult Secondary Education (Grade Level Equivalence 9.0 to 10.9) and High Adult Secondary Education (Grade Level Equivalence 11.0 to 12.9) students that separated from their adult education program and entered a community college credit program.

The number of students attaining their GED decreased by over one third in fiscal year 2007 (35.4 percent, N = 3,987) from fiscal year 2006 (N = 6,176). This is a 22.2 percent decrease from fiscal year 2004 (N = 5,126). The measurement approach taken on this indicator was modified in fiscal year 2007 in collaboration with federal officials. Recent GED counts are based on ICCB STAIRS self-reported GED attainment and matches between student STAIRS identifiers and GED Testing Service Data.

Adult education student advancement performance across levels remains strong for ABE/ASE and ESL populations. Placement in employment and employment retention for Illinois adult education populations remain strong compared to other states. Recent Illinois performance indicates that transitions to postsecondary education and GED attainment are areas where additional progress can be made.

Developmental

Developmental Measures Summary			
Measure Name/Title	Latest Results (FY 2007)	Percent Change 1 Year	Percent Change 5 Year
Rate of Developmental Credits Earned Versus Attempted (Percent Earned)	61.9%	-0.1%	-2.7%
Students Enrolled in at Least One Developmental Course (Base)	100,190	-2.3%	10.6%
Retained in Developmental (Year 2) Rate of Developmental Students	25.3%	-0.6	10.1%
Rate of Developmental Students Who Advanced to College Level	33.4%	0.1%	-10.5%
Not Returning – Rate Among Developmental Students	41.3%	-1.8%	0.4%
Retained or Advanced – Advancement to College Level Work for Developmental Students	57.5%	-1.0%	-1.6%

Several measures related to students enrolled in developmental courses at community colleges are summarized in the table. Community colleges continue to provide developmental coursework to a substantial number of students each year. The latest count shows that 100,190 students took at least one developmental course which is down slightly from the prior year (-2.3 percent) and up substantially (10.6 percent) from five years ago.

During fiscal year 2007, students in community colleges earned almost two-thirds (61.9 percent, N = 373,566) of the developmental credits they attempted. This is comparable to fiscal year 2006 (62.0 percent, N = 380,150). Over the five-year period of 2003 to 2007, the percent of developmental credits earned declined each year from a high of 64.6 percent in 2003 to a low of 61.9 percent in 2007.

One-third of the students – 33,459 individuals – advanced from developmental coursework to college level instruction in fiscal year 2007. An additional one quarter of the students (N = 25,332) returned the subsequent year and continued to address their basic academic skill deficiencies. Hence, 57.5 percent (N = 57,622) of the students were either retained and/or advanced to college level work. All these numbers are down slightly from the previous year and from the three year average except for students retained in remedial coursework which is up from the previous year and the three year average. The percent of students not returning in fiscal year 2007 (41.3 percent) was down from the previous year (43.1 percent) and comparable to the three year average.

Overall recently there has been a slight decline in the number of students taking developmental coursework. The extent to which returning students successfully completed developmental courses and advanced to college level coursework has been relatively steady for four years at about one-third of returning individuals.

Postsecondary Perkins and Career and Technical Education

Illinois Postsecondary Perkins Career and Technical Education Measures Summary			
	Latest Results	Percent Change	Percent Change
Measure Name/Title	(FY 2007)	1 Year	5 Year
Student Advancements – Postsecondary Perkins (Student Advancement Percentage)	66.5%	-3.6%	0.5%
Percent of Career and Technical Education Degree/Certificate Recipients Either Employed or Enrolled in Further Education or Both Within One Year of Graduation	92.0%	4.3%	3.2%
Career and Technical Education Degree/Certificate Recipients Placement in Employment	77.5% (FY 2006)	-0.4%	-2.8%
Career and Technical Education Degree/Certificate Recipients Retention in Employment	94.8% (FY 2006)	0.5%	1.0%
Partnership for College and Career Success Enrollments of Secondary Students	80,680	-1.2%	81.5%
Licensure Rates - RN– IL	89.0%	-4.0%	---
Licensure Rates - RN– US	85.0%	-3.0%	---
Licensure Rates - Dental Hygiene– IL	100.0%	0.0%	---
Licensure Rates - Dental Hygiene– US	97.0%	2.0%	---
Licensure Rates - Radiologic Tech– IL	94.0%	-6.0%	---
Licensure Rates - Radiologic Tech– US	91.0%	0.5%	---
Licensure Rates - EMT– IL	89.5%	0.2%	---
Licensure Rates - EMT- US	70.0%	-1.0%	---

A half-dozen measures addressing Career and Technical Education and Postsecondary Perkins are referenced in the table.

