

Agenda
465th Meeting of the
Illinois Community College Board

Carl Sandburg College
Room E241
2400 Tom L. Wilson Blvd
Galesburg, IL

March 21, 2025

<u>9:30 a.m.</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum	
2. Announcements and Remarks by Dr. Sylvia Jenkins, Acting Board Chair	
2.1 Attendance by Means other than Physical Presence	
3. Welcoming Remarks from Dr. Seamus Reilly, President, Carl Sandburg College	
4. Board Member Comments	
4.1 Illinois Board of Higher Education Report <i>Dr. Sylvia Jenkins</i>	
5. Executive Director Report <i>Dr. Brian Durham</i>	
6. ICCB's Adequacy and Equity in Community College Funding Work Group Presentation <i>Dr. Carrie Henderson</i>	1-42
7. Advisory Organizations	
7.1 Illinois Community College Trustees Association <i>Mr. Jim Reed</i>	
7.2 Illinois Community College Faculty Association <i>Ms. Carla Presnell</i>	
7.3 Illinois Council of Community College Presidents <i>Dr. Keith Cornille</i>	
7.4 Adult Education and Family Literacy Council <i>Dr. Margaret Segersten</i>	
8. Committee Reports	
8.1 Academic, Workforce, and Student Support <i>Mr. Mara Botman</i>	43
8.2 Finance, Budgeting, Accountability, and External Affairs <i>Mr. George Evans</i>	44
8.2a Presentation on Governor's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Recommendations <i>Ms. Jennifer Franklin</i>	45
8.2b Spring 2025 Legislative Session Presentation <i>Mr. Matt Berry</i>	46
9. ICCB Agency Website Preview <i>Mr. Matt Berry</i>	47-48
10. New Units of Instruction (<i>ACTION</i>) <i>Dr. Marcus Brown</i>	
10.1 <i>Permanent Approval:</i> Kennedy-King College, Lake Land College, Malcolm X College, Oakton Community College, John Wood Community College	49-59
11. Recognition of the Illinois Community Colleges (<i>ACTION</i>) <i>Dr. Marcus Brown</i>	
11.1 Lincoln Land Community College, Illinois Valley Community College	60-113

Agenda
465th Meeting of the
Illinois Community College Board

Carl Sandburg College
Room E241
2400 Tom L. Wilson Blvd
Galesburg, IL

March 21, 2025

<u>9:30 a.m.</u>	<u>Page</u>
12. Adoption of Minutes (ACTION)	
12.1 Minutes of the January 31, 2025 Board Meeting	114-120
13. Information Items	
13.1 Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Statements	121-125
13.2 Fiscal Year 2024 Adult Education and Literacy Report to the Governor and General Assembly	126-135
13.3 Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Report and Scholarship Policy Brief	136-207
13.4 Basic Certificate Program Approval approved on behalf of the Board by the Executive Director	208
13.5 ICCB Spring 2025 Illinois Community College Opening Enrollment Report	209-220
14. Other Business	—
15. Public Comment	—
16. Executive Session	221
16.1 Employment/Appointment Matters	—
16.2 Review of Executive Session Minutes	—
17. Executive Session Recommendations (ACTION)	
18. Approval of Confidentiality of Executive Session Minutes (ACTION)	222
19. Adjournment	—

Item #6
March 21, 2025

Illinois Community College Board

**ICCB'S ADEQUACY AND EQUITY IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE FUNDING WORK GROUP
PRESENTATION**

Dr. Carrie Henderson from TSG Advisors will present an overview of the Working Group's report submitted to ICCB. The presentation will cover the process used to develop the recommendations and provide a high-level summary of the definitions, key findings, and recommendations. This session is intended to familiarize board members with the report in preparation for a more in-depth discussion at the board retreat this summer.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adequacy and Equity in Community
College Funding Working Group

Recommendations

March 2025

The Illinois Community College Board convened the Adequacy and Equity in Community College Funding Working Group to assess disparities in the current funding model and recommend improvements. This executive summary outlines key findings and actionable recommendations to promote equity, ensure financial sustainability, and better align funding with Illinois' educational and workforce goals.

Key Findings

- **Funding Challenges:** The original shared funding model for Illinois' community colleges balanced state appropriations, local taxes, and student tuition. However, declining state support has shifted the burden toward local and student-based funding, creating disparities among districts. This imbalance threatens institutional sustainability and limits student access.
- **Equity and Adequacy Gaps:** The current funding model does not adequately address differences in student demographics, regional cost variations, or institutional needs. As a result, colleges serving underrepresented populations face higher costs without proportional funding adjustments.
- **Unstable and Unpredictable Resources:** Fluctuations in funding—especially in equalization grants—cause financial instability, making it difficult for institutions to plan for the long term.
- **Limitations of the Current Funding Formula:** The existing formula is based on outdated cost structures and does not account for modern instructional methods, workforce demands, or the full costs of delivering education and student support services.

About the Illinois Community College System



53% of Illinois undergraduates are enrolled in Illinois Community Colleges



552,000+ enrolled in credit and noncredit
76% part time
26 average age
50% minority



Tuition is **70% lower** at community colleges than public universities

Recommendations

1 Conduct comprehensive analyses to address key funding challenges and inform the future development of data-informed solutions.

Implementing the Working Group's recommendations requires additional data collection and analysis. A clear understanding of operational needs and district disparities is essential to develop effective funding solutions. Without robust data, funding methodologies risk overlooking critical factors, leading to inequities and insufficient support for districts to meet their goals.

2 Establish a base funding amount that provides each district with a foundational level of operational support.

Each district should receive a guaranteed level of funding to sustain high-quality education and services. Rather than simply reimbursing costs, base funding should empower districts to develop, maintain, and expand programs that address student needs. The model must also account for fixed costs that remain constant regardless of enrollment fluctuations.

3 Allocate targeted resources to districts based on student demographics and institutional needs while providing flexibility in how funds are used to improve student success.

Students across all program types face barriers that affect their success. Funding models must account for the specific needs of diverse populations by supporting basic needs, holistic services, and wraparound assistance. As community colleges take on a broader role in student support, a comprehensive list of essential services and corresponding state funding must be established.

4 Revise the equalization grant formula to reduce funding volatility, ensure fair distribution of resources, and create a more predictable and stable funding model for all districts.

Illinois' equalization formula was designed to offset disparities in local property tax revenues that impact community colleges. However, the Working Group recognizes that the current formula may not fully achieve its intended goal. Concerns persist about its effectiveness in addressing the diverse financial needs of community colleges statewide. Revising the formula is necessary to reduce funding volatility and ensure more equitable resource distribution.

5 Evaluate existing dual credit funding mechanisms and explore ways to ensure that all community college districts can offer these programs without financial strain.

While some districts find the current dual credit funding model adequate, others struggle to recover costs, creating financial strain. The lack of standardization in funding contributes to disparities, affecting both districts and high school students seeking equitable access. Many colleges, particularly those serving multiple high schools, face financial challenges as dual credit programs reduce tuition revenue for general education courses while demand for these programs continues to rise.



Adequacy and Equity in Community College Funding Working Group Report and Recommendations

MARCH 21, 2025

March 21, 2025

To the Members of the Illinois Community College Board:

On behalf of the Adequacy and Equity in Community College Funding Working Group, we are pleased to submit the enclosed report detailing our findings and recommendations. As co-chairs of this dedicated and collaborative group, it has been our privilege to lead this important effort aimed at addressing the challenges and opportunities surrounding funding for Illinois' community colleges.

The report represents months of thorough analysis, robust discussion, and input from a diverse array of stakeholders. It reflects our shared commitment to advancing adequate and equitable funding mechanisms that support student success, institutional sustainability, and the economic vitality of our state.

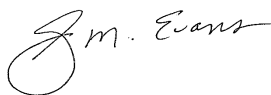
The Working Group produced a set of recommendations that will ensure that all students at Illinois community colleges receive a quality and affordable education. The recommendations emphasize:

- **Enhanced Funding Equity:** Establishes a foundation for equitable resource allocation that prioritizes underserved populations and promotes fairness across districts.
- **Operational Sustainability:** Encourages sustainable funding solutions, including a base funding amount and an improved equalization formula, to support long-term viability for all districts.
- **Data-Informed Decision-Making:** Advocates for robust data collection and analysis to refine funding formulas, ensuring evidence-based decisions reflect actual needs.
- **Alignment with Workforce and Educational Goals:** Supports instructional categories that prepare students for high-demand careers while addressing labor market needs.
- **Predictable and Stable Resources:** Recommends strategies to reduce year-to-year disparities in funding and improve predictability for institutional planning.
- **Holistic Student Success:** Recognizes the need for comprehensive services, such as academic advising and mental health resources, to address barriers and enhance outcomes.

We are deeply grateful to the members of the Working Group and subcommittees for their expertise, commitment, and collaboration throughout this process. We also extend our thanks to the Illinois Community College Board for your continued leadership and dedication to advancing higher education in our state.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide further information or clarification on any aspect of this report. We look forward to your feedback and the opportunity to support the Board in advancing these important recommendations.

Sincerely,



George Evans, Co-Chair
Adequacy and Equity in Community College
Funding Working Group



Brian Durham, Co-Chair
Adequacy and Equity in Community College
Funding Working Group

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	I
WORKING GROUP MEMBERS	II
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. COMMITMENT TO INCREASING ADEQUACY AND EQUITY	3
III. FUNDING CONTEXT.....	6
IV. OVERVIEW OF WORKING GROUP	10
V. WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS	13
VI. CONSIDERATIONS	19
REFERENCES	24
APPENDIX A: MEETING SCHEDULE	25
APPENDIX B: SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS	27
APPENDIX C: IMPLEMENTATION AND TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	29
APPENDIX D: INSTRUCTIONAL COST MANUAL CATEGORIES	34

Acknowledgments

This report was made possible through the thoughtful contributions, efforts, and support of numerous individuals and groups.

We extend our gratitude to the members of the Working Group for their dedication of time and expertise to this initiative. Special recognition is also given to the members of the Adequacy and Equity Subcommittees, whose knowledge and perspectives guided the development of thoughtful proposals on complex issues for the Working Group's review. The list of members is provided in Appendix A.

We sincerely thank the many professionals who generously contributed their time and expertise to this effort. In particular, we acknowledge Will Carroll (HCM Strategists), Nate Johnson (Postsecondary Analytics), and Lisa Castillo Richmond and Caitlin Power (Partnership for College Completion) for their insightful, data-informed presentations to the Working Group.

Our appreciation also goes to Carrie Henderson and Katie Grissom at TSG Advisors - Education for facilitating discussions and contributing subject matter expertise to the Working Group and its subcommittees.

Lastly, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the staff at ICCB for their exceptional leadership, unwavering support, and invaluable contributions. A special thank you goes to Matt Berry, Jennifer Franklin, and Nathan Wilson for their indispensable expertise, dedication, and effort in providing the research and data that have been essential to the success of this project.

Working Group Members

George Evans, Co-Chair
Kaskaskia College

Brian Durham, Co-Chair
Illinois Community College Board

Lorenzo Baber
Office of Community College Research and
Leadership, University of Illinois

Jim Reed
Illinois Community College Trustees
Association

Tammy Betancourt
Danville Area Community College

Lisa Castillo Richmond
Partnership for College Completion

Keith Cornille
Heartland Community College
Illinois Council of Community College
Presidents

Maribel Rodriguez
City Colleges of Chicago

Juan Salgado
City Colleges of Chicago

Gloria Cardenas Cudia
Rock Valley College

Arlene Santos-George
Wilbur Wright College (current)
McHenry County College (former)

Yolanda Farmer
Joliet Junior College

Lynette Stokes
South Suburban College

Steve Frommelt
Blackhawk College

Lori Suddick
College of Lake County

Teresa Garate
Illinois Community College Board

David Virgilio
College of DuPage

Jill Janssen
Highland Community College

Charlotte Warren
Lincoln Land Community College

Lazaro Lopez
Illinois Community College Board

Terry Wilkerson
Rend Lake College

Curt Oldfield
Spoon River College

Nick Yelverton
Illinois Federation of Teachers

Larry Peterson
Illinois Community College Board

Antonio Ramirez
Elgin Community College

I. Introduction

Community colleges are essential to higher education and workforce development, offering accessible, affordable, and career-focused pathways for millions of students in the country. Nationally, more than 6 million students enroll in community colleges each year, according to the [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System \(2025\)](#). In 2023, Illinois community colleges enrolled 411,217 students, comprising 53% of the state's undergraduate credit enrollments, highlighting their key role in postsecondary education ([ICCB, 2024a](#); [IPEDS, 2025](#)).

When considering non-credit, this number increases to 552,820—a 4.7% increase from the previous year. This growth has also been reflected in completions, driven by statewide efforts to re-engage students, expand workforce programs, and adapt to post-pandemic learning needs ([ICCB, 2024a](#)).

In 2023, Illinois community colleges enrolled 53% (n=411,217) of all credit seeking undergraduate students.

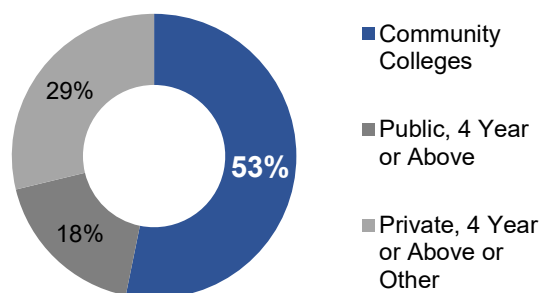


Figure 1. Illinois Higher Education Annual Undergraduate Enrollment Proportion by Sector

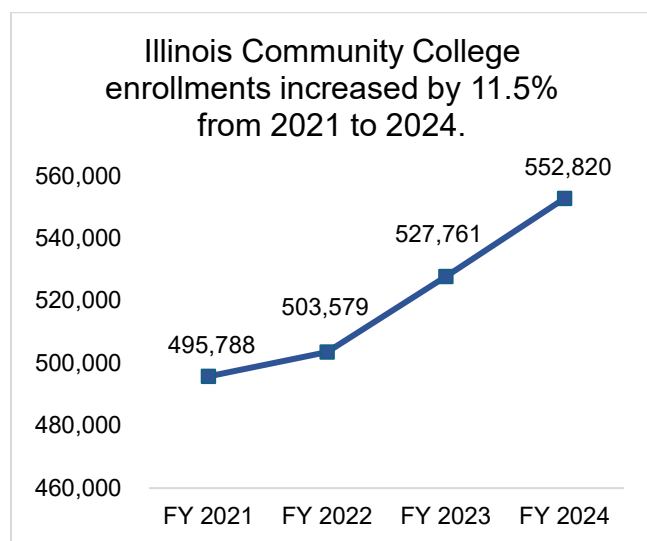


Figure 2. Annual Credit and Non-Credit Enrollments in Illinois Community Colleges, FY 2021-2024

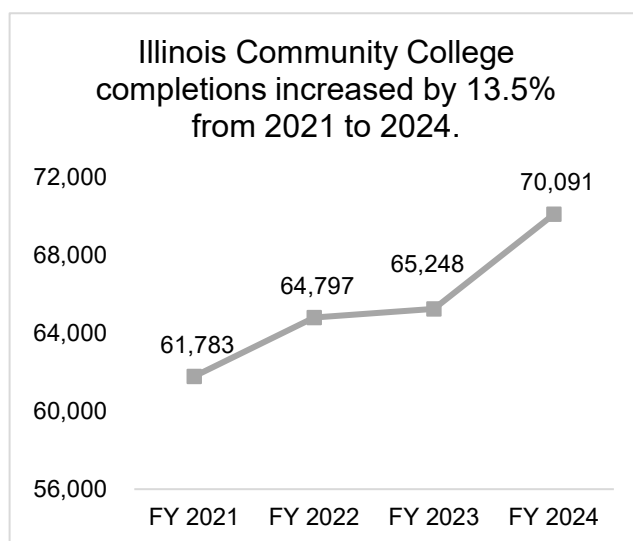


Figure 3. Annual Completions in Illinois Community Colleges, FY 2021-2024

Community colleges open up access to more rewarding futures. Community colleges make the benefits of higher education available to all by doing whatever it takes to help students succeed. Community colleges offer affordable tuition and financial aid counseling, faculty mentoring, comprehensive student success services, and class schedules that allow students flexibility to fulfill their family and job responsibilities. The “typical” community college student is 26 years old, female, and enrolled part-time.

In Illinois, the average full-time community college student pays \$4,813 per year in tuition and fees—nearly 70% less than the cost at Illinois public universities ([ICCB, 2024b](#)). This affordability enables many students to graduate with little to no debt and to attend college, an opportunity that might otherwise have been financially out of reach.

On community college campuses, everyone belongs. Community colleges serve the most diverse group of students and communities of any postsecondary option in Illinois. The colleges support a wide range of learners, including first-generation students, working adults, military veterans, and immigrants. More than 50% of credit-bearing students in Illinois community colleges identify as minorities, and over 15,000 students with disabilities and 34,000 students with limited English proficiency are served annually ([ICCB, 2024a](#)).

Community colleges are flexible, innovative, and agile. Community colleges meet students where they are through flexible scheduling options, including night, weekend, and online classes, to accommodate working adults, parents, and nontraditional students. Smaller class sizes provide more personalized instruction, and faculty focus on teaching rather than research, fostering a supportive learning environment. With over 275 transfer programs across the system, community colleges provide a seamless transfer pathway to a four-year college or university.

Community colleges are outcomes driven. According to the Community College Research Center (CCRC), Illinois ranks first in the nation for bachelor's degree completion rates among community college transfer students. Fifty-six percent (56%) of Illinois community college transfer students earn a bachelor's degree within six years, surpassing the national rate of 48% ([Velasco, Fink, Bedoya-Guevara, Jenkins, & LaViolet, 2024](#)).

Community college degrees and stackable certificate programs help every student forge a clear, personalized path toward their goal. The community college system is the largest provider of public workforce training in the state with more than 4,000 career and technical education programs. Colleges are constantly collaborating with local employers in the development of programs, increasing job placement opportunities. At last count, community colleges worked with 9,800 unique employers across the system. Students who graduate with an Associate of Applied Science degree or a long-term certificate can expect to earn \$600,000 in additional lifetime earnings ([Center for Governmental Studies, 2021](#)).

Community colleges are dedicated and accountable to their local communities. Community colleges bolster local education levels and social mobility, developing new generations of local leaders and being trusted partners for local economic development. The statewide economic output of Illinois' community colleges is estimated at \$3.5 billion and over 43,000 jobs ([Center for Governmental Studies, 2021](#)).

Community colleges provide non-credit courses for career advancement, skill-building, and personal enrichment. Community colleges partner with local high schools to provide opportunities for students to earn college credit through dual credit programs, helping them save time and money on their college education. In FY 2024, more than 91,000 high school students enrolled in dual credit courses—the highest recorded enrollment in Illinois ([ICCB, 2025](#)).

II. Commitment to Increasing Adequacy and Equity

Ensuring adequate and equitable funding for community colleges is crucial to maintaining their quality educational programming, allowing for the expansion of program offerings, and supporting the needs of both traditional and nontraditional students. Inadequate funding may lead to unequal resource distribution among community colleges, potentially perpetuating educational inequities.

Thanks to Governor Pritzker’s commitment to higher education—particularly community colleges—significant gains have been made in recent years. Nonetheless, more progress is needed, as the system has been underfunded for at least the past 15 years, if not longer. For most of the last two decades, the state has failed to meet its full obligation, further exacerbating funding challenges and disrupting the traditional community college funding model. This model was designed to be balanced, with 1/3 of funding coming from local property taxes, 1/3 from student tuition, and 1/3 from state support. In reality, as Figure 4 illustrates, the financial burden has increasingly shifted to local property taxes and students, with state support falling short of expectations.

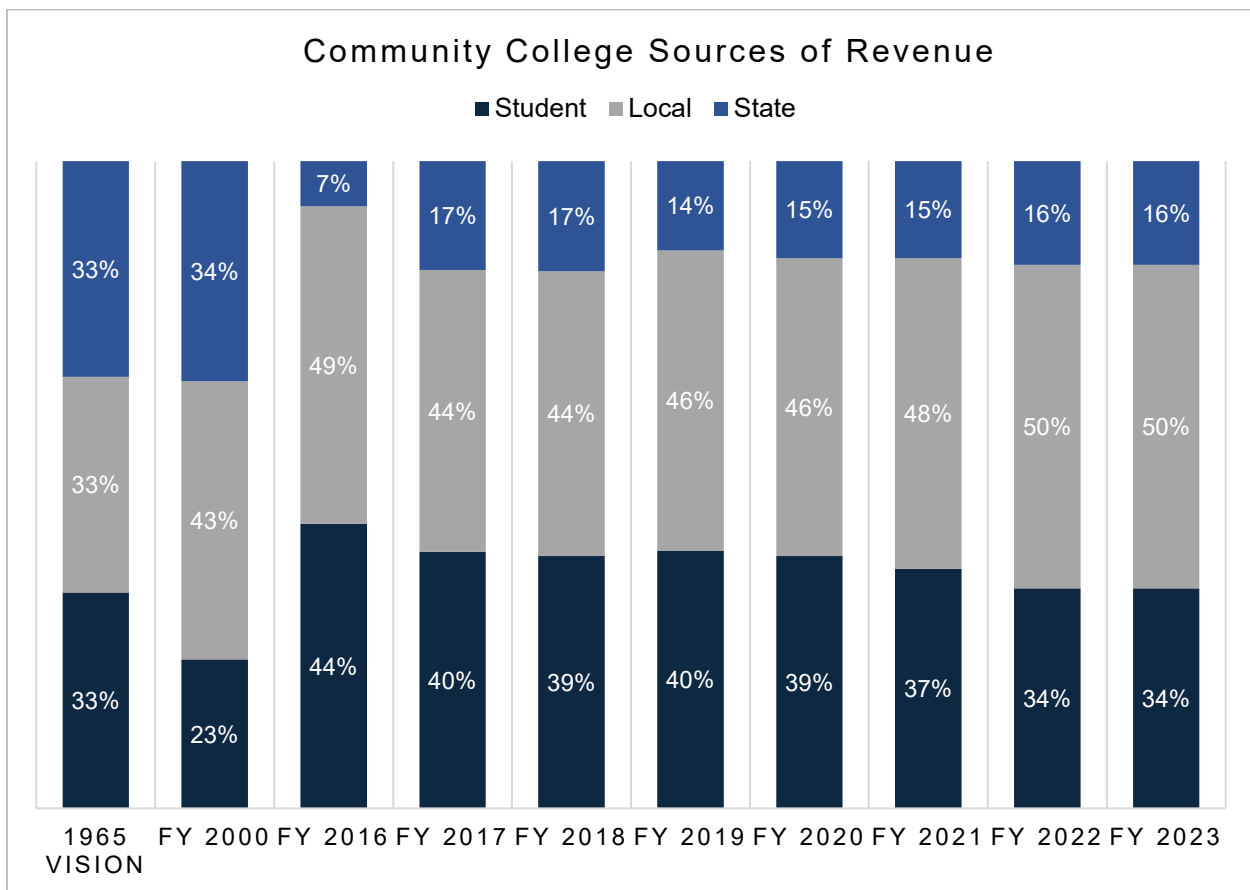


Figure 4. Illinois Community College Revenue Sources, 1965 Vision Compared to Fiscal Years 2000 – 2023

Data Source: Community College District Uniform Financial Statements

The underfunding history is perhaps best illustrated by looking closely at the two main formulas that drive community college funding: base operating and equalization. As Figure 5 and Figure 6 detail, the deficit—compared to the state’s obligation—has only widened over time.

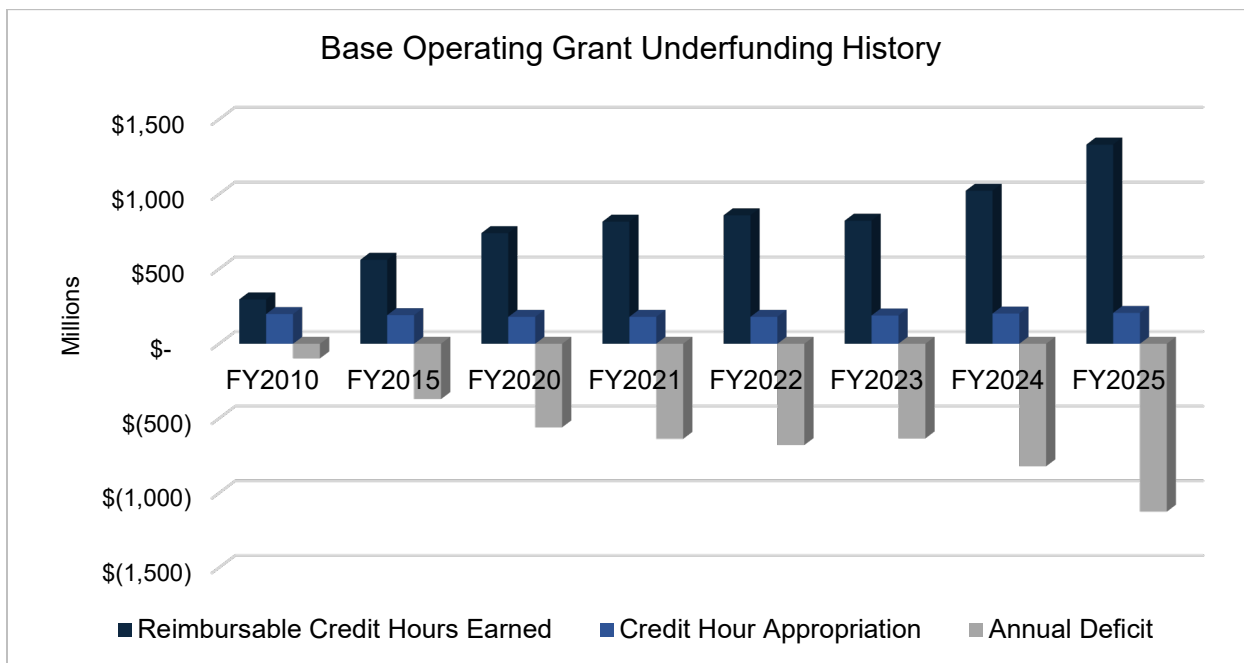


Figure 5. Illinois Community College Base Operating Grant Underfunding History, FY 2010 – FY 2025

Data Source: Operating Technical Appendix

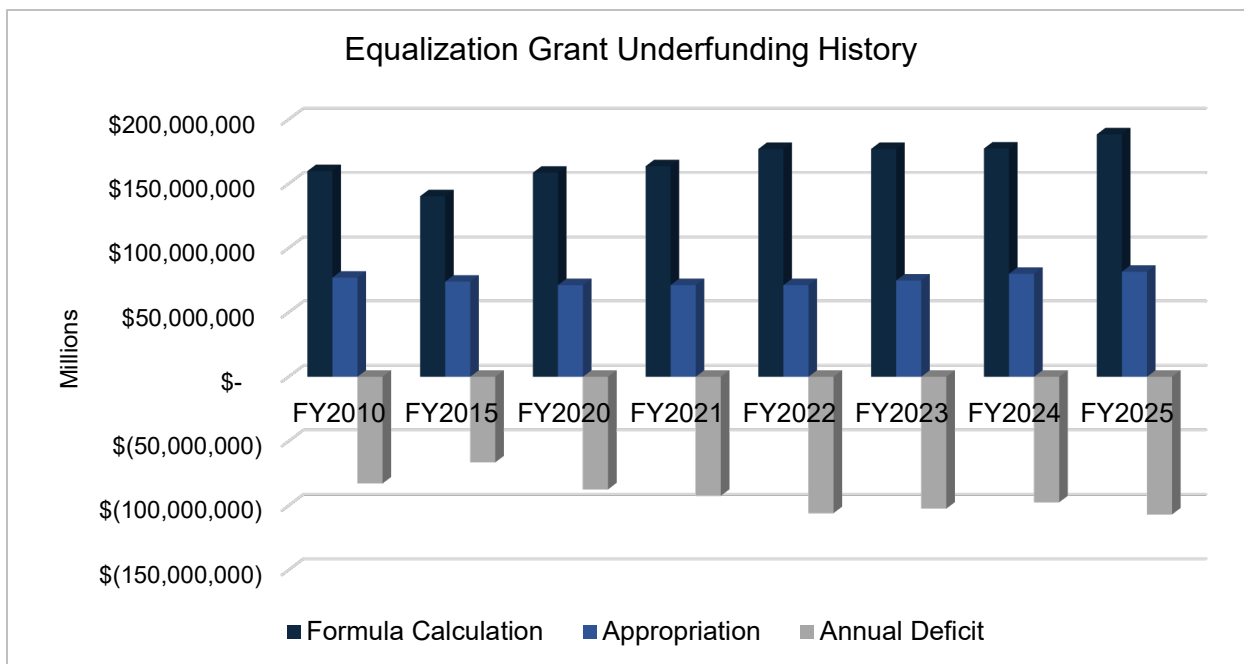


Figure 6. Illinois Community College Equalization Grant Underfunding History, FY 2010 – FY 2025

Data Source: Operating Technical Appendix

In response to growing concerns about underfunding and its impact on institutional adequacy and student equity, on June 7, 2024, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) adopted the following motion:

The Illinois Community College Board hereby directs the Executive Director to form an **Adequacy and Equity in Funding Working Group**, and to convene this working group in an effort to complete its charge based upon the terms herein. The Board further charges the Executive Director to see that the work is completed and presented to the Board no later than March 31, 2025.

To achieve this, ICCB instructed the Executive Director to assemble key community college stakeholders representing the ethnic, racial, and geographic diversity of the community college system. The group was to consist of diverse members with expertise in education policy, finance, community college administration, student affairs, and other relevant fields.

To facilitate a comprehensive funding review, ICCB subdivided the Working Group into two subcommittees, each tasked with a specific focus:

- The Adequacy Subcommittee shall examine the current funding mechanisms for community colleges in Illinois, considering factors such as enrollment, demographics, program offerings, as well as emerging, new, and other innovative instructional delivery methods, and geographical distribution. This analysis shall include a review of base operating, equalization, and performance-based funding.
- The Equity Subcommittee shall assess the potential impact of existing funding mechanisms on educational equity, considering the needs of underrepresented populations, low-income students, rural communities, first-generation students, and other marginalized groups.

The Working Group recognizes ICCB's commitment to promoting equitable access to education and supporting the state's community college districts in fulfilling their missions effectively while ensuring that the hardest-to-serve students receive the high-quality support needed to succeed. Members also recognize that the aforementioned funding disparity and the overarching growth in discussions around higher education funding in Illinois, in general, require more than simply detailing the deficit. Given these challenges, the Working Group saw the need to assess whether the current funding system remains the most appropriate model for community colleges and the need to examine what, if any, changes to existing mechanisms might be warranted.

III. Funding Context

The Illinois Junior College Act of 1965 established a shared funding model for community colleges, designed to distribute financial responsibility equally among three sources—state appropriations, local property taxes, and student tuition and fees—with each source contributing one-third of the funding. However, Illinois has significantly underfunded its higher education system for years, including both community colleges and public universities. Since Fiscal Year (FY) 2002, state appropriations for higher education have sharply declined, both in absolute terms and when adjusted for inflation.

The reduction in state support has shifted the financial burden onto local taxpayers and students. For community colleges, the proportion of revenue from local property taxes has increased over time, exceeding 50% of funding by FY 2022, while state funding has dropped to less than 16% annually. Meanwhile, revenue from student tuition and fees has trended closer to the original goal of 33%, further increasing the financial burden on students.

These trends highlight the growing reliance on local and student contributions to sustain community colleges, which raises concerns about equity and access. The decline in state funding risks creating disparities in funding across institutions due to variations in local tax revenue and places greater financial strain on students, particularly those from underrepresented or low-income backgrounds.

Revenue Sources

State Appropriations

The Illinois General Assembly allocates funding to community colleges annually, adjusting the budget based on the previous year's appropriation. State funding often falls far short of calculated needs, resulting in the prorated distribution of limited resources and increasing reliance on local taxes and student tuition.

Since 1965, state funding has been distributed through a formula-based base operating grant, supplemented by targeted grants for specific purposes. Over time, the funding model has been reviewed and adjusted to address operational changes, fiscal realities, and evolving educational priorities. To mitigate disparities in district taxable wealth, equalization grants were introduced to ensure fair funding across districts, regardless of location, size, or tax base. Despite this, tax-capped districts continue to face challenges due to limits on property tax growth.

As priorities shifted, new funding opportunities were developed to support disadvantaged students, workforce training programs, equipment investments, and small colleges. In 2012, performance-based funding was implemented, but it remains a small component of overall funding.

The most recent comprehensive review of the funding model was conducted in July 2002 by the [Illinois Community College Funding Study Task Force](#), which provided detailed recommendations for improving the framework.

Local Tax Revenue

Community colleges in Illinois rely heavily on local funding, which varies significantly due to differences in taxable wealth across districts governed by boards of trustees. To address financial needs, each community college has two authorized tax rates determined by public referendum: one for education purposes and one for operations and maintenance purposes. These tax rates, expressed in dollars per assessed property value, are based on the financial requirements of the college and the equalized assessed value (EAV) of taxable property within the district. While some colleges levy the maximum authorized rate, others do not.

Each year, community college boards adopt a tax levy that cannot exceed voter-authorized limits. To increase the tax rate beyond this limit, the board of trustees must approve the proposal, which must then gain voter authorization through a public referendum. Additionally, Illinois has enacted legislation to limit the growth of property taxes, including the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL), commonly known as tax caps. These laws restrict the amount by which property tax revenue can increase yearly, imposing a cap on the total extension of taxes for most local government entities, including community colleges.

Student Tuition and Fees

Illinois community colleges set tuition rates for in-district, out-of-district, and out-of-state residents in accordance with Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 1501.505. These tuition rates may be adjusted annually to reflect changes in costs, funding levels, and economic conditions. For in-district residents, tuition rates may vary based on program type, term, time of enrollment, course delivery method, or other identifiable groupings. However, the weighted average tuition for all credit courses, including adult education, must not exceed one-third of the college district's per capita cost. In-district students pay lower tuition rates than out-of-district or out-of-state students whose cost of attendance is not subsidized by local property tax revenue.

To qualify for equalization funding, community college districts must meet financial requirements. As of July 1, 2013, districts must maintain a combined in-district tuition and universal fee rate equal to at least 70% of the state average or ensure this revenue accounts for at least 30% of total revenue, as determined by the ICCB. Additionally, districts must maintain an operating tax rate of at least 95% of their maximum authorized rate, as defined under the PTELL¹.