The Student Advancement measure tracks a cohort of degree/certificate seeking career and technical education majors attending to upgrade their skills for a current job or acquire skills for a new career. Successful Student Advancements include those who graduate, transfer or are retained in the fifth year the cohort is tracked. In fiscal year 2007 two-thirds of the students advanced. The number of student advancing in fiscal year 2007 was the highest over the last five fiscal years (N = 17,700). The current Student Advancement Rate is a decrease of 3.6 percent from fiscal year 2006 (70.1 percent) and a 0.5 percent increase from fiscal year 2003 (66.0 percent).

Approximately nine out of ten career and technical education degree or certificate recipients were either employed or enrolled in further education in each of the last five years. The most recent data from fiscal year 2007 show the highest percentage of employment or continuing education across the last five years (92.0 percent). This is a gain of 4.3 percent since fiscal year 2006 (87.7 percent) and a 3.2 percent gain from fiscal year 2003 (88.8 percent).

Over the last five years nearly 4 out of 5 career and technical education graduates was placed in employment. In fiscal year 2006, 77.5 percent of graduates had been placed in employment. This was a slight decrease of -0.4 percent from the previous year and a decrease of 2.8 percent from five years ago.

Retention in employment performance among community college system career and technical program graduates has been strong across the five year observation period. In fiscal year 2006, overall 94.8 percent of students were retained in employment. This was a slight increase from the previous year (0.5 percent) and five years ago (1.0 percent).

In fiscal year 2007, the number of secondary Partnerships for College and Career Success/Tech Prep students was 80,680. This is a slight decrease of 1.2 percent from the previous year. The methodology for identifying secondary Tech Prep students became more inclusive in fiscal year 2005. Accordingly, over the past five years, secondary Tech Prep enrollment counts increased dramatically (81.5 percent). One in eight secondary students was classified as a Tech Prep student in fiscal year 2007 (Tech Prep = 80,680, and Total Secondary Enrollment = 641,013). <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/reports/annual07/students.pdf>

In fiscal year 2007, licensure rates in Illinois were consistently above the corresponding national benchmark. The RN licensure rate is 4.0 percent higher in Illinois than it is nationally, Dental Hygiene is 3.0 percent higher, Radiologic Tech is 3.0 percent higher, and EMT is 19.5 percent higher.

Compared to the previous year, in 2007 Illinois licensure rates increased on one exam, remained the same on another, and decreased on the remaining two. The EMT licensure rate increased 0.2 percent from the previous year to 89.5 percent. One program saw 100.0 percent licensure rates, Dental Hygiene, which is no change from the previous year. The Radiologic Tech rate is 94.0 percent, a decrease of 6.0 percent. The RN program's licensure rate was 89.0 percent in 2007 – a decrease of 4.0 percent from the previous year.

General

General Measures Summary			
Measure Name/Title	Latest Results (FY 2007)	Percent Change 1 Year	Percent Change 5 Year
First Generation College Students	80,130 (FY 2008)	2.9%	7.6%
Overall Credits Earned Versus Attempted (Percent Earned)	76.4%	0.5%	-0.1%
Internet Credits Earned Versus Attempted (Percent Earned)	71.4%	0.2%	2.0%
Adjusted Retention for First-Time Full-Time College Level Students	60.6% (FY 2006-2007)	-0.3%	-1.6%
Transfer Rates	38.4%	28.8%	57.0%
Proportion of First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen Who Complete Their Degree/Certificate Within 150% of Catalog Time, or Are Still Enrolled or Transferred (Percent Graduated, Transferred, or Still Enrolled)	70.3% (FY 2004-2007)	-0.5%	3.6%
Overall Completions (Total Students)	51,322	3.4%	13.2%
Completions by Gender (Male)	22,030	6.2%	14.9%
Completions by Gender (Female)	29,292	1.4%	12.0%
Completions by Race (Asian)	2,787	17.0%	23.2%
Completions by Race (Native American)	161	-16.6%	-8.5%
Completions by Race (African American)	7,794	9.5%	16.1%
Completions by Race (Latino)	4,589	6.8%	25.2%
Completions by Race (White)	35,485	0.9%	10.4%
Completions by Race (Non-Resident Alien)	201	1.0%	3.6%
Completions by Race (Other/Unknown)	305	6.3%	76.3%
Completions by Disability Status (Students With Disability)	1,164	3.0%	18.2%
Completions by Disability Status (Students Without Disability)	50,158	3.4%	13.1%

The following indicators provide information about transitions across postsecondary populations. Indicators include: first generation college students; overall credits earned versus attempted;

internet credits earned versus attempted; completions by gender; completions by race; and completions by disability status.