In addition to tuition, community colleges assess various fees to cover costs associated with student services, facilities, technology, and other resources. These fees may include registration fees, technology fees, laboratory fees, course-specific fees, and other charges. Together, tuition and fees help support each institution's operational and educational needs.

Allocation Methodology

The allocations are divided into two main types of grants: restricted and unrestricted. When appropriations are insufficient, proration is applied to adjust funding levels across grant categories. For example, in FY 2025, the effective credit hour rate for base operating funds was

¹ For a list of counties and other information on PTELL, see: <https://tax.illinois.gov/localgovernments/property/ptell.html>

significantly reduced after proration. Similarly, equalization grant thresholds were adjusted to align with available appropriations. These adjustments demonstrate the state's effort to balance funding limitations with the diverse needs of its community college system. Incremental changes to the funding model reflect ongoing efforts to better align state resources with institutional goals and missions.

Unrestricted Grants

Unrestricted grants provide funds with no specific limitations on their use, allowing colleges flexibility in meeting their operational needs (110 ILCS 805/2-16.02). Among these, base operating grants are distributed based on credit hours in six reimbursable instructional categories: baccalaureate, business, technical, health, remedial, and Adult Basic Education/Adult Secondary Education (ABE/ASE). Allocations are calculated by multiplying funded credit hours by the effective credit hour rate, which accounts for direct and indirect instructional costs, adjusted for inflation and other economic factors. After subtracting tuition, fees, and local revenue, an effective credit hour rate is determined. Colleges receive funding based on whichever is higher: their three-year average unrestricted credit hours or their current unrestricted credit hours.

Equalization Grants

To address disparities in local property tax revenues per student, the state provides equalization grants to districts with lower-than-average tax bases. These grants are calculated by subtracting a district's local tax revenue per full-time equivalent (FTE) student from a statewide threshold and multiplying the result by the district's FTE. Districts with positive results after this calculation receive funding, with a minimum grant of \$50,000 established in 1998 to ensure eligibility even when full funding is not available. Fluctuations in Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax (CPPRT), Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV), and FTE enrollment can impact a district's eligibility and grant amounts. For example, a positive increase in CPPRT could lead to a reduction in equalization grant eligibility, as higher CPPRT revenues may indicate greater local wealth.

Small College Grants

Districts with fewer than 2,500 FTE students receive a flat grant of \$25,000. This is prorated depending on the number of districts qualifying and the total state appropriation. Districts below 2,000 FTE, below \$850 million EAV, and are eligible for an equalization grant, can qualify for an additional \$25,000 grant. These grants acknowledge that smaller colleges face unique financial constraints, with fixed costs consuming a larger share of their budgets.

Performance-Based Grants

Performance-based grants reward districts for improving outcomes on key measures, including degree and certificate completion, success of at-risk students, transfer rates to four-year institutions, developmental progress, and other momentum metrics. Funding is awarded based on institutional improvement, with districts competing for a share of funds allocated to each performance measure. No funds are awarded for declines in performance.

Restricted Grants

Restricted grants are allocated for specific purposes and include funding for programs such as adult education and literacy, career and technical education, and special initiatives like dual credit or non-credit workforce programs. Allocations for these grants are sometimes formula-based and tied to targeted projects or priorities.

Advantages and Limitations

The base operating grant system offers several advantages and limitations for Illinois community colleges. Among the strengths, the grant is productivity-based, linking funding to the costs associated with delivering credit-hour programs and accounting for variations in program offerings and associated costs. The system acknowledges disparities in revenue support across districts, ensuring that not all are treated uniformly despite differing local resources. It also relies on credible, auditable data to allocate resources, avoiding an overreliance on estimates.

However, the model also has some limitations. By focusing on actual costs, the plan often reflects what currently exists rather than what is ideal, potentially rewarding inefficiencies while penalizing cost-effective practices. Its reliance on enrollment and credit-hour production fails to capture the full scope of community college activities, such as non-credit instruction, or alternative instructional approaches, such as competency-based education. Furthermore, there is no guaranteed minimum state funding responsibility, shifting the financial burden onto students and local taxpayers instead of adhering to the original goal of equal cost-sharing. The use of proration factors to allocate base operating and equalization grants perpetuates systemic underfunding, leaving many colleges struggling to address financial challenges.

IV. Overview of Working Group

Need

Illinois has taken steps to incorporate equity and adequacy into its education funding models, as seen in the Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) model for K-12 schools and the Illinois Commission on Equitable Public University Funding. The EBF model sets an Adequacy Target for each K-12 school district, aligning resources with student and school needs based on factors such as demographics, district characteristics, and the cost of essential educational services.

Similarly, the university funding commission has explored ways to address disparities across institutions, with an emphasis on directing resources where they are needed most (note that the university funding recommendations are pending consideration by the General Assembly at the time of this report). While these efforts reflect Illinois' broader commitment to fair and needs-driven funding, it is important to carefully consider how different funding approaches translate across sectors, ensuring that any future community college funding reforms are tailored to the unique role and diverse student populations of the system.

Community colleges are vital to Illinois' educational ecosystem, offering accessible pathways to higher education, addressing workforce needs, and fostering student success. As indicated in the Introduction, community colleges already serve a highly diverse student population, including low-income students, first-generation students, part-time learners, and adult students, and they enroll 53% of the state's undergraduate population ([ICCB, 2024a](#)). Discussions about adequacy and equity in community college funding should be framed within this context. Considering how to modernize the funding methodology to reflect these priorities will enable community colleges to better serve their diverse student populations and meet the state's educational and economic objectives while also providing an updated rationale to more fully fund the system.

Principles

Throughout its discussions, the Working Group consistently emphasized core tenets that served as an underlying foundation for the recommendations. While these concepts were not formally adopted as guiding principles, they emerged as recurring themes and may offer ICCB a valuable framework for shaping future policies and strategies.

These themes reflect the Working Group's shared priorities and insights, providing a lens through which to address funding and operational challenges while advancing equity, accountability, and innovation across Illinois' community college system.

- **Adequacy.** Financial resources should be allocated to ensure all community colleges have the necessary funding to deliver high-quality education and effectively serve their students. This principle recognizes and accounts for differences among colleges, including enrollment size, local tax revenue variability, regional disparities, and diverse student characteristics.
- **Equity.** Financial resources should be prioritized to recruit, enroll, retain, and support the completion of populations underrepresented and underserved in higher education. This

principle acknowledges that additional investments may be required to ensure the success of these students and emphasizes directing funding to community colleges that serve these populations.

- **Simplicity.** The funding formulas should be straightforward to understand, explain, and calculate, ensuring that all stakeholders—students, faculty, administrators, policymakers, and the public—can clearly see how funds are allocated and why. By prioritizing simplicity, the formula reduces confusion and minimizes the potential for misinterpretation or mistrust.
- **Quality.** The funding formula should support the delivery of high-quality services that advance student success and equity goals. By aligning resources with evidence-based practices, programs, and innovations, the formula ensures that colleges are equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students. This approach emphasizes accountability and equity, ensuring funding provides the services and supports necessary to remove barriers and foster success for students.
- **Flexibility.** The funding formula should be designed with built-in flexibility to adapt to evolving workforce demands and educational standards while prioritizing student outcomes. It should empower districts with local control, giving them the autonomy to invest in innovative practices, programs, and strategies that address their unique contexts and community needs. By maintaining this flexibility, the formula ensures that financial resources can respond to emerging priorities and challenges while driving student success and promoting equity.

Process

The review process for Illinois' community college funding model was designed as a collaborative and structured effort involving subcommittees and the Working Group. A summary of meeting dates and key milestones is provided in Appendix B. Beginning in August 2024 and concluding in January 2025, the process followed a systematic sequence to ensure a thorough evaluation. The first step involved finalizing definitions of adequacy and equity to establish a shared understanding to guide the review. The Working Group then identified and prioritized key focus areas for exploration, which were assigned to two subcommittees—Adequacy and Equity—based on their relevance to the committees' overarching goals.

The Adequacy Subcommittee focused on topics such as recognizing costs across institutions, identifying funding mechanisms beyond traditional credit hours, and supporting program improvement and new program development. Meanwhile, the Equity Subcommittee concentrated on how funding could be leveraged to address students' basic and educational needs, as well as investing in strategies to improve student access, affordability, and outcomes, and ensuring students attain credentials of value.

Each subcommittee analyzed assigned focus areas, developed and tested hypotheses about the impact on funding adequacy and equity, and proposed solutions to address identified challenges. The Working Group reviewed and refined these findings, offering additional insights and identifying opportunities for further exploration. Iterative discussions resulted in actionable recommendations that balanced systemic funding needs with fairness and accessibility.

This structured process culminated in subcommittee recommendations being presented to the Working Group for review, refinement, and synthesis into a cohesive set of proposals for improving Illinois' community college funding model. By addressing critical areas through a lens of adequacy and equity, the review aligned with the state's goals of creating a funding system that supports the diverse needs of institutions and students.

The final recommendations were narrowed down to five key proposals through a consensus-driven process. Working Group members were engaged in reviewing the initial recommendations, with opportunities to suggest refinements that aligned with their goals and intent. This iterative process involved open discussions and thoughtful deliberation, ensuring that each recommendation addressed the most critical challenges within the funding model.

Definitions

An important initial task in the review process was the Working Group defining what is meant by “adequacy” and “equity” in funding. Establishing a clear baseline set of definitions was crucial, as it not only provided clarity for all stakeholders but also helped distinguish the focus and responsibilities of the subcommittees. These definitions created a shared understanding that informed the direction of the discussions and ensured alignment across the Working Group's efforts. To that end, the Working Group, with input from the two subcommittees, developed draft definitions of adequacy and equity for ICCB to consider.

Adequacy Definition

The allocation of financial resources to ensure all community colleges have the necessary funds to provide high-quality education and effectively serve their students. This approach acknowledges that colleges face differences due to factors such as enrollment size, variation in local tax revenue, regional differences, and student characteristics.

Equity Definition

The prioritization of financial resources to recruit, enroll, retain, and complete populations underrepresented and underserved by higher education. This approach recognizes that additional resources may be needed to support students' success and prioritizes funding to community colleges serving those populations.

Limitations

A key limitation of the funding model review was the overarching concern about the amount of funding allocated to community colleges. Throughout the discussions, members frequently emphasized that while the working group's primary focus was determining how the existing funds are distributed, a broader and more critical issue lies in addressing the overall inadequacy of funding for the system. There was widespread recognition that discussions about increasing the total funding available—“expanding the pie”—are essential to fully addressing the needs of community colleges. Without a larger pool of resources, changes to funding formulas lead to a redistribution of existing limited resources among community colleges and fall short of ensuring that all institutions have adequate funding to meet their missions and serve their communities effectively.

V. Working Group Recommendations

This section of the report presents the Working Group's recommendations to ICCB as a foundation for addressing critical funding and operational challenges. These recommendations provide clear guidance while allowing for flexibility to adapt as new insights emerge, ensuring that decisions remain evidence-based and aligned with state priorities. The Working Group aims to support the ICCB in delivering sustainable and impactful solutions to complex and evolving issues. We are confident that ICCB will thoughtfully evaluate these recommendations and determine the most effective course of action, whether through technical adjustments, legislative initiatives, or other strategic approaches. The numbering of the recommendations is not reflective of the Working Group's assignment of the importance of each recommendation and a determination of prioritization. A broader discussion of the prioritization of these recommendations is provided in Section VI. The Working Group also acknowledges that additional work beyond these recommendations will be required and that such engagement will also require system and non-system stakeholder engagement.

Note: [Appendix C: Implementation and Technical Considerations](#) provides key insights and observations from the subcommittees and Working Group members regarding each recommendation. These considerations address practical and technical factors that could influence the implementation process, offering important context to support ICCB's decision-making.

Recommendation 1: Conduct comprehensive analyses to address key funding challenges and inform the future development of data-informed solutions.

To implement the recommendations outlined in this document, additional data collection and analysis are essential to enhance the existing funding methodology, making it a more equitable and effective funding model. Accurate and comprehensive data will provide a clearer understanding of the factors driving operational needs and disparities across districts. This information is critical for tailoring the base funding amount to address each district's unique challenges and priorities, ensuring resource allocation supports high-quality services and promotes equity. Without robust data, funding methodologies risk overlooking key variables, potentially leading to inequities or inadequate support for districts to achieve their goals.

The Working Group has also identified ways ICCB may consider utilizing the findings from this data-informed exploration to enhance funding model discussions. These include refining existing funding methodologies to better address equity and adequacy, integrating evidence-based practices into resource allocation decisions, and advocating for additional state or federal funding. The insights may also guide the development of targeted grant opportunities and the creation of new funding mechanisms that more accurately reflect the evolving needs of students and districts. These efforts may help build a funding framework that aligns with ICCB's commitment to equity, quality, and sustainability.

Subrecommendation 1.1 (True Cost Per Credit Hour): Analyze the current institutional cost per credit hour guidance to ensure both fixed and variable expenses are adequately reflected.

The current cost per credit hour, comprising direct and indirect costs as outlined in the 2012 Instructional Cost Manual, is summarized in Appendix D. By evaluating the current guidance, ICCB may assess whether the current credit hour rates reflect the actual cost of education. These data may inform potential modifications to the rates, ensuring they are aligned with the funding required for high-quality instruction and student services. This analysis may also provide ICCB with a more accurate justification of the financial resources required to sustain and improve community college operations across the state.

Subrecommendation 1.2 (Instructional Categories Review): Conduct a comprehensive review of the six reimbursable instructional categories used to classify courses and programs for credit hour grants—Baccalaureate and General Academic, Business and Service, Technical, Health, Remedial Education, and Adult Basic/Adult Secondary/ESL—to assess their continued relevance.

The review may help determine whether the instructional categories reflect the evolving needs of the labor market and state priorities, ensuring that programs prepare students for high-demand careers and align with economic development goals. By assessing the categories, ICCB may identify gaps or overlaps in funding and support for underserved populations, such as adult learners, English language learners, and students requiring remediation. Additionally, these categories were originally designed to reflect variations in program costs. A key consideration is whether they still accurately capture instructional cost differences. Reviewing these categories may provide ICCB with insights into whether adjustments are needed.

Subrecommendation 1.3 (Credit Hour Funding Alternatives): Conduct an evaluation of alternative instructional delivery methods to determine if and how they could be integrated into existing funding mechanisms or future funding discussions.

The evaluation may provide ICCB with critical insights into trends in alternative delivery models and existing approaches to cost recovery for non-credit-hour-based instruction. This information may support informed decision-making on how such models might be integrated into Illinois' community college funding structure.

Subrecommendation 1.4 (Funding Beyond Current Levels to Promote Quality): Determine the additional funding required beyond current levels to adequately support high-quality academic and non-academic functions.

The analysis may also identify the costs associated with scaling these supports to address the needs of all students comprehensively, with a particular focus on districts serving higher proportions of underserved populations. By integrating this research and cost analysis, ICCB may define a base funding amount that reflects the true investment required to deliver high-quality, equitable services and close opportunity gaps. These insights would enable ICCB to advocate for sufficient state appropriations, design funding formulas that promote equity and student success, and prioritize investments that have the greatest impact on improving outcomes for all students.

Subrecommendation 1.5 (Infrastructure Evaluation): Conduct a comprehensive statewide assessment to evaluate the condition of community college facilities and identify critical maintenance needs.

An analysis of infrastructure within Illinois' community college system is essential to ensure that institutions can meet the safety, accessibility, and operational needs of their campuses. Many colleges face aging facilities, deferred maintenance, and accessibility challenges that require strategic investment to create environments conducive to learning and workforce development. A comprehensive infrastructure analysis would help identify critical gaps. Additionally, this assessment may also include an analysis of required investments in modernization and emerging technologies to ensure facilities are equipped to support future-ready operations and evolving educational demands. This assessment may inform future ICCB discussions to address infrastructure needs systematically and align capital investments with the broader goals of equity and adequacy.

Subrecommendation 1.6 (Small Colleges): Analyze the effectiveness of current funding mechanisms in addressing the needs of small colleges, focusing on whether these institutions receive adequate support aligned with their specific operational and educational demands.

This analysis may determine whether existing funding mechanisms provide sufficient resources to meet the operational and educational demands of smaller institutions, which often lack the economies of scale available to larger colleges. Special attention should be given to how these funding mechanisms support smaller institutions in serving underserved populations, including students in rural or low-income areas, who may face additional barriers to success.

While the Small Colleges Grant should be included as part of this analysis, the review of funding mechanisms in addressing the needs of small colleges should not be limited to that grant alone. It is important to evaluate the broader range of funding mechanisms and their role in addressing the higher operational costs faced by smaller institutions. ICCB may use the results of this analysis to determine whether current funding mechanisms adequately meet these needs.

Subrecommendation 1.7 (1/3 Funding Principle): Reassess the 1/3-1/3-1/3 funding principle to evaluate its feasibility and relevance, particularly in light of statutory tuition caps and variations in local taxing authority.

This assessment may examine how the principle impacts districts with varying levels of local tax revenue and enrollment, particularly those in under-resourced or rural areas. It may also include whether the reliance on tuition disproportionately burdens students, potentially creating barriers to access for underserved populations. Additionally, the evaluation may consider whether the principle aligns with current economic realities.

ICCB may use the results to guide policy revisions that address inequities in the current funding model, including adjustments to the "1/3 principle" and statutory requirements. The findings may inform the establishment of a minimum per-credit-hour state funding threshold and prioritize support for districts with limited local revenue or capped tax levies. Additionally, the results may support advocacy efforts for increased state funding and help design sustainable financial strategies that reduce burdens on students and taxpayers while promoting long-term viability for community colleges.

Recommendation 2: Establish a base funding amount that provides each district with a foundational level of operational support.

The Working Group recommends that ICCB implement a base funding model to provide every district with a foundational level of operational support essential for delivering high-quality education and services. This funding should go beyond merely reimbursing existing costs and instead enable districts to build, sustain, and grow robust programs that address the diverse needs of their students. A base funding model must account for fixed costs that remain constant regardless of enrollment levels, such as utilities, health insurance, and personnel required to maintain operations. These ongoing expenses place additional financial strain on districts with limited resources, particularly during periods of fluctuating enrollment.

The base funding amount should reflect variations in resource needs across districts, particularly those serving students who face greater challenges to success and require additional support services. By adopting a funding approach that accounts for these factors, ICCB can create a more sustainable framework that enables community colleges to fulfill their mission, support student success, and adapt to evolving educational and workforce demands across the state. A stable financial foundation would empower all districts, regardless of their local revenue-generating capacity, to offer equitable educational opportunities that align with statewide goals.

Recommendation 3: Adopt an equity-driven funding approach that provides districts with adequate resources aligned to their students' needs, supported by targeted investments to improve outcomes while allowing districts the flexibility to determine the best strategies for implementation.

Community colleges serve a diverse student population, offering traditional pathways to the baccalaureate degree alongside workforce training, continuing education, and community education programs. Colleges collaborate with local employers through contract training and support adult learners through non-credit offerings. Further, they offer adult education programs and developmental education for those needing academic assistance. Providing access to these varied programs—and more—is crucial to fostering student success and addressing the educational and workforce needs of their communities.

Students across all program types face numerous barriers that impact their success, requiring funding models that address the specific needs of diverse populations through provisions for basic needs, holistic supports, and wraparound services. This includes investments in critical areas like academic advising and career counseling, which are essential for student success. Community colleges are increasingly expected to provide essential services that historically fell outside their scope, such as mental health services. To support this expanded role, a comprehensive list of these services and corresponding state funding is necessary.

As legislative priorities shift toward defining “completion” as job placement rather than degree attainment, funding must prioritize career services and workforce development programs. Initiatives targeting high-skill, high-wage fields should be emphasized, ensuring that underserved students receive career counseling, skills training, and work-based learning opportunities.

The need for outcome-driven approaches is clear, with success hinging on establishing measurable goals from the outset. While flexibility for colleges to address barriers in locally

relevant ways is crucial, maintaining accountability through defined outcomes is equally important. However, careful consideration must be given to ensure colleges are not unfairly penalized through funding losses if outcomes are not immediately met, balancing innovation with sustainability.

ICCB may use the results of this recommendation to guide the development of an equity-driven funding framework or to enhance existing funding mechanisms with more equity-based components, ensuring districts receive adequate resources tailored to their students' specific needs.

Recommendation 4: Evaluate and enhance the existing equalization formula and identify solutions to address factors that lead to wide disparities from year to year, enabling greater predictability and stabilization.

Illinois established an equalization formula to address disparities in local property tax revenues that impact community colleges. By distributing resources to districts with lower tax revenues, the formula aims to ensure colleges meet a minimum funding threshold, promoting equity in access to quality education and services for students across the state. This approach supports community colleges in fulfilling their mission effectively, regardless of geographic location.

The Working Group acknowledges that the current equalization formula may not fully achieve its stated goal of mitigating disparities in local property tax revenues per student. There are growing concerns about its effectiveness in addressing the diverse needs of community colleges across the state. To ensure the formula aligns with current economic realities and promotes equitable funding outcomes, the Working Group recommends that ICCB further explore this topic through a comprehensive evaluation and targeted enhancements.

A thorough evaluation of the current funding components is essential to determine whether the measures and calculations effectively achieve the goal of equalizing tax revenue among districts. This analysis should also examine the formula's impact on student outcomes and the institutional capacity of low-resource districts. By assessing these factors, ICCB can ensure that the formula aligns with broader equity and sustainability goals.

The Working Group highlighted the need to analyze whether the formula inadvertently disadvantages certain districts or fails to provide sufficient incentives for local revenue generation. This review should explore whether the formula's current structure remains adequate or requires adjustments to better reflect modern economic realities and evolving educational needs.

Based on the findings of this evaluation, ICCB may consider recommending modifications to the metrics used in the formula to ensure it continues to meet its intended purpose. Potential updates could focus on promoting equitable financial support for all districts while also encouraging local revenue generation. ICCB may also consider innovative strategies for resource distribution that balance equity with local accountability. In particular, this includes examining how the practice of proration—resulting from the absence of a fully funded equalization formula—may be disadvantaging colleges that would otherwise qualify for greater access to equalization funds.

Through these steps, ICCB can strengthen the equalization formula, ensuring it remains a vital tool for addressing funding disparities and supporting equitable access to quality education across all community college districts.

Recommendation 5: Analyze existing dual credit funding structures and mechanisms to explore opportunities for greater consistency and alignment across the system.

While some districts report satisfaction with the current dual credit funding model, others face challenges in recovering costs, creating financial strain. The lack of standardization in the model contributes to potential inequalities across the system, impacting both districts and high school students seeking equitable access to instruction. Dual credit programs are financially unsustainable for many colleges, especially those serving multiple high schools, as they lose tuition dollars for general education courses while managing increasing demand.

The Working Group recommends that ICCB evaluate disparities in current cost structures and propose adjustments to ensure consistent support across all community college districts in Illinois. The Working Group recommends that ICCB explore the development of a sustainable funding framework for dual credit programs to ensure they align with community colleges' missions and support equitable access and outcomes. This framework may consider a dedicated funding mechanism that covers the costs of delivering dual credit.

VI. Considerations

Prioritizing Recommendations

Prioritizing the recommendations is challenging because they are interconnected and collectively advance the broader goals of adequacy and equity in the funding model. Each recommendation complements and reinforces the others, making it difficult to isolate one as more critical than the rest. Addressing key issues requires a holistic approach, as progress in one area often depends on advancements in another. This interconnectedness emphasizes the importance of implementing the recommendations cohesively to achieve meaningful and sustainable improvements.

Nonetheless, the Working Group recognizes that implementing changes to the funding model may need to occur incrementally and in stages, given the complexities of the current system and the resources required for reform. While practical constraints may necessitate prioritization, it is crucial to acknowledge the collective impact of all the recommendations and ensure that each is eventually addressed.

As **Recommendation 1** emphasizes collecting and analyzing additional data to inform future decisions, the subrecommendations are organized under the substantive recommendations they most directly support.

To inform the development of a base funding amount as outlined in Recommendation 2, the following subrecommendations in Recommendation 1 are identified as essential:

- **Subrecommendation 1.1:** True Cost Per Credit Hour
- **Subrecommendation 1.2:** Instructional Categories Review
- **Subrecommendation 1.4:** Funding Beyond Current Levels to Promote Quality

Additionally, two subrecommendations may warrant consideration as part of a base funding amount under Recommendation 2 or could be addressed through alternative funding approaches:

- **Subrecommendation 1.3:** Credit Hour Funding Alternatives
- **Subrecommendation 1.6:** Small Colleges

While the Working Group acknowledges the importance of **subrecommendation 1.5: Infrastructure Evaluation**, it is less aligned with the current scope of work than other subrecommendations.

Lastly, the Working Group engaged in substantive discussions regarding **subrecommendation 1.7: 1/3 Funding Rule**. Although this is an important topic, it is more focused on revenue sources than allocation methodologies and may not directly inform changes to the distribution framework.

Some Working Group members identified **Recommendation 2** as the most foundational, as its outcomes have the potential to influence and guide the implementation of other recommendations significantly. It establishes a framework for addressing critical elements that underpin the funding model, ensuring that changes are comprehensive and effective. While Recommendation 2 focuses on advancing institutional equity, **Recommendation 3** specifically

targets student equity, which remains an urgent priority. Together, Recommendations 2 and 3 were widely recognized as the highest priorities, reflecting their pivotal role in addressing both institutional and student needs within the funding framework.

Recommendation 4, related to equalization, was also identified by many as the highest priority, with some members emphasizing its close connection to Recommendation 2. They noted that equalization reform is essential for creating a level playing field for districts and must work in tandem with revisions to the base funding model to achieve institutional equity.

While challenges with dual credit funding are not universal across all districts, they pose significant obstacles for those impacted. During discussions on **Recommendation 5**, members highlighted that the K-12 system might already be addressing aspects of this issue, underscoring the urgency of finding a collaborative solution. Effective alignment between K-12 and community colleges will be essential to addressing these challenges and ensuring equitable access to dual credit opportunities. If ICCB intends to integrate dual credit into base funding, prioritizing an analysis of its financial impact could be particularly valuable in the context of Recommendation 2.

Need for Additional Analyses

It is evident that additional work is required before any decisions can be made to ensure an informed and collaborative process. Several topics have emerged as potential areas of focus that may benefit from the formation of dedicated workgroups. If these groups are established, it is crucial to create a structured feedback loop to ensure that each group remains aware of the progress and findings of the others. This feedback mechanism should also integrate existing committee work, such as the efforts of the presidents' group, to prevent duplication and ensure alignment with ongoing initiatives. By fostering communication and coordination across groups and committees, the process can remain efficient, transparent, and targeted toward addressing identified needs effectively.

Technical Modeling

Establishing a technical modeling workgroup will be essential to support the effective implementation of funding model reforms. This workgroup would focus on developing, testing, and refining technical models to evaluate the impact of proposed changes on funding distribution and equity. Comprised of experts in data analysis, finance, and policy, the workgroup would use data-driven approaches to simulate various scenarios, assess the implications of recommendations, and identify unintended consequences. By providing technical expertise and actionable insights, the workgroup would play a critical role in translating high-level recommendations into practical, equitable, and sustainable solutions for Illinois' community college funding model.

For example, equalization emerged as the highest priority for many Working Group members, highlighting its critical importance and the need for focused attention. Given the complexity of this issue, it may be beneficial to examine the challenges currently facing institutions. This workgroup could take a deep dive into the factors contributing to disparities, while considering the diverse needs of different institutions and communities. Addressing equalization through a

structured and intentional process may help ensure that any proposed strategies are both thoughtful and actionable, aligning with the broader goals of educational equity and institutional sustainability.

Dual Credit

Dual credit has emerged as a particularly urgent and timely issue, warranting focused attention and coordinated efforts. To advance work in this space, it may be beneficial to convene institutional representatives to explore and address the complexities of dual credit more comprehensively. The Working Group recognized dual credit as a two-pronged approach. The first prong involves institutional policy, with an emphasis on creating consistency in policy and practice across the system to ensure equitable and seamless access for students. The second prong focuses on the funding mechanism, with the goal of proposing a strategy that ensures institutional adequacy and sustainability. Notably, the presidents' group is already exploring this topic, presenting a valuable opportunity to leverage their insights and ongoing work. Aligning efforts with this group could enhance collaboration, avoid duplication, and expedite progress toward actionable solutions.

Additional Topics for Consideration

These topics were explored and discussed in depth by the subcommittees and subsequently by the Working Group. While the Working Group ultimately determined that these issues did not warrant inclusion as formal recommendations at this time, they remain relevant and may hold value for the ICCB's future deliberations. These considerations reflect areas of interest that could inform long-term planning or be revisited as new data and priorities emerge, ensuring that the funding model continues to evolve to meet the needs of Illinois' community colleges.

Performance-Based Funding

The Working Group engaged in extensive discussions regarding performance funding but ultimately declined to make specific recommendations on the topic. Members acknowledged that revisiting the definitions of student success within the performance funding framework may be a worthwhile endeavor, particularly given the length of time since the formula was last reviewed. Updating these definitions could help ensure they align with current educational priorities, workforce demands, and evolving student needs. The Working Group also emphasized the importance of integrating performance components into broader equity-focused initiatives. By linking performance metrics with equity goals, the funding framework could support strategies that not only drive student success but also address disparities and promote inclusive outcomes across all districts.

At the same time, concerns were raised about significantly expanding performance-based funding. Research highlights potential drawbacks, including timing issues and the risk of colleges losing critical funding, which could disproportionately impact underfunded institutions and exacerbate inequities. Members also noted the absence of systems to reliably track timely post-graduate outcomes, such as employment and wages, leading to outdated or incomplete information and making it difficult to demonstrate the up-to-date impact of community college education. Without robust data systems, performance funding discussions may be premature and risk creating a punitive environment that undermines institutional operations and student success.

The Working Group stressed the importance of framing equity goals in a way that connects them to broader societal outcomes, such as increased transfer rates, workforce participation, reduced unemployment, and economic growth. Proposals that tie equity initiatives to measurable impacts are more likely to gain legislative support. However, with any potential increase in state funding, colleges must anticipate greater accountability requirements. Members cautioned that performance funding should not be a zero-sum game; it must be transparent, equitable, and supportive rather than punitive. Given the historical underfunding of the system and the urgency of other pressing issues, the group concluded that performance funding is not an immediate priority and requires further exploration before being pursued as a viable funding model.

Integration of Certain “Statewide Initiatives and Other Grants” into Base Funding

Community colleges face significant strain on resources as they increasingly use operating budgets to cover unfunded mandates. Shifting more state funding into unrestricted categories could provide greater flexibility to address these costs and evolving institutional needs. However, balancing unrestricted and restricted funding is crucial to avoid risks such as losing targeted resources for high-impact initiatives. Restricted funding has enabled colleges to excel in specific areas aligned with state priorities, while unrestricted funds support broader operational needs.

The Working Group discussed the balance between unrestricted and targeted funding, recognizing the need to address unfunded mandates and evolving institutional needs while maintaining support for high-impact initiatives. Members explored the potential benefits of shifting more state funding into unrestricted categories, which could provide colleges with greater flexibility to meet diverse challenges.

The group emphasized the importance of evaluating the role of restricted funding in driving innovation and responding to local needs. A dual funding approach was discussed as a potential solution, combining base funding for essential, ongoing programs (e.g., dual credit) with restricted funding for short-term initiatives (e.g., emerging workforce needs). The Working Group will ultimately defer to ICCB to consider evaluating current funding structures to determine the optimal balance, ensuring that resources support institutional flexibility, promote equity, and align with both local and statewide priorities.

Conclusion

The recommendations outlined in this report represent a culmination of thoughtful deliberation, diverse perspectives, and a collective commitment to advancing equitable funding practices for the future. Throughout our discussions, the Working Group has demonstrated the power of unity and collaboration, bringing together insights from leaders across the spectrum to create recommendations that are both innovative and impactful.

As the Working Group reflects on our charge, it is clear that we are at a pivotal moment in history. This process has not only been educational but has also fostered a shared sense of purpose and determination among all participants. The open exchange of ideas, regional perspectives, and collective expertise has strengthened our ability to chart a path that addresses immediate challenges and long-term opportunities.

This work has reinforced the importance of a unified voice in advancing our shared mission. By prioritizing equity, transparency, and strategic investments, we can ensure that our institutions remain catalysts for student success, economic development, and community enrichment.

Moving forward, let us remain committed to championing these recommendations with the same spirit of collaboration and optimism that has guided this process. Together, we are not only making meaningful progress but also laying the foundation for transformative change that will define the future of our institutions and the communities they impact.