In fiscal year 2008 the number of first generation college students attending an Illinois community college registered a five year high at 80,130. This is an increase of 2.9 percent from fiscal year 2007 (N = 77,877) and up 7.6 percent from fiscal year 2004 (N = 74,439).

During fiscal year 2007, Illinois Community College System students earned over three-quarters of the credits they attempted (76.4 percent, N = 5,461,223 / 7,148,639). This is a slight increase (0.5 percent) from fiscal year 2006 when students earned 75.9 percent of the overall credits attempted. Over the five-year period of 2003 to 2007, the percent of overall credits earned has remained steady at just over three-quarters. The number of credit hours attempted has decreased slightly in each of the last four years.

During fiscal year 2007, Illinois Community College System students earned more seven out of ten (71.4 percent) internet credits they attempted. This is comparable to fiscal year 2006 (71.1 percent earned). Over the five-year period of 2003 to 2007, the percent of internet credits earned has steadily increased each year from 69.3 percent in 2003 to 71.4 percent in 2007 – an increase of 2.1 percent. At the same time the number of internet based credit hours attempted has increased dramatically. The number of credits attempted more than doubled between 2003 and 2007. The rate of successful internet course completions has increased slightly during this period of dramatic enrollment growth in internet credits. Internet earned credit rates trailed the overall earned credit rates during each of the last five years. Some narrowing of the gap is noted.

Fall to fall retention rates for first-time, full-time college level students have been just above sixty percent for the last several years. Community college offer many certificate programs that can be completed in a year or less. The adjustment factor counts students who complete a program within the year as successes. Adjusted rates for first-time, full-time college level students have been decreasing slightly each year since fiscal year 2002. In fiscal year 2006, the adjusted retention rate was 60.6 percent down 0.3 percent from the previous year (N = 60.9 percent) and 1.6 percent from five years ago (N = 62.2 percent).

Transfer rates are calculated using the National Transfer Assembly approach developed by a workgroup in conjunction with the Center for the Study of Community Colleges at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA). Cohorts of entering students with no prior college experience who completed 12 or more credits at the community college are tracked for four years and the number of successful transfers is identified. Over the last several years, national results have varied between 21.5 and 25.2 percent. In Illinois, the statewide transfer rate for cohorts of community college entering students based on the Illinois Community College and Public University Shared Data Files and the National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker have been increasing since fiscal year 2004. The latest Illinois transfer rate was 38.4 percent in fiscal year 2007, up 7.2 percent versus last year and 13.7 percent higher than five years ago. Illinois Community College System Transfer Rates are above national rates that were calculated using the National Transfer Assembly methodology.

In fiscal year 2007, 70.3 percent (N =19,497) of the 2004 first-time, full-time freshmen completed their degree within 150 percent of catalog time, or were still enrolled or transferred during the observation timeframe. The rate decreased slightly from last year (-0.5 percent) and is up 3.6 percent from five years ago.

Females make up 57.1 percent of all graduates in the community college system. In fiscal year 2007 the number of female graduates increased 1.4 percent to 29,292 from fiscal year 2006. Over the previous five years, this was an increase of 12.0 percent. The number of male graduates increased 6.2 percent from fiscal year 2006 to reach 22,030 graduates. This was an increase of 14.9 percent from five years earlier.

African Americans (15.2 percent) and Latinos (8.9 percent) accounted for the largest percentages of minority graduates. The number of African American graduates in fiscal year 2007 was 7,794, an increase of 9.5 percent from fiscal year 2006 (N = 7,116) and 16.1 percent over the past five years (N = 6,714). In fiscal year 2007 there were 4,589 Latino graduates, an increase of 6.8% from fiscal year 2006 (N = 4,296) and 25.2 percent over the past five years (N = 3,666).

The number of Asian graduates increased 17.0 percent in fiscal year 2007 (N = 2,787) from fiscal year 2006 (N = 2,382). This is a 23.2 percent increase from fiscal year 2003 (N = 2,262). There were 201 Non-Resident Alien and 161 Native American graduates in fiscal year 2007.

Nearly seven out of ten graduates were White (N = 35,485) in fiscal year 2007. White graduates increased 0.9 percent from fiscal year 2006 and increased 10.4 percent from five years ago.

Across the community college system, 1,164 students with disabilities graduated in fiscal year 2007 which represents 2.3 percent of all graduates. The number of graduates with disabilities has increased 3.0 percent from the previous year (N = 1,130) and 18.2 percent from five years ago (N = 985).

SELECTED STATEWIDE TRANSITIONS INITIATIVES

Examples of statewide transitions initiatives that are underway in Illinois which the Illinois Community College Board partners in and provides leadership to include: College and Career Readiness (CCR); P-16 Grant Initiatives; the American Diploma Project (ADP); the Adult Education Strengthening Student Transitions Theme for FY2009; Shifting Gears; the Career and Academic Readiness System (CARS); Career Clusters, Pathways and Programs of Study; Partnerships for College and Career Success (PCCS); Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI); Course Applicability System/U.Select Illinois; Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT); and Lincoln's ChalleNGe Academy Completer Community College Stipend and Scholarship. The student population categories used in conjunction with the measures are used to list the selected statewide transition initiatives. Several of the initiatives could be listed under multiple categories. A single broad category was selected to avoid duplication – Secondary, Adult Education, Developmental, Postsecondary Perkins and Career and Technical Education; or General.

Secondary**College and Career Readiness (CCR) – Pilot Initiative to Collaborate Across Educational Levels to Increase the Number of College Ready High School Graduates Transitioning to Higher Education**

The College and Career Readiness (CCR) initiative is being implemented to further dialogue and enhance cooperation across secondary and postsecondary education. The project will make positive contributions to developing shared expectations about what the term “college ready” means in Illinois. The goals of the CCR project include diagnosing college readiness, collaborating across educational levels to reduce remediation, strengthening the alignment of high school and college curriculum, providing resources and academic support to students, and enhancing evaluation processes.

P-16 Grant (Dual Credit & Dual Enrollment)

The P-16 Grant funding allows community colleges to expand service to high school students with the ability and interest in taking college-level classes prior to receiving their high school diploma. The grant is primarily used to provide financial support to dual credit and dual enrollment programs. These programs serve to increase secondary to postsecondary alignment and collaboration.

American Diploma Project (ADP)

During spring/fall 2008, Illinois took the necessary steps to join the American Diploma Project (ADP) and has begun working with Achieve, Incorporated, to further align expectations across educational levels and increase student readiness for college and careers. As a part of the ADP network, Illinois is committed to address key policy priorities including increased alignment, elevated rigor of high school curriculum, streamlined assessment systems, strengthened accountability, and linked data systems.

High School to College Success/High School Feedback Report

The High School to College Success Report is an initiative between public higher education (ICCB/IBHE/ISEG), public secondary schools (ISBE) and ACT, Inc. to provide a more transparent high school feedback report. A goal of the initiative is to promote enhanced alignment across educational levels and contribute to a reduction in the need for developmental education among recent high school graduates.

Adult Education**Adult Education Strengthening Student Transitions Theme for FY2009**

The August, 2008, Adult Education and Family Literacy Administrators Meeting focused on strengthening transitions for adult education students into college level coursework and the workplace. Administrators attended sessions addressing state policy, tools for aiding transitions, and best practices for helping individuals advance. At the end of the conference, administrators spent time identifying next steps at the local level to facilitate student transitions in Adult Education programs. This focus on strengthening student transitions has been identified as the Adult Education Community’s theme for fiscal year 2009.

Career and Academic Readiness System (CARS) – Enhancing Opportunities for Online Foundational Academic Skills

The new internet-based statewide Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Career and Academic Readiness System (CARS) initiative is being designed to enhance and extend existing developmental education course/content delivery opportunities. The CARS online teaching and learning system will provide engaging interactive coursework to help individuals build their basic academic skills anytime and anywhere they have adequate internet access.

Shifting Gears

Shifting Gears is a Joyce Foundation-funded initiative with the goals of positively impacting policy and increasing the number of current and aspiring workers transitioning from adult education and developmental education into postsecondary credit education. A more complete description of the Shifting Gears initiative appears in the Developmental/Remedial Education section.

Developmental

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Shifting Gears

Shifting Gears is a Joyce Foundation-funded pilot initiative with the goals of positively impacting policy and increasing the number of current and aspiring workers transitioning from adult education and developmental education into college level postsecondary credit education. In Illinois, Shifting Gears is supporting bridge programming in the high demand industries of Healthcare, Transportation, Distribution, Logistics (TDL), and Manufacturing. The eight pilot projects include Black Hawk College, College of DuPage, Lewis & Clark Community College, John A. Logan College, the City Colleges of Chicago, McHenry County College, College of Lake County, and Oakton Community College. The approach being used across projects is to integrate workforce and foundational academic skills course content. These blended and contextualized courses are being used to enhance student's core math, science, and verbal and written communication skills and develop the area specific technical skills for success in the workforce. Illinois' overall project goal is to identify policy issues that help or are barriers to people moving smoothly through the education and training system and to identify best-practice transition models.