References

- Center for Governmental Studies. (2021). *Illinois community colleges' economic impacts and student employment outcomes: A report to the Illinois Community College Board by the Center for Governmental Studies*. Northern Illinois University. https://www2.iccb.org/iccb/wp-content/pdfs/data/ICCB_Statewide_Report_Final.pdf
- Illinois Community College Board. (2024a). *Student enrollments and completions in the Illinois Community College System in fiscal year 2024*. https://www.iccb.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Annual_Enroll_Comp_2024_Final.pdf
- Illinois Community College Board. (2024b). *What does it cost to attend an Illinois community college and how does that compare with other available options?* <https://www.iccb.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Cost%20FY25.pdf>
- Illinois Community College Board. (2025). *Dual credit in the Illinois Community College System in fiscal year 2024*. <https://www2.iccb.org/data/studies-reports/student-reports/>
- Illinois Community College Funding Study Task Force. (2002). *Illinois Community College Funding Study Task Force Report*. https://www.iccb.org/wp-content/pdfs/fiscal_manuals/fundingstudytrpt7-02.pdf
- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). (2025). *12-month enrollment survey, 2023*. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/trendgenerator>
- Velasco, T., Fink, J., Bedoya-Guevara, M., Jenkins, D., & LaViolet, T. (2024). *Tracking transfer: Community college and four-year institutional effectiveness in broadening bachelor's degree attainment*. Community College Research Center. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/tracking-transfer-community-college-and-four-year-institutional-effectiveness-in-broadening-bachelors-degree-attainment.html>

Appendix A: Meeting Schedule

Adequacy and Equity in Funding Working Group and Subcommittees Illinois Community Colleges

Meeting Schedule

Date	Meeting	Objectives
August 8, 2024	Working Group Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured all stakeholders had a shared understanding of the current funding model. Agreed on a vision for improving funding adequacy and equity in Illinois community colleges. Identified potential high-level categories of adequacy and equity for subcommittees to explore.
August 30, 2024	Adequacy Subcommittee Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured all stakeholders had a shared understanding of the current funding model and the working group's vision. Developed a draft working definition for "adequacy." Discussed the topics identified by the working group for the subcommittee to explore in its work.
August 30, 2024	Equity Subcommittee Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured all stakeholders had a shared understanding of the current funding model and the working group's vision. Developed a draft working definition for "equity." Discussed the topics identified by the working group for the subcommittee to explore in its work.
September 13, 2024	Working Group Meeting #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided updates on the subcommittees' work. Continued working on definitions of adequacy and equity within the current funding models. Determined the focus areas to guide the next stage of work for the subcommittees and working group. Established "big questions" to discuss during future working group meetings.
October 2, 2024	Adequacy Subcommittee Meeting #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided updates on the Working Group's work. Analyzed the focus areas and determined how the current funding mechanisms affect achieving adequacy and what data is needed/available to support this. Reviewed and provided feedback on the focus areas specific to the equity subcommittee.
October 2, 2024	Equity Subcommittee Meeting #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided updates on the Working Group's work. Analyzed the focus areas and determined how the current funding mechanisms affect achieving equity and what data is needed/available to support this. Reviewed and provided feedback on the focus areas specific to the adequacy subcommittee.
November 1, 2024	Adequacy Subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed the draft funding considerations from the last subcommittee meeting and engaged in informal

Date	Meeting	Objectives
	Meeting #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> polling and discussion. Identified additional topics as possible recommendations and topics outside the current funding mechanisms for consideration.
November 1, 2024	Equity Subcommittee Meeting #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed the draft funding considerations from the last subcommittee meeting and engaged in informal polling and discussion. Identified additional topics as possible recommendations and topics outside the current funding mechanisms for consideration.
November 15, 2024	Working Group Meeting #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided updates on the subcommittees' work. Evaluated subcommittee recommendations and identified additional recommendations and possible solutions for consideration. Discussed the extent to which the ideated solutions meet existing criteria.
December 4, 2024	Adequacy & Equity Subcommittees (Combined) Meeting #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided updates on the Working Group's work. Reviewed and provided feedback on the draft funding recommendations from the last subcommittees and working group meetings. Discussed and provided feedback on additional considerations previously brought forth by all groups.
January 23, 2025	Working Group Meeting #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided updates on the subcommittees' work. Achieved consensus on the final recommendations, including a clear rationale and incorporating data-driven analysis. Determined the prioritization of the recommendations and identified additional considerations to be included in the final report.

Appendix B: Subcommittee Members

Adequacy and Equity in Funding Working Group and Subcommittees Illinois Community College System

Adequacy Subcommittee

Mike Abramson
Partnership for College Completion

Dennis Baskin
Harper College

Josh Bullock
Lakeland College

Sarah Diel-Hunt
Heartland Community College

Roger Eddy
Illinois Eastern Community Colleges

Sarah Gray
Spoon River College

John Gulley
Rend Lake College

Sarah Hartwick
Illinois Manufacturers' Association

Ryan Hawkins
Illinois Eastern Community Colleges

Jen Kirmes
Advance Illinois

James Kostecki
College of DuPage

Beth Nunley
Kankakee Community College

Mike Phillips
Illinois Valley Community College

Mark Potter
City Colleges of Chicago

Chris Randles
Parkland College

Howard Spearman
Rock Valley College

Troy Swanson
Moraine Valley Community College

Tim Taylor
Shawnee Community College

Bob Tenuta
McHenry County College

Kenneth Trzaska
Lewis and Clark Community College

Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro
Latino Policy Forum

Josh Welker
John Wood Community College

**Adequacy and Equity in Funding Working Group and Subcommittees
Illinois Community College System**

Equity Subcommittee

Mike Abramson
Partnership for College Completion

Luevinus Muhammad
Rock Valley College

Lorenzo Baber
Office of Community College Research and
Leadership, University of Illinois

Antonio Ramirez
Elgin Community College

Kelsey Bakken
Advance Illinois

Jim Reed
Illinois Community College Trustees
Association

Maureen Banks
Parkland College
Illinois Community College Board

Kathy Ross
Illinois Valley Community College

Mara Botman
Vivo Foundation

Dave Sanders
City Colleges of Chicago

Roger Eddy
Illinois Eastern Community Colleges

Tim Taylor
Shawnee Community College

Brett Egger
Southwestern Illinois College

Bob Tenuta
McHenry County College

Cherita Ellens
Women Employed

Karen Weiss
Southeastern Illinois College

Ryan Gower
Illinois Eastern Community Colleges

Kyle Westbrook
Education Systems Center, Northern Illinois
University

Dan Hagberg
Heartland Community College

Amy Zanton
Kaskaskia College

Stephanie Horton
Harper College

Jennifer Juarez
Latino Policy Forum

Pam Lau
Parkland College

Appendix C: Implementation and Technical Considerations

This section outlines key insights and observations shared by subcommittee and Working Group members for each recommendation. These reflections capture the individual perspectives of participants and may not fully represent the consensus of the Working Group. The insights provided are intended to highlight practical and technical factors that could impact implementation. Additionally, this section offers guidance to help anticipate potential challenges, identify needed adjustments, and facilitate the successful implementation of the recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Conduct comprehensive analyses to address key funding challenges and inform the future development of data-informed solutions.

- Conducting the necessary analyses to inform funding model reforms will require both significant time and financial resources. The complexity of the current funding system, combined with the need to collect and analyze comprehensive data, will demand a careful and systematic approach. Costs may include hiring technical experts, acquiring advanced data modeling tools, and dedicating staff time to coordinate and oversee the process.
- Additionally, time will be required to gather input from stakeholders, test various funding scenarios, and refine models to ensure accuracy and effectiveness. Depending on the scope of the analysis, this effort could span several months to over a year.
- While these costs and time commitments are considerable, they are essential investments to create a funding model that is equitable, adequate, and aligned with the long-term goals of Illinois' community college system.

Subrecommendation 1.1: True Cost Per Credit Hour

- Previous ICCB unit cost studies should be used as a starting point, despite their age and limitations.
- The funding analysis should encompass all services offered by community colleges, not just instructional delivery, to reflect the full scope of their mission and impact.
- Actual costs should be compared with what costs should be, and the analysis should consider the impact of high tuition and whether addressing tuition reduction is necessary.
- The analysis should explore combining cost-per-student metrics with operational costs to create a more integrated and holistic approach.

Subrecommendation 1.2: Instructional Categories Review

- The current cost-per-credit-hour valuation undervalues the true expenses of education delivery and creates unnecessary disparities between types of education, misaligning with the open-access mission of community colleges. Consider valuing all parts of the pathway—whether GED®, ESL, CTE, or transfer programs—equally, as the associated costs, such as faculty and support services, are consistent across programs.

Subrecommendation 1.3: Credit Hour Funding Alternatives

- Alternatives to the per-credit-hour funding formula should be evaluated, recognizing that

many students are enrolled in programs that do not follow a traditional credit-hour structure.

- Competency-based education (CBE) models should be examined as potential alternatives for funding community colleges.
- Funding gaps in non-credit education should be addressed by investigating the percentage of non-credit offerings at community colleges and exploring how other states fund these programs, as many colleges rely heavily on grants to support these initiatives.

Subrecommendation 1.4: Funding Beyond Current Levels to Promote Quality

- Funding allocations are determined by credit hours generated two years earlier, introducing a lag that can disadvantage colleges with growing enrollments. This time gap prevents state funding from responding to changes in real time. Moreover, funding models often fail to fully account for the costs associated with student success services, which are critical for supporting learners and improving outcomes.
- To address these challenges, ICCB should explore evidence-based funding models from other states to identify successful practices that could inform improvements to Illinois' funding system. This research should prioritize causal studies and comprehensive analyses to develop effective strategies for enhancing educational quality and equity through improved funding mechanisms.

Subrecommendation 1.5: Infrastructure Evaluation

- Depending on the size of this number, consideration should be given to whether it should be included in the base funding formula or treated as a separate category.
- Exercise caution against prioritizing funding recommendations too early in the process to avoid unintentionally penalizing colleges that have already addressed specific needs or made proactive investments.

Subrecommendation 1.6: Small Colleges

- Small colleges struggle with limited grants, which only cover basic needs and leave no room for innovation or programs like competency-based education.

Subrecommendation 1.7: 1/3 Funding Principle

- Disparities exist between districts with differing industrial bases and populations, underscoring the need for equitable base-level funding for all colleges. Across the state, some colleges do not receive the full one-third funding from the state, further highlighting these inequities.
- This raises questions about whether the 1/3 funding model remains realistic, given its historical reliance on local property taxes and the challenges it creates for certain districts.

Recommendation 2: Establish a base funding amount that provides each district with a foundational level of operational support.

- A comprehensive analysis of community college funding must account for all

components necessary to serve students effectively, including geographic and economic factors.

- Operational cost analyses, encompassing both academic and non-academic expenses, should include equity adjustments to address the diverse needs of students across institutions.
- Current base funding primarily covers basic operational costs and lacks provisions for growth to meet workforce demands, such as expanding healthcare programs.
- Formulas that allocate a fixed amount per institution without considering variables like the number of campuses or the size of a district's territory may fail to address critical differences among colleges.

Recommendation 3: Adopt an equity-driven funding approach that provides districts with adequate resources aligned to their students' needs, supported by targeted investments to improve outcomes while allowing districts the flexibility to determine the best strategies for implementation.

- Equity should be framed as addressing barriers to student success, ensuring that institutional needs are validated and quantified within a constrained funding environment. Targeted investments, similar to the EBF model in K-12, should be prioritized to address unique student demographics and specific support needs.
- Colleges must be given the flexibility to define and meet their students' equity needs, ensuring that resources align with both institutional and student priorities.
- Successful programs should be evaluated to determine their costs and use this data to guide equitable funding distribution across the state. These programs should also be leveraged to strengthen efforts in delivering credentials of value, where colleges have demonstrated strong outcomes.
- Accountability should be highlighted as a positive feature, emphasizing transparency, clear outcome goals, and regular reporting to resonate with legislators and stakeholders. Methods for documenting and tracking these variations in student goals and outcomes should be developed to better align funding strategies with actual success metrics. Centralized accountability measures should be implemented to ensure funding is used effectively while preserving college autonomy.
- While funding should not be punitive (e.g., in a non-performance-based funding model), supplemental approaches that enhance the current funding system and prioritize outcomes should be explored.

Recommendation 4: Evaluate and enhance the existing equalization formula and identify solutions to address factors that lead to wide disparities from year to year, enabling greater predictability and stabilization.

- Addressing Disparities in Equalization
 - Equalization must address disparities caused by reliance on fluctuating property taxes, which colleges cannot control.
 - The formula should consider student demographics, socioeconomic conditions, service needs, and EAV, which is currently excluded.
 - Outdated elements, such as tax base growth, need re-evaluation to align with

modern funding realities.

- Stabilizing Funding Through Equalization
 - Year-to-year fluctuations should be mitigated by fully funding equalization or increasing allocations to stabilize college funding.
 - A "hold harmless" provision should protect colleges from funding losses during adjustments to the formula.
 - Political constraints that prevent some districts from raising taxes further highlight the need for equalization as a stabilizing mechanism.
 - Equalization is critical for the long-term sustainability of the funding formula, ensuring consistent and equitable support for all community colleges while adapting to evolving institutional and community needs.
- Enhancing Equity and Modernizing the Formula
 - Changes to equalization must avoid negatively impacting the equity tax, while acknowledging how current constraints influence outcomes.
 - Metrics and distribution methods should reflect modern challenges, such as dual credit programs and delivery methods tied to base operating funds.
 - Quartile or tier-based approaches should be explored to identify disparities and ensure equitable distribution.
- Ensuring Comprehensive and Fair Evaluations
 - A statewide perspective is necessary to compare similar colleges (e.g., small to small, large to large) for fair assessments.
 - Non-equalization colleges should be included in technical modeling to fully evaluate the funding model's impact.
 - EAV growth should be analyzed through "what-if" scenarios to guide recommendations and inform funding decisions.

Recommendation 5: Analyze existing dual credit funding structures and mechanisms to explore opportunities for greater consistency and alignment across the system.

- Financial Sustainability of Dual Credit
 - Dual credit has become an essential component of community college operations, necessitating its inclusion in funding formulas rather than being treated as an optional program.
 - Analyze the true cost per credit hour by including both direct and indirect costs, with dual credit costs presented separately and as part of overall operational expenses.
 - A sustainable funding model is needed to support dual credit programs without charging students or creating financial burdens for families, ensuring alignment with equity goals.
- Equity and Accessibility in Dual Credit
 - Assess the equity impact of dual credit programs, as evidence suggests they may disproportionately benefit wealthier students.
 - Programs must remain integral to equity work by ensuring access for underrepresented students and addressing barriers that could unintentionally arise from expanded offerings.

- Program Expansion
 - Guardrails should be implemented to balance the volume of dual credit offerings, emphasizing evidence-based practices that align with college readiness, equity, and student growth.
 - Risks of excessive dual credit offerings should be evaluated, with thresholds established for sustainable program delivery.

Appendix D: Instructional Cost Manual Categories

DIRECT COSTS

- **Instructional.** Instructional expenditures consist of those activities dealing directly with teaching students, including faculty efforts across various programs such as baccalaureate-oriented/transfer, occupational-technical career, general studies, remedial, and ABE/ASE programs. They cover costs associated with administrators and staff, as well as equipment, materials, supplies, and other resources for supporting the instructional programs.

INDIRECT COSTS

- **Academic Support.** This category includes activities designed to provide support services for the institution's primary mission. Academic support includes library operations, media services, instructional materials centers, academic computing, and other activities (e.g., tutoring, learning skills centers, reading and writing centers, etc.).
- **Student Services.** The student services function provides assistance in the areas of financial aid, admissions and records, health, placement, testing, counseling, and student activities.
- **Auxiliary Services.** Auxiliary Services provides for the operation of the cafeteria, bookstore, student organizations, athletics, and other related activities.
- **Operations and Maintenance of Plant.** Operation of plant consists of housekeeping activities necessary in order to keep the physical facilities open and ready for use. Maintenance of plant consists of those activities necessary to keep the grounds, buildings, and equipment operating efficiently. This function also provides for campus security and plant utilities, as well as equipment, materials, supplies, fire protection, and property insurance.
- **Institutional Support.** Institutional support includes expenditures for central executive-level activities and support services that benefit the entire institution (e.g., expenses for the governing board, administrative data processing, fiscal operations, legal services, etc.).

Illinois Community College Board

ACADEMIC, WORKFORCE, AND STUDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE

- Call to Order
- Adult Education and Literacy Update
 - Adult Education and Literacy (Report)- Information Item
- Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity ECACE Report (ECACE)
- Program Approval Process
- New Units of Instruction
- Next Meeting
- Other
- Adjourn

Illinois Community College Board

FINANCE, BUDGETING, ACCOUNTABILITY, & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

An oral report will be given during the Board meeting on the discussions that took place at the committee meeting. The discussion items are outlined below:

- Community College Month (April)
- Governor's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Recommendations
- Spring 2025 Legislative Update
- Impact of Federal Actions
- Spring 2025 Illinois Community College Opening Enrollment Report
- Other
- Public Comment
- Adjournment

Illinois Community College Board

**PRESENTATION ON GOVERNOR'S
FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

On February 19, 2025, Governor Pritzker unveiled his proposed fiscal year 2026 budget in a joint address to the General Assembly and Illinois residents. The fiscal year 2026 budget highlighted the previous six years of budget discipline, resulting in State of Illinois debt reduction and credit rating upgrades, additional funding for pension systems, and investments in infrastructure, education, childcare, health and social services. The fiscal year 2026 proposed budget continues the commitment to fiscal discipline along with continued investments in the Governor's key priorities, including early childhood education and childcare, college affordability, healthcare, workforce development, and continued economic development.

The Governor's proposed budget includes a 3% increase (\$9 million) over fiscal year 2025 appropriations for Base Operating, Equalization and City Colleges grants. The budget recommendation also includes continued funding for Dual Credit, Non-Credit Workforce Programs, Advanced Manufacturing-Electric Vehicles, Mental Health Early Action on Campus, Homelessness Prevention, PATH, Adult Education, and Career & Technical Education. Additionally, the budget recommends a \$10 million increase in funding for MAP.

A presentation will be given during the Board meeting on the Governor's proposed budget.

Item #8.2b
March 21, 2025

Illinois Community College Board

**SPRING 2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION PRESENTATION & UPDATE
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The 104th General Assembly is in full swing. Legislators have filed over 6,600 bills in the Senate and over 4,000 bills in the House. The deadline for legislators to get their bills out of committee is March 21st. The adjournment deadline is scheduled for May 31, 2025.

Matt Berry will provide an oral presentation on significant higher education legislation at the Board meeting. A written report will also be provided.

Illinois Community College Board

ICCB AGENCY WEBSITE PREVIEW

In 2022, the ICCB embarked on an ambitious process to create a new agency website using in-house staff and resources. Despite staff turnover and vacancy which significantly stalled progress, the agency is poised to launch its new website on July 1, 2025.

The new website will address several shortcomings and challenges associated with the user experience on the current www.iccb.org site. The new website will streamline the user navigation experience, reduce duplication of webpages and information, and significantly reduce the complexity of a website with over 700 individual pages. The new website also improves the mobile functionality, enhances language translation capabilities, and updates the search feature.

The website creation process was relaunched in late 2023 with the hiring of new staff to manage website development, social media, and graphic design. The last fifteen months of design and development have been divided into three phases summarized below.

December 2023-April 2024 – Initial troubleshooting, design and site audit.

- Troubleshooting: As the site had been sitting stagnant between department hires, investigation of the WordPress installation and design revealed a series of issues that had to be resolved for the redesign to successfully continue, including:
 - WordPress Updates - many of the website design elements were out of date and broken, requiring manual updates and maintenance to fix.
 - Update HTML Code and Create New CSS Style Sheets – website code was updated and new CSS style sheets were created and tested to correct for site speed problems, display errors, and corrupt fonts and icons.
 - Mobile Functionality Restored - mobile functionality was broken across all browsers, resulting in an unusable mobile experience across desktops, tablets, and phones, requiring the entire mobile framework of the website to be redesigned with new code.
- Website Audit: A conventional and necessary website audit had never been properly performed. Multiple Installations existed as “sub-sites” often containing redundant information and pages. These pages needed to be catalogued and cross referenced with similar pages to determine eligibility for inclusion in the new site.

April 2024-December 2024 – Redesign, Page Elimination, Functionality and Staging

- Website Redesign: A consistent look and feel was established between pages, creating a user experience that feels less disjointed, making sure fonts and colors are all similar and displayed accordingly.
- Functionality:
 - A new search bar was incorporated, replacing the previous search option that took the user “off-site” which resulted in a disjointed experience.
 - A new language translation service was installed with options including the ability to translate everything on the page, not just the body text.
 - New caching features were explored for the site to run faster and more efficiently.
 - An accordion to hide and reveal large amounts of information was encoded on text heavy pages to eliminate needless scrolling.

Item #9
March 21, 2025

- **Page Elimination:** Over 700 individual website pages were condensed to less than 70 percent of that number by implementing a new sub-navigation system, allowing many smaller pieces of information to exist on the same page, yet still giving each of these elements their own dedicated URLs to be shared easily.
- **Staging:** The agency lacked a proper staging environment for website development. Development of a staging environment was necessary so that changes to the website could easily be reversed and testing could occur outside of public view.

December 2024-Current – Server Creation, Migration, Testing, and Division Pages

- **Server Creation, Migration and Testing:** Our existing website server slowed the site down and caused “404” or “the page could not be reached” errors intermittently. The agency’s IT division created a new virtual server and migrated the website to this new server.
- **Division Page Design:** In order to aggregate the sheer volume of pages, divisions were asked to comb through their pages and condense information as well as eliminate information that was either redundant or no longer relevant. Those pages are still being worked on as individual meetings to clarify and explain have been necessary.

Divisions are continuously being refined and consolidated as necessary. The site will be tested for speed and caching prior to its migration to the primary server and “going-live.” Revisions, additions of missing data and information, and new website functions and features will be worked on throughout that initial launch and beyond. The website design process is anticipated to continue well beyond the official public launch.

Illinois Community College Board

NEW UNITS OF INSTRUCTION

The Illinois Community College Board is requested to approve new units of instruction for the following community colleges:

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the following motion be adopted:

The Illinois Community College Board hereby approves the following new units of instruction for the community colleges listed below:

PERMANENT PROGRAM APPROVAL

Kennedy-King College

- Master Builder Advanced Certificate (50 credit hours)

Lake Land College

- Criminology Security Studies Certificate (33 credit hours)

Malcolm X College

- Medical Laboratory Technician A.A.S. degree (69 credit hours)

Oakton Community College

- AI and Machine Learning Certificate (40 credit hours)

John Wood Community College

- Ag Mechanics A.A.S. degree (64 credit hours)

BACKGROUND

Kennedy-King College **Master Builder Advanced Certificate (50 credit hours)**

Program Purpose: This program will prepare individuals for entry-level employment and advancement opportunities in construction with advanced skills in carpentry, masonry, and plumbing.

Catalog Description: The Master Builder Advanced Certificate program at Dawson Technical Institute (DTI) equips students with a comprehensive skillset in carpentry, masonry, and plumbing, paving the way for lucrative and fulfilling careers in the construction industry. This innovative program integrates theoretical knowledge with hands-on training, preparing graduates for success in various construction-related roles.

Curricular Information: The curriculum requires 50 credit hours of career and technical education coursework. Career and technical coursework includes instruction in construction math and specifications, blueprint reading and specifications, hand tools and power tools, computer applications for construction, interior construction, residential carpentry, concrete framing, introductory masonry, mortar, masonry installation procedures, basic electrical theory, introductory fire protection, introductory plumbing, home plumbing systems, plumbing codes, basic arc welding, professional development for construction workers, and advanced construction safety. Assessment of student learning will be achieved through evaluation of the student's performance by program faculty during their hands-on learning labs through comprehensive skills projects.

Graduates of the program will be prepared for industry credentialing including OSHA-10 certifications in Scaffolding Safety, Scissor Lift, and ATTS Flagger. Further this program offers an educational ladder opportunity for students and graduates of the college's existing basic-level Certificates in Carpentry, Masonry, and Plumbing. Credits from the proposed program will also articulate towards the completion of the existing Construction Management A.A.S. degree, and the Associate in General Studies (A.G.S.) degree.

Justification for Credit hours required: The program exceeds 30 credit hours to wholly include the three (3) existing certificate programs. The proposed Advanced Certificate builds on the knowledge and skills acquired through completion of these basic Certificates. Advisory Committee partners believe the proposed Advanced Certificate will provide individuals with the additional skills necessary for advanced employment and for advanced placement opportunities into local apprenticeships.

Accrediting Information: Kennedy-King College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. No additional specialty accreditation is required.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Efforts: Kennedy-King College is committed to equity strategies that involve closing gaps on who enrolls, persists, and completes programs in this field of study. The college currently utilizes multiple forms of outreach with underrepresented groups in an effort to increase enrollment, retention and graduation rates. The college continues to utilize its long-standing partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) to reach the most underserved populations within the district. The college regularly promotes programs and services such as TRIO, the ACCESS Center for Disabilities, the Wellness Center, Food Pantry and Clothing Closet. Faculty monitor student progress through dedicated advising. The college continues its efforts to hire and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and administration through DEI advertising to diverse audiences, review of existing policies and practices, and providing access to DEI support activities throughout the year. The college will intentionally seek to expose program students to a diverse set of faculty within the classroom and through opportunities to hear from diverse individuals with diverse backgrounds from employers of skilled trades workers in residential and commercial construction.

Supporting Labor Market Data (including employer partners): Labor market information provided by the college supports the interest in a program in this field of study.

According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), average growth in employment of occupations related to construction and the skilled trades is expected to remain constant statewide through 2032.

Table 1: Employer Partners

Employers	Location
Laborer's International Union of North America (LIUNA)	Chicago, IL
IUOE Operating Engineers Local 150	Countryside, IL
Plumbers UA Local 130	Round Lake, IL
ComEd	Chicago, IL
Bowa Group Inc.	Chicago, IL
F.H. Paschen	Chicago, IL
Pipefitters	Chicago, IL
Ironworkers	Forrest Park, IL

Table 2: Projected Enrollments

Master Builder Adv Cert	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Full-Time Enrollments:	20	40	60
Part-Time Enrollments:	0	0	0
Completions:	10	20	30

Financial / Budgetary Information: Three (3) existing part-time faculty will be necessary to implement the program. Qualified faculty will hold current city/state licensure for specific construction trades (plumbing, masonry, general contracting/carpentry), at least five (5) years work experience, and one (1) year teaching experience is preferred. The program was developed utilizing Bluhm Foundation grant funds to create seamless pathways into construction-related occupations. New costs are associated with new faculty and no additional costs are projected to implement the proposed program. All existing resources will be utilized. This program will otherwise be fiscally supported through student tuition and fees.

Table 3: Financial Information

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Faculty Costs	\$0	\$0	\$23,200
Administrator Costs	0	0	0
Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Equipment Costs	0	0	0
Library/LRC Costs	0	0	0
Facility Costs	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
TOTAL NEW COSTS	\$0	\$0	\$23,200

Table 4: Faculty Requirements

	First Year		Second Year		Third Year	
	Full-Time	Part-time	Full-Time	Part-time	Full-Time	Part-time
New Faculty	0	0	0	0	0	1
Existing Faculty	0	3	0	3	0	3

Lake Land College
Criminology Security Studies Certificate (33 credit hours)

Program Purpose: This program will prepare individuals for entry-level employment in the security field, including public and private security, loss prevention, crime prevention, and facilities protection.

Catalog Description: The Criminology Security Studies certificate program will prepare students for career opportunities in the physical security industry. Students will gain knowledge in common core coursework in crime prevention, criminology theory, investigations, and criminal law. Additionally, students will receive coursework in topics such as loss prevention, security, and the protection of facilities. Graduates of the program would find employment in criminal justice, private security, and corporate operations.

Curricular Information: The curriculum requires 33 credit hours of career and technical education coursework. Career and technical coursework includes instruction in criminal investigations, criminal law, introductory private security, crime prevention, loss prevention, criminal evidence and procedures, liability in criminal justice, criminology, school and campus security, institutional and industrial security, and a required work-based learning experience in criminal justice. Assessment of student learning will be achieved through evaluation of the student's performance during their criminal justice internship by program faculty and worksite supervisor.

Justification for Credit hours required: The program exceeds 30 credit hours by three (3) total credit hours to include a required internship in criminology/security. Advisory Committee partners believe this work-based learning experience to be crucial for graduates to be successful in employment.

Accrediting Information: Lake Land College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. No additional specialty accreditation is required.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Efforts: Lake Land College is committed to equity strategies that involve closing gaps on who enrolls, persists, and completes programs in this field of study. The college currently utilizes multiple forms of outreach with underrepresented groups in an effort to increase enrollment, retention and graduation rates. Targeted efforts include focusing on attracting, recruiting, and retaining a diverse population of students, and within CTE programs. Lake Land College provides a multitude of services for assisting students with program completion through various student support services available on campus and virtually. This includes but is not limited to academic support and tutoring, success coaching, career coaching, accessibility services, veteran-focused services, TRIO, and the Lake Land Early Advantage program. The college continues its efforts to hire and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and administration through DEI training for search committees, advertising to diverse audiences, review of existing policies and practices, and providing access to DEI support activities throughout the year. The college will intentionally seek to expose program students to a diverse set of faculty within the classroom, employers through practical learning experiences and opportunities to hear from diverse individuals with diverse backgrounds from the various industries and employers of physical security services.

Supporting Labor Market Data (including employer partners): Labor market information provided by the college supports the interest in a program in this field of study. According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), average growth in employment of occupations related to criminal justice and private security is expected to increase by 0.62% Statewide through 2032.

Table 1: Employer Partners

Employers	Location
Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System	Mattoon, IL
Hinkle & Hinkle Resources, Investigations & Security	Fairfield, IL
Mattoon Community Unit School District 2	Mattoon, IL

Table 2: Projected Enrollments

Crim. Security Studies Cert	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Full-Time Enrollments:	10	10	10
Part-Time Enrollments:	2	2	2
Completions:	10	12	12

Financial / Budgetary Information: One (1) existing full-time faculty and three (3) existing part-time faculty will be necessary to implement the program. Qualified faculty will hold at least an Associates degree in Criminal Justice, at least two (2) years work experience, and one (1) year teaching experience is preferred. New costs are associated with new faculty and no additional costs are projected to implement the proposed program. All existing resources will be utilized. This program will otherwise be fiscally supported through student tuition and fees.

Table 3: Financial Information

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Faculty Costs	\$5,800	\$6,100	\$6,500
Administrator Costs	0	0	0
Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Equipment Costs	0	0	0
Library/LRC Costs	0	0	0
Facility Costs	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
TOTAL NEW COSTS	\$5,800	\$6,100	\$6,500

Table 4: Faculty Requirements

	First Year		Second Year		Third Year	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>
New Faculty	1	3	0	0	0	0
Existing Faculty	1	3	1	3	1	3

Malcolm X College
Medical Laboratory Technician A.A.S. (69 credit hours)

Program Purpose: This program will prepare individuals for entry-level employment as medical laboratory technicians in labs in hospitals and labs that specialize in medical and diagnostic testing.

Catalog Description: The Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT) program prepares students for all functions in the medical laboratory (clinical chemistry, coagulation, hematology, immunohematology, immunology, microbiology, and urinalysis). Detailed study of routine test procedures of moderate and high complexity. Graduates of the program will be eligible for certification through the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) and/or through the American Medical Technologists (AMT) for medical laboratory personnel.

Curricular Information: The curriculum includes 16 credit hours of required general education coursework and 53 credit hours of career and technical education coursework. Career and technical coursework includes instruction in introductory and advanced human structure, introductory and advanced microbiology, medical lab technology, urinalysis and other body fluids, introductory and advanced hematology and coagulation, introductory and advanced immunohematology, phlebotomy and phlebotomy practicum, introductory and advanced immunology, introductory and advanced clinical chemistry, and introductory and advanced levels of clinical practice. The curriculum reflects all required pre-requisites in the total credit hours. The program will prepare individuals for industry certification through either the American Society for Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) or the American Medical Technologists (AMT). Both industry organizations offer certification credentialing for graduates. Assessment of student learning will be achieved through evaluation of the student's performance in the work-based learning course(s) by program faculty and worksite supervisor.

Accrediting Information: Malcolm X College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. The program must be accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science (NAACLS) prior to accepting students.

The college is currently in the process of applying for NAACLS accreditation. Once accredited, students will be eligible to sit for related industry credentialing examinations.

Justification for Credit hours required: The proposed program exceeds 60 credit hours in order to meet NAACLS standards for Medical Laboratory Technician training and related industry credentialing. These standards include requiring specific clinical practicum and seminar coursework as reflected in the proposed curriculum.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Efforts: Malcolm X College is committed to equity strategies that involve closing gaps on who enrolls, persists, and completes programs in this field of study. The college currently utilizes multiple forms of outreach with underrepresented groups in an effort to increase enrollment, retention and graduation rates. The college continues to utilize its long-standing partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) to reach the most underserved populations within the district. The college regularly promotes programs and services such as TRIO, the ACCESS Center for Disabilities, the Wellness Center, Food Pantry and Clothing Closet. Faculty monitor student progress through dedicated advising. The college continues its efforts to hire and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and administration through DEI advertising to diverse audiences, review of existing policies and practices, and providing access to DEI support activities throughout the year. The college will intentionally seek to expose program students to a diverse set of faculty within the classroom and through opportunities to hear from diverse individuals with diverse backgrounds from employers of medical lab technicians in a variety of industry settings.

Supporting Labor Market Data (including employer partners): Labor market information provided by the college supports the interest in and the need for training programs in this field of study. According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), employment growth for “clinical laboratory technicians” is expected to increase by 3.6% statewide through 2032.

Table 1: Employer Partners

Employer	Location
University of Chicago Hospital	Chicago, IL
University of Illinois at Chicago	Chicago, IL
Rush University	Chicago, IL
Rush Oak Park	Oak Park, IL
Advocate Trinity Hospital	Chicago, IL
Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center	Chicago, IL
Advocate Good Samaritan	Downers Grove, IL
Advocate South Suburban Hospital	Hazel Crest, IL
Advocate Christ Medical Center	Rosemont, IL
Community First Medical Center	Chicago, IL
Provident Hospital of Cook County	Chicago, IL
Gottlieb Hospital	Melrose Park, IL
Loretto Hospital	Chicago, IL
MacNeal Hospital	Berwyn, IL
Mt. Sinai Hospital	Chicago, IL
Northwestern Hospital	Chicago, IL
Alverno-Presence St. Joseph	Chicago, IL
Alverno-Presence St. Mary and Elizabeth	Chicago, IL
Alverno-RMS PSC	Chicago, IL
St. Elizabeth PSC	Chicago, IL
Cook County Hospital	Chicago, IL
Roseland Hospital	Chicago, IL
St. Anthony Hospital	Chicago, IL
South Shore Hospital	Chicago, IL

Table 2: Projected Enrollments

Medical Lab Tech A.A.S.	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Full-Time Enrollments:	5	5	5
Part-Time Enrollments:	10	10	10
Completions:	-	8	9

Financial / Budgetary Information: The programs will require one (1) existing full-time faculty and one (1) existing part-time faculty the first year. The Program Director will hold at least a Masters degree in Medical Laboratory Science, hold current ASCP or AMT Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS) credentials, have at least one (1) year work experience, and at least three (3) years teaching experience. Qualified faculty will hold at least a Bachelors degree in Medical Laboratory Science, hold current ASCP or AMT MLS credentials, have at least one (1) year work experience, and one (1) year teaching experience preferred. Costs to implement the program relate primarily to faculty and equipment. Facilities including lab space that complies with accreditation guidelines is currently in place, pending the accreditation site visit. The program will be supported fiscally through student tuition and fees.

Table 3: Financial Information

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Faculty Costs	\$111,000	\$115,000	\$120,000
Administrator Costs	\$95,000	\$100,000	\$115,000
Other Personnel Costs (site coordinator)	\$80,000	\$85,000	\$90,000
Equipment Costs/Service Agreements	\$155,890	\$10,000	\$12,000
Library/LRC Costs	-	-	-
Facility Costs	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-
TOTAL NEW COSTS	\$441,890	\$300,000	\$337,000

Table 4: Faculty Requirements

	First Year		Second Year		Third Year	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-Time	Part-time	Full-Time	Part-time
New Faculty	1	0	1	0	0	0
Existing Faculty	1	1	2	1	3	1

Oakton College
AI and Machine Learning Certificate (40 credit hours)

Program Purpose: The program will prepare individuals for entry- and mid-level employment in fields such as software engineering and data science that utilize artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning.