Postsecondary Perkins Career and Technical Education

Career Clusters, Pathways and Programs of Study

Illinois' approach to Programs of Study within Career and Technical Education is being organized around Career Clusters and Career Pathways. **Clusters** are formed around major groupings of similar occupations and industries within the United States economy (e.g., business, information technology, manufacturing, health, and human services). Within each of the career clusters are various **Career Pathways**. The national level recognizes 16 clusters and 81 associated pathways. The project further aligns course content at the secondary level with increasingly advanced academic and technical courses at the postsecondary level. The Illinois approach to Programs of Study aims to equip students with the knowledge and credentials required for success in the

emerging high skills workplace. The project aims to establish additional formal linkages between basic skills, academic preparation, and entry-level training.

Partnerships for College and Career Success (PCCS)

The Partnerships for College and Career Success (PCCS) initiative develops seamless avenues that prepare students for careers that are in demand now and those that are projected to thrive in the future. Partnerships are built around local geographic areas and collaborations. Partnership programs have existed for several years and achieved substantial success at the state and local levels. Successful Partnerships are built around several key components including: cooperation; career pathways; professional development; equal opportunity; preparatory services; closely coordinated activities; and accountability/ performance reporting.

General

Illinois Articulation Initiative

The Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) is a joint initiative of the ICCB, Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Transfer Coordinators of Illinois Colleges and Universities for the purpose of enhancing the transfer process among all sectors of Illinois higher education. Community college faculty and staff, along with representatives from four-year institutions, serve on IAI panels that developed specific recommendations for lower-division transfer courses. Recommendations have been endorsed for a common General Education Core Curriculum and major specific courses. The IAI Core Curriculum includes 12-13 courses in five different academic areas. The Core Curriculum transfers to any IAI Participating school and fulfills the lower level General Education requirements. Courses approved for statewide articulation are listed on the IAI website (www.iTransfer.org).

Course Applicability System/U.Select Illinois

The Course Applicability System (CAS) which is transitioning to a new name this fall -- u.select Illinois -- provides free internet based information to students and advisors to facilitate planning for the transfer of courses. CAS provides Course Equivalencies between participating schools. The system Planning Guide indicates how specific courses from specific institutions will transfer to another school and how they apply toward specific degrees.

Associate of Arts in Teaching Degree

Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree models have been developed in high-need disciplines. The resulting AAT programs are designed to facilitate a smooth transition for community college student transfer into university teacher preparation programs. To date, AAT degree models for Secondary Mathematics, Secondary Science, Early Childhood Education, and Special Education have been completed and brought implemented. Four customized checklists to facilitate AAT program development are available on the ICCB website. Additional information about the Illinois CAS system can be located at the following links: <http://www.ibhe.state.il.us/cas/default.htm> and <https://uic.transfer.org/cas/index.jsp>.

Lincoln's Challenge Academy Completer Community College Stipend and Scholarship

The Illinois National Guard youth intervention program called the Lincoln's Challenge Academy works to improve life skills and employability of high school dropouts through participation in a military boot camp program. There are eight core objectives that cadets attending the academy must demonstrate proficiency with during the strictly supervised residential intervention: Academic

Excellence; Job Skills; Physical Fitness; Leadership/ Fellowship; Health, Sex Education and Nutrition; Life Coping Skills; Responsible Citizenship; and Community Service. Participants can enroll in dual credit, are offered education and enrichment opportunities and can receive a scholarship to an Illinois Community College Additional information about the program can be located on the Lincoln's Challenge Academy website (<http://www.ngycp.org/state/il/>)

Selected Next Steps

The following section of the report highlights selected next steps aimed at developing further elevated, aligned, and shared expectations across P-20 education. These efforts should contribute to smoothing student transitions across educational levels and into the workplace.

Secondary

Participate in the new High School to College Success/High School Feedback reporting system. The High School to College Success Report is an emerging initiative between public higher education – Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)/Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE)/Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation Consortium (ISEG) and public high schools – Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) – to work with ACT, Inc., to provide a more transparent high school feedback report that promotes enhanced alignment across educational levels. With the appropriate authorizations, ICCB can provide information for community colleges, ISEG can provide information for public universities, and ISBE can provide information for public high schools in the state. ACT, Inc., can provide additional background information on students based on their responses to the supplemental data collection components that accompany the ACT assessment (interest inventory, course and grade information questionnaire, student profile, future plans, etc.).

Work with community colleges to encourage and support involvement by area junior high schools/middle schools and high schools to administer the Explore and Plan assessments from ACT, Inc., to their students. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is making funding available for schools to implement Explore and Plan in addition to the Prairie State Achievement Exam (which includes the ACT assessment and selected Workkeys assessments). <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/htmls/protocol.htm> The Explore/Plan/ACT sequence is known as the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) which provides a longitudinal, systematic approach to educational and career planning, assessment, instructional support, and evaluation tracking capabilities. The system focuses on assessing the integrated, higher-order thinking skills students need to develop in grades K-12. <http://www.act.org/epas/index.html> Having additional information available about student performance from Explore and Plan can help identify areas for improvement in student preparation earlier in the educational process. Schools can then design interventions to help students who are falling behind earlier in the educational process.

Strengthen efforts to promote higher education outreach and access through the delivery of dual credit opportunities. Dual credit offers high performing high school students with another option for studying advanced college-level academic content while they are still enrolled in high school. College officials control course content and academic standards for dual credit courses. Previously, the P-16 Initiative Grant allowed community colleges to expand service to high school students seeking to complete college-level coursework prior to receiving their high school diploma (formerly known as the Accelerated College Enrollment Grant). Dual credit initiatives are an important mechanism for smoothing the transition between high school and college.

Adult Education

Continue and refine the use of the web-based Data and Information Systems Illinois (DAIS-i) system for all adult education and family literacy programs to elevate Adult Education progress and results. DAIS-i, implemented in fiscal year 2008, is a robust data system and collects information about students (e.g., outcomes, demographics, attendance); faculty and staff (e.g., qualifications, professional development, classes taught, etc.); and courses. All of the adult education programs throughout Illinois take advantage of the system. DAIS-i allows for real-time comparison of programs' National Reporting System student educational gains with federal and statewide performance targets. The capability to monitor program and student success during the year should contribute to elevated state performance.

Collaborate to meet the needs of additional Adult Education students in Illinois. Additional resources to support Adult Education are needed. The Illinois Adult Education provider community currently serves approximately 125,000 students; however, waiting lists for individuals needing Adult Education services exist throughout the state. Currently, more than 1.8 million of Illinois' 9.9 million adults have less than 12 grades of formal education, including about 713,000 people with less than a 9th grade education. The number of adults with less than a 9th grade education has increased by 4.4 percent since 2003. Approximately 2.33 million Illinois residents speak a language other than English as the primary language in their home. English literacy skills for entry and advancement in the labor force are needed by many of these residents (U.S. Census, 2007 Index of Need.). Hence, the demand for adult education in Illinois exceeds the current capacity. To help address the unmet need, the ICCB will continue to seek additional resources to meet the needs of the Illinois population.

Seek additional support for GED Testing Administration statewide. In fiscal year 2006, the GED Transition Committee which includes Regional Superintendents of Schools, Cook County GED Testing staff, Illinois Adult Continuing Educators Association (IACEA), and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) staff, conducted a Fee and Feasibility Study to determine the actual costs of administering the GED Test in Illinois. After a review of this information, the GED Transition Committee recommended to the ICCB the following: 1) to eliminate the deficit of \$1.2 million, the ICCB should request additional resources from the state Legislature to offset a portion of the cost of administering the GED Test and 2) to raise the cost to take the GED to \$50, which is an increase of \$15. Additionally, since this information was reviewed, the American Council on Education/GED Testing Services increased their fees for testing materials by more than 15 percent which would increase the deficit over the previously stated \$1.2 million. Given this information, the Illinois Community College Board at its September 19, 2008 Board meeting made the difficult decision to increase the GED Testing fee. Effective July 1, 2009, the GED Testing Fee in Illinois will increase from \$35 to \$50. The fee increase does not fully address the deficit, but should help defray some of the costs associated with the GED Testing process.

This new fee is well within the range of other states in the Midwest and is, in some cases, significantly less than other large states. With this fee increase, Illinois will still remain among the lowest cost states in the nation as it relates to GED fee structures. States that have lower fees either receive full state support or partial support. Nationwide, the cost to take the GED Test varies among states and ranges from no cost to approximately \$150. The ICCB will continue to seek additional resources from the state Legislature to keep GED costs low for students.

Refine and enhance transition initiatives designed to help adult education students advance into postsecondary education and attain their GEDs. Student attainment of a GED or high school diploma and engaging students in bridge programs to facilitate the transition to postsecondary education or training remains a top priority in adult education. Recently, Illinois was awarded a Shifting Gears grant from the Joyce Foundation to implement bridge programming to help transition low-skill, low-wage adults into postsecondary programs in critical skills shortage industries. This initiative is led by the ICCB, and key partners include the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and Women Employed. The partners plan to compete for further private foundation funding of related bridge program initiatives.

Developmental Education

Seek innovative solutions to decrease the need for developmental education among recent high school graduates. Explore opportunities to expand the elevated transitional support services, contextualized learning approaches, and summer bridge initiatives being piloted in the College and Career Readiness project and the Shifting Gears initiative. Helping students address their basic skill deficiencies before they complete high school benefits all parties and allows for a more seamless transition into postsecondary education.