Catalog Description: The AI and Machine Learning Certificate provides students with the essential knowledge and skills in artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies and their application in business and industry. Students will sharpen their skills in prompt engineering, study machine learning models, natural language processing, and computer vision algorithms, and, gain hands-on experience with popular programming languages, tools and platforms used in AI development. Graduates of this program will be prepared to develop intelligent systems that automate processes, enhance decision-making, and optimize operational efficiency across various industries.

Curricular Information: The curriculum requires 40 credit hours of required career and technical education coursework.

Coursework includes instruction in introductory artificial intelligence, AI ethics, introductory and advanced levels of prompt engineering, no code machine learning, natural language processing, introductory SQL programming, machine learning using Python programming, data visualization using Tableau, AI for computer vision, AI for business solutions, Python computer science, database management, job search tools and techniques, and an optional internship in AI and Machine Learning. The program was developed using National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) competencies. Assessment of student learning will be achieved through evaluation of the student's performance on comprehensive capstone assignment using a real-world AI/Machine Learning project. For those students who participate in the internship, an additional evaluation of their performance will be conducted by program faculty and worksite supervisor.

Justification for Credit hours required: The proposed program exceeds 30 credit hours to include, in whole, the existing Essential Applications of AI Certificate. This articulation, in addition to intermediate and advanced-level coursework, will prepare individuals for entry-level employment requiring additional skills and mid-level advancement opportunities. Faculty responsible for developing these programs, as supported by the existing Program Advisory Committee, incorporated the knowledge and skills necessary to meet local demand for related employment.

Accrediting Information: Oakton College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. No additional specialty accreditation is required.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Efforts: Oakton College is committed to equity strategies that involve closing gaps on who enrolls, persists, and completes programs in this field of study. The college currently utilizes multiple forms of outreach with underrepresented groups in an effort to increase enrollment, retention and graduation rates. Targeted efforts include focusing on attracting, recruiting, and retaining a diverse population of students, and within CTE programs. Student academic support services include academic support and tutoring, success coaching, career coaching, accessibility services, veteran-focused services, and the TRIO program. The college continues its efforts to hire and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and administration through DEI training for search committees, advertising to diverse audiences, review of existing policies and practices, and providing access to DEI support activities throughout the year. The college will intentionally seek to expose program students to a diverse set of faculty within the classroom, employers through internships, and opportunities to hear from diverse individuals with diverse backgrounds from the various industries and employers of professionals educated and trained using AI and machine learning skills.

Supporting Labor Market Data (including employer partners): Labor market information provided by the college supports the interest in additional educational programs in this field of study. According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), growth in the employment of occupations utilizing AI and Machine Learning ranges between 19-30% statewide through 2032. The proposed program provides an educational ladder opportunity for students and/or graduates of the college's existing Essential Applications of AI Certificate program.

Table 1: Employer Partners

Employers	Location
National Futures Association	Chicago, IL
Allstate Insurance	Northbrook, IL
Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield	Chicago, IL
Emergency Nurses Association	Des Plaines, IL
Inference Analytics and AI	Chicago, IL
HiPoint & SnipBack AI	Des Plaines, IL
Nutanix	Mount Prospect, IL
LOGS Legal Group Network	Bannockburn, IL
Steersman Company	Deerfield, IL
Enterprise Auto Product Management	Barrington, IL
Global Project Management Services	Slidell, LA

Table 2: Projected Enrollments

AI/Machine Learning Cert.	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Full-Time Enrollments:	18	36	42
Part-Time Enrollments:	0	0	0
Completions:	0	18	18

Financial / Budgetary Information: One (1) new part-time faculty and two (2) existing part-time faculty will be necessary to implement the program. Qualified faculty will hold at least an Bachelors degree in Computer Information Science or related field, at least one (1) year of work experience, and one (1) year teaching experience preferred. This program will otherwise be fiscally supported through student tuition and fees.

Table 3: Financial Information

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Faculty Costs	\$33,800	\$0	\$0
Administrator Costs	0	0	0
Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Equipment Costs	0	0	0
Library/LRC Costs	0	0	0
Facility Costs	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
TOTAL NEW COSTS	\$33,800	\$0	\$0

Table 4: Faculty Requirements

	First Year		Second Year		Third Year	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>
New Faculty	0	1	0	0	0	0
Existing Faculty	0	2	0	3	0	3

John Wood Community College
Ag Mechanics A.A.S. (64 credit hours)

Program Purpose: This program will prepare individuals for entry-level employment and career advancement in the agricultural mechanics industry.

Catalog Description: The Ag Mechanics A.A.S. degree is designed to prepare individuals for careers that support the agriculture sales and service industry. Students will receive a strong understanding of the field of agriculture, technical skills to service and repair equipment, and obtain a commercial drivers license (CDL). This degree prepares students for employment in various fields in agricultural sales and service, repair and maintenance of diesel-powered equipment.

Curricular Information: The curriculum includes 17 credit hours of required general education coursework and 47 credit hours of career and technical education coursework. Career and technical coursework includes instruction in crop management technology, truck driver training fundamentals and operations, introductory and advanced levels of diesel technology, introductory and advanced levels of fluid power technology (hydraulics and pneumatics), maintenance and repair welding, ag mechanization skills, ag finance and records, and a required work-based learning experience related to ag mechanics. The curriculum reflects all required pre-requisites in the total credit hours. The program will prepare individuals for taking the Commercial Drivers License (CDL) exam through the Illinois Secretary of State. Assessment of student learning will be achieved through evaluation of the student's performance in the work-based learning course by program faculty and worksite supervisor.

Accrediting Information: John Wood Community College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. No further specialized accreditation is required.

Justification for Credit hours required: The proposed program exceeds 60 credit hours by four (4) credit hours to include a work-based learning internship course. This content was identified by local employer partners as critical for the student's success in entry-level and advanced employment.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Efforts: John Wood Community College is committed to equity strategies that involve closing gaps on who enrolls, persists, and completes programs in this field of study. The college currently utilizes multiple forms of outreach with underrepresented groups in an effort to increase enrollment, retention and graduation rates. The college continues its efforts to hire and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and administration through DEI advertising to diverse audiences, review of existing policies and practices, and providing access to DEI support activities throughout the year. The college will intentionally seek to expose program students to a diverse set of faculty within the classroom and through opportunities to hear from diverse individuals with diverse backgrounds from employers of ag mechanics in a variety of agriculture service areas.

Supporting Labor Market Data (including employer partners): Labor market information provided by the college supports the interest in and the need for training programs in this field of study. According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), employment growth for occupations related to ag mechanics is expected to increase between 1.6 - 9.4% statewide through 2032. The proposed degree program provides an educational ladder opportunity for students and graduates of the College's existing Certificate programs in Ag Applications, Diesel Technology, and Truck Driver training.

Table 1: Employer Partners

Employer	Location
Birkey's	Quincy, IL
Heritage Tractor	Quincy, IL
Beard Implement	Multiple locations, IL
Jenner Ag	Multiple locations, IL

Table 2: Projected Enrollments

Ag Mechanics A.A.S.	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Full-Time Enrollments:	5	10	10
Part-Time Enrollments:	2	4	5
Completions:	-	5	5

Financial / Budgetary Information: The programs will require six (6) existing full-time faculty and one (1) existing part-time faculty the first year. Qualified Agriculture faculty will hold at least a Masters degree in Agriculture Sciences, have three (3) years work experience, and at least three (3) years teaching experience. Qualified faculty the areas of diesel, industrial, and welding technology will hold at least a Certificate, while an Associates degree is preferred, in their field, have at least one (1) year work experience, and one (1) year teaching experience preferred. No new costs to implement the program are anticipated during the first three years. All facilities and equipment resources are currently in place and will be shared with existing programs. The program will be supported fiscally through student tuition and fees.

Table 3: Financial Information

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Faculty Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0
Administrator Costs	-	-	-
Other Personnel Costs	-	-	-
Equipment Costs/Service Agreements	-	-	-

Item #10.1
March 21, 2025

Library/LRC Costs	-	-	-
Facility Costs	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-
TOTAL NEW COSTS	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 4: Faculty Requirements

	<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>		<u>Third Year</u>	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-Time	Part-time	Full-Time	Part-time
New Faculty	0	0	0	0	0	0
Existing Faculty	6	1	6	1	6	1

Illinois Community College Board

**ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD
RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

The Illinois Community College Board has statutory authority to “recognize” community colleges for their compliance with state statutes and standards. Based on a five-year cycle, ICCB staff conduct recognition evaluations to assure that colleges are in compliance with the standards. Standards identified for focused review during Fiscal Years 2021 – 2025 for Illinois Valley Community College and Lincoln Land Community College include the following categories: Academic, Student Services/Academic Support, Finance/Facilities, and Institutional Research/Reporting. These same standards are used by each district in a self-evaluation that is submitted to ICCB prior to the staff evaluation.

During Fiscal Year 2024, Illinois Valley Community College and Lincoln Land Community College underwent an in-depth recognition evaluation. The colleges submitted a thorough self-evaluation; ICCB staff conducted internal evaluations of all required college documents and a college finance site visit was conducted. This agenda item not only presents the staff recommendations for the colleges that completed the evaluation but gives background on the recognition evaluation and approval process for the Board’s information.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the following motion be adopted:

The Illinois Community College Board hereby grants a status of “recognition continued” to the following districts:

Illinois Valley Community College, District 513
Lincoln Land Community College, District 526

BACKGROUND

Recognition is a statutory term describing the status of a district which meets instructional, administrative, financial, facility and equipment standards as established by the Illinois Community College Board (110 ILCS Section 805/2-12f and 805/2-15). Community colleges must be recognized to be eligible for state funding. Once a college district has been recognized by the ICCB, that recognition status is continued unless, action is taken by the Board to interrupt it. To determine a district's recognition status, the ICCB conducts periodic evaluations. The objectives of the recognition evaluation include 1) determination of a district's compliance with the Public Community College Act and ICCB Administrative Rules; 2) the provision of assistance to districts in achieving compliance with the Act and Rules; 3) the identification of issues which may be of concern to the community college system and the gathering of basic data about these issues; and 4) the identification of exemplary district practices/programs that can be shared with other districts. Based on a five-year cycle, ICCB staff conducts recognition evaluations to assure that districts are in compliance with selected standards.

All districts are evaluated on a select number of standards during the same five-year cycle. ICCB staff makes an assessment on each individual standard and on a global basis considering all focused and non-focused standards. On individual standards districts are identified as either in compliance or not in compliance. Compliance recommendations require the college to take immediate action to adhere to a particular law or administrative rule, and advisory recommendations are suggestions by staff to improve upon a current process or practice. Advisory recommendations are not mandatory and do not affect a college's overall recognition status.

At the conclusion of the recognition review, the ICCB staff presents a report to the Board and the college to summarize the evaluation. Based on the report, the Board may take one of three types of action:

Recognition Continued – The district generally meets ICCB statutory laws and administrative rules. A district which has been granted a status of “recognition continued” is entitled to receive ICCB grants for which it is otherwise entitled and eligible.

Recognition Continued-with Conditions – The district does not meet ICCB standards. A district which has been assigned the status of “recognition continued-with conditions” is entitled to receive ICCB grants for which it is otherwise entitled and eligible, but it is given a specified time to resolve the conditions which led to the assignment of that status. A follow-up evaluation is scheduled no sooner than three nor longer than nine months after ICCB action on the assignment to determine the district's progress in resolving the conditions.

Recognition Interrupted – The district fails to take corrective action to resolve the conditions placed upon it under “recognition continued-with conditions” within a prescribed time period. A district which has been assigned a status of “recognition interrupted” may apply for recognition at such time as all requirements set forth by the ICCB have been satisfied. A district will have state funding suspended on a pro rata, per diem basis for the period of time for which such status is in effect.



RECOGNITION REPORT

LINCOLN LAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 2025

**Illinois Community College Board
Recognition Report
For Lincoln Land Community College
February 2025**

Introduction

During fiscal year 2023-24, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) conducted a recognition evaluation of Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC), District 526. Due to the number and type of compliance findings in this report, the ICCB staff will recommend that the ICCB issue a finding of *Recognition Continued* to Lincoln Land Community College. The information below describes the recognition process. The report following addresses specific compliance and advisory recommendations.

Recognition is a statutory term describing the status of a district that meets instructional, administrative, financial, facility, and equipment standards as established by the ICCB. A favorable recognition status is a condition of state funding eligibility. There are three categories of recognition status.

- *Recognition Continued*- The district generally meets ICCB standards.
- *Recognition Continued-with Conditions*- The district generally does not meet ICCB standards.
- *Recognition Interrupted*- The district fails to take corrective action to resolve the conditions placed upon it under “recognition continued-with conditions” within a prescribed period.

The standards selected for review during the current cycle include four categories: 1) Academic, 2) Student Services/Academic Support, 3) Finance/Facilities, and 4) Institutional Research/Reporting. The report focuses on the findings and recommendations for each standard. These findings are based on the specific rule(s) or statute(s) being examined as a part of the appropriate standard. For each standard the college may receive one of two types of recommendations: compliance or advisory.

- **Compliance Recommendations** are those for which the college was found to be out of compliance with a given state statute or administrative rule.
- **Advisory Recommendations** consist of instances where the review team identified areas that it believes would be beneficial for the college to examine or pursue, but action is not required.

The staff of the Illinois Community College Board wishes to thank the college for its assistance and efforts in conducting this review. The Board acknowledges that the college is involved in numerous positive activities, processes, and initiatives not reflected in the report and commends the institution for its efforts on behalf of students.

Evaluation Results and Recommendations

1. Instruction

1. Degrees and Certificates

A comparison between Lincoln Land Community College's 2023-2024 catalog and the ICCB Curriculum Master File indicates that all degree and certificate programs have been approved by ICCB. All active and approved degrees and certificates fall within the required credit hour ranges as defined in the ICCB Administrative Rules Section 1501.302 a)3)A)i). No discrepancies between the printed college catalog and the curriculum master file were identified.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

2. Articulation

Lincoln Land Community College offers the Associate in Arts (A.A.), the Associate in Science (A.S.), the Associate in Fine Arts (A.F.A.), the Associate in Engineering Science (A.E.S.), and the Associate in General Studies (A.G.S.). Specific degree requirements parallel recommendations of the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI).

According to the ICCB Program Approval Manual, for courses that are offered as part of a transfer program that are not IAI-approved, community colleges are required to keep current (within the *last five years*) articulation documents on file and available upon request from the ICCB. Evidence of articulation includes signed Form 13's or documentation from Transferology indicating a current articulation match.

According to the requisite Recognition standard, the college has provided documentation of articulation for 20 of the 20 baccalaureate/transfer courses requested. Per the college, one course is being withdrawn due to lack of interest. A review of the college's evidence of articulation (Form 13) submissions, IAI codes, and/or Transferology documentation indicates that 19 of 20 courses submitted had the required current transfer agreements in place.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

3. Academic Control

The institution maintains academic control of the units of instruction. The college reviewed Curriculum and Academic Standards processes as well as board policies related to Academic Services. Additionally, the college reviewed several processes related to dual credit. Faculty maintain responsibility for curriculum design and delivery. Multiple stakeholders review curricular changes, revisions, and new programs including those from academic departments, divisions, and within Student Services.

The college has a process for instructor evaluation, as defined in the collective bargaining agreement. In addition, admission, course placement, and graduation requirements are consistent with requirements of the Public Community College Act and ICCB Administrative Rules. The college has reviewed placement requirements and has incorporated standards related to multiple measures placement as indicated in the Developmental Education Reform Act.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

4. Curriculum

4a) A comparison between Lincoln Land Community College's college catalog and the ICCB Curriculum Master File indicates that all degree programs are within the range of total number of credit hours required for completion of an associate degree curriculum. All active and approved degrees fall within the required credit hour ranges as defined in the ICCB Administrative Rules Section 1501.302, all career and technical education degree offerings are aligned with a career pathway, and all plans of study are aligned with a transfer pathway.

4b) The college indicated there is a systemic process in place to identify the local, state, and federal standards by which curriculum is developed including any associated program accreditation (optional or required) for students to earn related industry-recognized credentials. Furthermore, multiple CTE programs offer stackable credentials, from short-term to advanced certificates to an A.A.S. degree, many of which lead to industry-recognized credentials.

No discrepancies between the college catalog and the ICCB Curriculum Master File beyond what the college identified in their self-evaluation were noted.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

5. Dual Credit

As part of Lincoln Land Community College's 2024 Recognition review, the following dual credit information was examined to determine if institutional policies and practices are in compliance with ICCB Administrative Rules 1501.313: 1) the college's self-evaluation, 2) data from the ICCB Annual Course submission, and 3) an audit of student qualifications and faculty credentials. To examine student qualifications, ICCB utilized the Annual Course submission to select 100 dual credit transfer (1.1 PCS) and career and technical education (1.2 PCS) courses for review; 50 from fiscal year 2023 and 50 from fiscal year 2024. The college was then required to conduct an audit using the dual credit sample and provide information related to student qualifications, relevant pre-requisites,

and placement policies. The college was also required to provide a list of all instructors teaching dual credit courses in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, including their credentials.

State Laws and Regulations and Accreditation Standards

Based on the review, staff concluded that the college adheres to all state laws, regulations, and accreditation standards. Dual credit policy at the college is conducted in accordance with the Dual Credit Quality Act, the ICCB Administrative Rules, and the rules set forth by the Higher Learning Commission. Lincoln Land Community College reviewed and updated their dual credit process in both the spring and summer of 2023. Additionally, the college provided a sample of current Memorandums of Understanding.