Collaborate with assessment experts and other community college representatives to explore establishing minimum cut scores for entry into college-level courses (e.g., math, communications/reading/writing). ICCB staff have compiled cut score information from the colleges and will collaborate with local officials including those with expertise in measurement and assessment to determine the ability and desirability of setting a minimum cut score in the core academic areas. Assessment experts from other sectors and testing experts may also be invited to participate in these discussions. Common cut scores could add another dimension of commonality to the definition of what college ready means within the Illinois Community College System.

Move forward with the new internet-based statewide Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Career and Academic Readiness System (CARS) initiative. This three-year start-up project will use technology to provide additional access and outreach to individuals who need to strengthen their basic academic skills (Math, English/Reading/Writing, etc.) anytime and anywhere they have adequate internet access. A vision and framework will be established by the steering committee. A curriculum subcommittee will adapt existing online learning systems and materials as the foundation for the curriculum for the CARS system and create new educational content as needed. The system will be developed, piloted, and implemented with community colleges, K-12 schools, and adult education providers.

Career and Technical Education

Collaborate to implement Programs of Study and career clusters and pathways. The 16 Career Clusters and 81 Career Pathways are foundational elements in Illinois' effort to move Career and Technical Education forward. These concepts are an integral part of creating Programs of Study and advancing an enhanced workforce development agenda in the state. The Programs of Study initiative aims to equip students with the skills and credentials required for success in high-demand and high-wage careers by establishing additional formal linkages between basic skills, academic preparation, and entry-level training. Once a student selects a cluster, they are guided

through a series of appropriate courses that are applicable to the field as a whole. Math, science, and English are foundational skills that are required to prepare individuals for clusters, and students can more clearly see the role each will play in their ability to enter and succeed in their chosen occupation or profession.

Develop new data systems to monitor and report postsecondary Perkins IV Core Measures and Perkins IV Tech Prep Measures. The latest edition of the federal Perkins legislation places an elevated emphasis on tracking student progress, transitions, and outcomes. New measures have been created under Perkins IV. Illinois has begun designing and developing two new companion web-based data systems to share college and consortia-level outcomes with the field and promote elevated performance.

Partner with workforce representatives from DCEO to prepare adequate numbers of individuals for positions in high demand occupations. In Illinois, the Workforce Development System has elected to concentrate initial efforts on the Health Sciences cluster with emphasis on the Diagnostic Services, Health Informatics, Support Services, and Biotechnology Research and Development Pathways, and Manufacturing Cluster with emphasis on Maintenance, Installation and Repair, Quality Assurance, Logistics and Inventory Control, and Health Safety and Environmental Assurance Pathways.

General

Continue to refine and expand the number and variety of transition points being tracked. The initial report contains a variety of important measures about major student groups that community colleges serve. As subsequent editions of the full report or focused sections of the report are produced, consideration should be given to incorporating additional measures that offer further insights into student transitions and progress.

Continue efforts to collaborate and link distributed data systems to follow student progress and outcomes. The new High School to College Success/High School Feedback Report is one example where Illinois is demonstrating an ability to work together to track student progress and outcomes. As these initiatives advance, entities possessing expertise with specific student populations retain responsibility for the collection and validation of their data and the publication of factual information about the student populations they serve. Data across educational systems are linkable through a common student identifier which allows the tracking of student performance. The approach builds on the states current resource investments, existing infrastructure, and staff expertise regarding specific student populations. Data are linked to address questions which cannot be adequately addressed by a single data system and responsibility for data quality, comprehensiveness and adherence to specified standards remains with the originator of the data.

Linking existing data systems across the state, meets multiple essential elements of the Data Quality Campaign. The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) is a national collaborative initiative working to encourage and support policymakers' efforts to fully develop and use data to improve education (Data Quality Campaign. April, 2007). ICCB regularly links data systems to track students across educational levels within the state and across the country and has done this for specific student populations for over a decade. The essential elements identified by DQC that Illinois has the ability to address currently include the following. In Illinois a unique statewide student identifier can be

used to connect student data across key databases and years. Match student records between the P-12 and higher education systems. Provide student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information. Provide student-level college readiness test scores for specific populations. Provide student-level graduation and dropout data. Match individual students' test records from year to year to measure growth among specific student populations. Provide information on untested students at the P-12 level. Each agency or consortium has data review processes and procedures to assess and elevate data quality, validity, and reliability. Areas from the Data Quality Campaign where additional work could be done in Illinois include (1) build a teacher identifier system with an ability to match teachers to students (the Illinois teacher data warehouse offers some potential for making progress in this area and the ICCB has done some work related to this topic on a course-level basis) and (2) the ability to provide student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned. Pilot initiatives are underway with community colleges and the ICCB that include this level of detail. Collecting this level of detail involves the creation of substantial data sets.

Strengthen student support services. Student support services and systems are an important part of the educational infrastructure that provides the assistance many students need to succeed. Illinois community colleges plan to continue seeking resources to deliver additional student support services. Grants such as the Student Success Grant provided flexibility to colleges to target their educational support systems to the needs of the students they serve. Colleges were able to use these grant funds for a variety of services, including counseling, tutoring, assessment, mentoring, and retention programs for specific populations.

Provide support for technology. Community colleges are charged with educating and training individuals for the jobs of today and the future. A sizable portion of the career and technical courses and programs are technology intensive. Training students with the materials and equipment they will be expected to be proficient with in the workplace requires the colleges to keep pace with changing technology. Delivering quality instruction also requires colleges to upgrade instructional technology to facilitate the learning and teaching process. The ICCB continues to support the integration of technology into curriculum to enhance student achievement and encourages professional development for faculty and staff. A need exists for additional funding to support this needed technology. A dedicated funding stream to help defray the costs related to infrastructure, transmission, and maintenance associated with technology would further assure the colleges' ability to keep up with changing technology.

Report measures are consistent with the goals of the Public Agenda for Higher Education and the Illinois Community College System's Promise for Illinois Revisited. The Public Agenda for College and Career Success proposes four goals to a new pathway of progress and prosperity. Excerpts from the latest draft of the Public Agenda follow.

Educational Attainment – Increase educational attainment to match bestperforming U.S. states and world countries. Increase success of students at each stage of the P-20 education pipeline to eliminate achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and disability. Increase the number of adults reentering education and completing a postsecondary credential. Reduce geographic disparities in education attainment

Affordability – Ensure college affordability for students, families, and taxpayers. Make Illinois one of the five most affordable states in the country measured in terms of a) the percent of family income required to pay net cost of attendance for low- and middle-income families, and b) the average amount of debt per undergraduate student.

Education and Workforce – Increase the number of quality postsecondary credentials to meet demands of the economy. Increase the number of people with quality postsecondary credentials to ensure the state has an educated workforce and an engaged citizenry. Improve transitions between associate and baccalaureate degree levels. Increase the number of postsecondary degrees in fields of critical skills shortages, such as Nursing, Allied Health, and Information Technology

Education and Economic Vitality – Better integrate Illinois' educational, research, and innovation assets to meet economic needs of the state and its regions. Boost Illinois into the ranks of the five states with the fastest growing economies through cutting-edge research, technology transfer, workforce training, innovation education, and a culture of entrepreneurship.

The goals are addressed with many of the measures in the Transitions Report and are aligned with the current Illinois Community College System pledges (See <http://www.ibhe.state.il.us/masterPlanning/comment/default.asp>)

The Illinois Community College System Pledges include:

High Quality – Emphasize high quality in all programs, services, and operations.

Affordable Access – Deliver affordable and accessible learning opportunities for all residents of Illinois.

Competitive Workforce – Address workforce and economic development needs with flexible, responsive, and progressive programs and services.

Effective Transitions – Offer rigorous courses, programs, and services designed to enable students to transition from one learning environment and level to another.

Enhanced Adult Education – Enhance adult education and literacy programs necessary for individuals and families to achieve high-quality standards of living in Illinois.

Services for Student Success – Provide programs and services to assist students succeed in their educational endeavors. (See <http://www.iccb.state.il.us/pdf/agendas/2006/PromiseRevisited1-06.pdf>).

Community colleges are an important part of the education and workforce system of Illinois and provide educational access to a broad cross section of the state's adult and young adult populations. Community colleges help individuals transition from secondary to postsecondary education, from pre-college to college-level coursework, and from entry-level employment into careers requiring higher level skills. As Illinois moves forward to meet future challenges, community colleges will play an important role in providing individuals with the skills needed to compete.

Community colleges are a prodigious engine of economic growth, helping produce an educated and skilled workforce that improves the quality of life in their communities and collectively across the United States. Two-year colleges have a significant impact on both communities and individuals, expanding economic and social choices for students, while helping secure the health and welfare of their communities and our nation. . . It is no exaggeration to say that if community colleges did not exist, Americans would have to find other ways to educate most of the men and women who put out fires, fight crime, expand small firms, and care for the sick and elderly. They would also have to find other (probably more expensive) ways to introduce many immigrants, minority Americans, and foreign students to the benefits of higher education. America, as we know it, is inconceivable without the contributions of these institutions. College Board. 2008. p. 16.

For further information please review the full report which is available on the Illinois Community College Board internet homepage at the following address:
<http://www.iccb.org/pdf/reports/TransitionsReport08.pdf>

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