Instructors

During fiscal years 2023 through 2024, it was noted that one instructor was not qualified to teach dual credit courses. Staff determined that all other instructors appeared to hold the proper qualifications to teach 1.1 dual credit coursework. It was also reported that 36 instructors taught career and technical education (1.2) dual credit courses. Based on the information provided, ICCB staff determined that all instructors met the minimum 2,000 hours of relevant occupational experience required to teach 1.2 dual credit coursework.

Students.

After a review of the college self-study report and the additional audit materials requested by the ICCB, it was determined that all students from fiscal year 2023 and 2024 met the required placement test score and or prerequisite coursework.

Course Offerings and Requirements.

Courses were selected from transfer courses and career and technical education courses consistent with requirements for dual credit offerings. The course prerequisites (including placement policies), descriptions, outlines, and student outcomes utilized for these courses aligned with the courses offered on campus and at other off-campus sites.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

6. Assessment Plans

The college has a systematic process to assess student learning in each degree and certificate program it offers. The college has built a structure and timeline that supports the continuous improvement of instruction. Academic assessment is led by faculty and supported by academic deans and the Learning Outcomes Assessment Team (LOAT). The college has outlined a process for curriculum mapping aligned to student learning outcomes, including the general education program.

The college incorporates the use of benchmarking, AAC&U's VALUE rubrics, programmatic assessments, curricular mapping and LOAT General Education assessment schedule as part of its on-going assessment efforts. These results may be shared at the monthly LOAT meeting by department assessment coordinators.

The college has incorporated multiple measures for math and English placement into their curriculum. Having been in place for approximately three to five years, the college will begin the process to assess if adjustments are necessary for placement into introductory courses.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

7. Student Evaluation

Lincoln Land Community College has a well-documented policy for evaluating and recording student performance. The evaluation process is directly tied to the official course learning objectives and goals. Both faculty and student handbooks were thoroughly reviewed to ensure that the practices comply with and align with ICCB Rule 1501.405 as per the College Policy and Administrative Procedure.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

8. Faculty Qualifications/Policies

The college employs highly qualified faculty for each of its units of instruction. The faculty credentialing policies meet the minimum requirements of the ICCB Administrative Rules, and the institution has in place a credential verification process to ensure that faculty maintain appropriate credentials for all units of instruction. The college maintains resources for professional development activities for faculty that focus on enhancing teaching and scholarship. Throughout each semester, the Academic Innovation and eLearning department (AieL) develops workshops and/or coordinates with faculty and staff to offer workshops led by faculty or presenters from outside entities a few times a month on topics ranging from assessment to instructional technology to accessibility standards. The college recently hired a Director of Faculty Development to focus faculty professional development on identified areas of need, specifically on active learning and increasing teacher presence within online instruction.

The ICCB staff requested that the college provide faculty credentials to verify that the instructors of record met the criteria. ICCB staff requested the transcripts of a listing of active courses that were taught during the review period to confirm faculty qualifications.

The college provided transcripts and relevant work experience evidence for all of the courses requested. The ICCB review of the faculty transcripts provided by the college showed that all faculty members appear to meet the faculty requirements outlined by the ICCB.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

9. Cooperative Agreements and Contracts

As part of the recognition review for standard 9, Cooperative Agreements and Contracts, Lincoln Land Community College reviewed their college procedures, website, college catalog, and pertinent information regarding cooperative agreements. Currently, the college participates in an agreement with the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives for Electrical Distribution Lineman units of instruction. The college also participates in the Comprehensive Agreement Regarding the Expansion of Educational Resources (CAREER Agreement) which has been adopted by all 39 Illinois community college districts.

The following items of the college were reviewed: self-study, the college's website, and the college's course catalog (online). Lincoln Land Community College participates in the Comprehensive Agreement Regarding the Expansion of Educational Resources (CAREER Agreement) which has been approved by the ICCB and agreed upon by the 39 community college districts in the state. The course catalog does make mention of the use of chargebacks.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Advisory Recommendation: Note that as of January 1, 2024, Public Act 103-0159 removes chargeback provisions from the community college act and codifies the CAREER agreement into statute.

College Response:

10. Program Review/Results

After reviewing Lincoln Land Community College's program review process and submissions, staff concluded that all instructional programs have been reviewed utilizing a systematic, college-wide process. The college meets the minimum requirements of need, cost, and quality for evaluating their instructional programs. Program reviews submitted are thorough in nature supporting the notion that there is adequate coordination and support from administrative leadership and institutional effectiveness. The college includes student and academic support services and administrative functions in their review cycle.

Over the past five years, one discrepancy between the college's program review submissions and the ICCB five-year program review cycle was identified. On April 7, 2023, Lincoln Land Community College's state fiscal year 2021 program review submission received a compliance finding for not reviewing and submitting a program review for Business Services. Under the ICCB SFY2017-2021 Program Review Manual, Business Services was a required area for review under Student and Academic Support Services. The ICCB required that the college submit the review in either the state fiscal year 2023 or state fiscal year 2024 cycle to remedy the compliance finding. Such review was not submitted.

Compliance Recommendation: Under Section 1501.303 (d) (1) and (3), the college is to review programs, including student service areas, at least once every five years, adhering to the ICCB published program review schedule, unless an exception is granted. Lincoln Land Community College did not request such an extension, nor did it review Business Services in state fiscal year 2021 or thereafter, as required.

College Response: In FY 2021, Lincoln Land Community College submitted its Program Review, and a review of business services was not included. Moving forward, the college will exercise greater care in review of its Program Review to ensure all areas are reviewed and included in our report.

2. STUDENT SERVICES/ACADEMIC SUPPORT

1. Student Services/Academic Support

Part 1A: Advising/Counseling

The advising, counseling, and transfer program at Lincoln Land Community College is designed to support all students with their academic planning and transitional needs, helping them succeed throughout their program. The college provides student advising and counseling through an appreciative advising model.

Upon admission, undergraduate students are assigned to a student success coach (academic advisor) based on their program of study or primary location. First-time college students are required to meet with their coach before registering for their first semester. The success coach assists students in creating a plan to complete their academic program and serves as the primary contact for addressing both academic and non-academic challenges.

Appointments are available in person or virtually, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with extended evening and Saturday hours during peak periods.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

B: Financial Aid

Lincoln Land Community College provided a holistic review of its Financial Aid Department. Financial aid information is disseminated to all students upon admission. Students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) will receive an award letter outlining the available aid through the student portal within three business days of completing their application. The financial aid office provides dedicated advisors specializing in military benefits and offers in-person and virtual assistance for FAFSA completion. Furthermore, the office organizes community and school events to promote FAFSA awareness.

Collaborations with the LLCC Foundation and grant program leaders ensure comprehensive financial support for students. The office operates from Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with extended hours during peak periods and the option for appointments outside of regular hours. Students may engage with the office through email,

text, the student portal, or in person and upload documents online. All services are designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Advisory Recommendation: The college did not report on their current loan default rate. The ICCB recommends including this data in future reports.

College Response:

C: Career Placement

In 2022, a cross-departmental team at the college reviewed career development efforts, discovering overlapping activities across Student Services, Academics, and Advancement. In spring 2023, these departments were reorganized into a unified Career Center, combining career coaching, internships, and employer relations to enhance student services.

The Career Center supports student employment through several initiatives:

1. **Career Fairs:** Hosting industry-specific and general career fairs, with plans for expansion based on employer input.
2. **Resume and Cover Letter Development:** Collaborating with academic programs to integrate career coaching into coursework and co-curricular activities, such as one-on-one resume writing sessions for students.
3. **Online Job Board:** Transitioning to Handshake for better analytics and ease of use, promoting it through incentives and events, resulting in over 800 student accounts.
4. **Work-Based Learning Opportunities:** Partnering with employers to provide internships and cooperative work experiences.
5. **Job Search Assistance:** Connecting students with employment opportunities through various services.

These efforts aim to improve career development programming and strengthen employer engagement for student success.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

D: Support Services

Lincoln Land Community College offers a comprehensive range of support services to help students succeed academically, financially, and personally:

1. **Targeted Support Programs:**
 - **TRiO:** Academic support for low-income, first-generation, and students with disabilities.
 - **WEI (Workforce Equity Initiative):** Academic, financial, and placement support for minoritized and low-income students.

- **PATH (Pipeline for Advancement of the Healthcare Workforce):** Resources for healthcare training programs, including compensation for basic needs during training.
- 2. **Liaisons and Transportation Assistance:**
 - A **homeless and housing liaison** and **dream resource liaison** provide referrals and support.
 - Transportation assistance includes bus passes, Uber gift cards, and help with gas and minor car repairs.
- 3. **Student Life and Engagement:**
 - The Student Life Office organizes leadership development, multicultural programming, and social events, as well as student clubs like the Gay Straight Alliance and Chemistry Club.
 - A campus **food pantry** is available for students in need.
- 4. **Mental Health and Academic Success:**
 - A **Student Care Coordinator** connects students with mental health resources and offers skill-building workshops.
 - The **Center for Academic Success** includes Writing and Math Centers, peer tutoring, online support, and a College Success Skills course.
- 5. **Childcare Services:**
 - The **Child Development Center** provides childcare for students' children (ages 15 months to kindergarten), including free or reduced-cost care through a CCAMPIS grant for Pell-eligible students.

These services aim to foster academic, financial, and personal well-being and ensure that all students have the resources needed for success.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

2. Student Programming, Co-Curricular Activities, and Support Services for Students

Lincoln Land Community College provides various co-curricular learning opportunities aligned with its mission and values. Key offerings include multicultural programming, such as African American History and Hispanic Heritage activities, tied to the classroom curriculum.

LLCC's academic support services foster co-curricular learning through:

- **Center for Academic Success:** Offers tutoring, workshops, and embedded classroom tutoring.
- **Math Center:** Provides math-specific tutoring.
- **Writing Center:** Assists students in writing-intensive classes or other writing needs, including embedded tutoring.
- **Student Technology Center:** Helps students with course-related software.
- **Library:** Offers research assistance and other resources.

These services undergo program reviews to develop a logic model for improving co-curricular activities and assessment.

Students can also engage in clubs, organizations, and honor societies like Phi Theta Kappa, which provide additional learning and service opportunities. The college has worked on defining co-curricular learning, establishing assessment mechanisms, and incorporating it into strategic goals, with plans to expand service-learning and work-based learning opportunities.

LLCC also supports students through six athletic programs, making college accessible to underrepresented groups. Accessibility Services ensures accommodations for students with disabilities, offering support during and beyond business hours and leveraging accessible technologies for classroom needs.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

3. Admission of Students and Student Records

All community colleges in Illinois have an open admissions policy. Admission to the college does not ensure admission to a particular course or program of study. The procedures for students to enroll at the college are outlined in the college catalog and the website for each program. Students include high school graduates or the equivalent, others 18 years of age and older, non-graduates aged 17 who have severed their connection with the high school system, and students younger than 18 who meet established criteria.

College credit is accepted for transfer from institutions with regional accreditation, covering the student's enrollment time. The Admission and Registration Office maintains student records, upholds admission policies and standards, and evaluates transcripts. ARO supports the college's admission policies by accurately recording student type, placement, and proficiency information.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

3. FINANCE/FACILITIES

1. Credit Hour Claim Verification

The (ICCB staff conducted an on-site visit at Lincoln Land Community College on November 25, 2024. During this visit, ICCB staff performed a finance and facilities assessment and discussed the processes relating to financial planning and credit hour claims. The college performed a demonstration of key systems to show how students are coded in the systems for residency and reporting credit hour claims. ICCB staff reviewed a sample of credit hours reported and certified by the college as semester unrestricted (SU) and semester restricted (SR). The credit hour certifications are used by ICCB annually to determine system funding calculations and college allocations.

The college has documented and verifiable processes for proper classification of credit hours reported to ICCB and for determining residency. The college makes a distinction between residency classifications for tuition and state funding purposes. When residency comes into question, students are asked for verification. This can be a voter's registration card, tax filing, or other supporting documents that the student provides to the college for proof of residence. These processes were evaluated, and no evidence of inaccuracies was found.

ICCB staff reviewed the Instructional Credit Hour Claim Reports to select a sample of individual course sections per funded instructional category, semester, and student residency classification to verify the accuracy of the submissions that are used to compile the certified reports (SU/SR claim reports). The sample consisted of 18 course sections and 282 students in fiscal year 2023 for the summer, fall, and spring semesters. Mid-term class lists, final grade sheets, and transcripts were reviewed for reporting accuracy. Information reported on the SU/SR claim reports agreed with the certified mid-term class lists.

Interdepartmental communications were appropriate regarding changes in laws, regulations, or internal operations that could impact the SU/SR claim reports. ICCB has not found any evidence that the college failed to meet the reporting or certification requirements over the period of the review. Overall, the college has generally complied with applicable laws, regulations, and rules for claiming credit hours for funding. Based on the review, ICCB staff finds, with a confidence level of 95 percent, that compliance with the reporting of certified hours is between 95 and 100 percent accurate. (Note: the statistical margin of error or confidence interval is five percent.)

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Midterm Certification

According to 110/ILCS 805/2-16.02, courses eligible for reimbursement are those which the district pays 50 percent or more of the program costs from unrestricted funds.

To determine the college's procedure for determining reimbursement eligibility, a written explanation of the methodology used to classify student credit hours, a listing of faculty which identified the percent of salary applied for selected course sections, and the midterm certification instructions sent to faculty were reviewed. Mid-term class lists and final grade sheets were reviewed and compared to ICCB internal reports.

Based on the review, instructors for SU courses were funded with more than 50 percent of unrestricted funds and appropriately reported. However, the college does not use a certification statement on the midterm class roster as required in the administrative rules.

Compliance Recommendation: The college must ensure the certification statement complies with 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1501.501, "Midterm Class List Certification" and 1501.507(c), "Student Requirements". At midterm and at the end of each term, instructors are required to review and approve a certification statement such as "*I hereby certify that the above-listed students, except where noted otherwise, are currently enrolled and actively pursuing completion of the course at midterm, and I have proper documentation to support this certification.*"

College Response: Lincoln Land Community College will ensure compliance with 23 Ill. Admin Code 1501.501 by having instructors review and approve a certification statement in the process of submitting midterm participation. Our process has been amended and such a certification is included.

Student Residency

The written procedure for residency verification and a summary of tuition/fee rates charged to students in-district, out-of-district, and out-of-state were reviewed. Student demographics and transcript information were reviewed to support residency status, funded instructional category placement, and final grade postings. To determine if certain categories of students were properly excluded from the reimbursable credit hour claim report, ICCB staff reviewed samples with specific criteria.

Based on the review, the college properly classifies students for reporting purposes. However, the college does not have a detailed residency procedure that addresses all of the provisions for general, district, special, and military students.

Compliance Recommendation: The college must ensure its residency procedure complies with 110 ILCS 805/2-16.02, 23 Admin. Code 1501.501, and P.A. 102-800.

College Response: Lincoln Land Community College is revising the associated Board Policy to comply with 110 ILCS 805/2-16.02, 23 Admin. Code 1501.501, and P.A. 102-800, which should be complete and in place by June 2025.

Course Repeats

The credit hour claims written procedure for excluding students who repeat a course was reviewed. Based on this review, there is a suitable process and procedure in place.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment

The written procedure for dual credit and dual enrollment was reviewed along with intent to enroll instructions, enrollment forms, and a data sample. Based on the review, no issues were found.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

2. Financial Planning

The Facilities Master Plan, annual budgets, close-out reports, uniform financial statements, strategic planning reports, certification of publications, instructional cost reports, Tax and Budget Survey reports, Certificates of Tax Levy, and annual external audits were reviewed.

All college departments are included in the financial planning and accountability process. Documentation on the college's website confirms that the Board of Trustees meets and discusses financial conditions and strategies monthly.

Report submissions were made in a timely manner. ICCB staff did not find any evidence indicating issues with financial planning requirements.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

3. Financial Compliance Annual External Audit

For fiscal years 2021 through 2023, ICCB staff reviewed the annual external audits and consolidated year-end financial reporting (CYEFR) reconciliations and evaluated overall outcomes and timeliness of completion.

To ensure that any audit findings indicating the need for actions were addressed, evidence of corrective action plans (CAP) were reviewed by ICCB staff for all findings.

There were only five findings noted over the three-year period. The CAP for each finding was provided and appears to be adequate. The college is developing a process to review and approve the management decision letter (MDL) in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) system.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Advisory Recommendation: ICCB recommends the college continue developing a process to close audits in the GATA system.

College Response:

4. A & B Facilities

A. Approval of Construction Projects

ICCB's administrative rules at 23 Ill/ Adm. Code 1501.602b require an updated District Site and Construction Master Plan be filed with ICCB by July 1st of the year in which the district undergoes its recognition evaluation. It should be updated when a project is completed or added to the plan. Due to the pandemic, ICCB has made this plan not due until July 1, 2022. The college submitted its 2024 Facilities Master Plan and its self-study, which were found to be in good order.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

B. Facilities Data Submissions:

Effective January 21, 2021, regulations on reporting requirements at Ill. Adm. Code Title 23, Section 1501.607 were revised. The requirement to submit reports "F3, F6, B3, and R3" for facility inventory records and building layouts was eliminated.

Annual facility data, project updates, estimated deferred maintenance, annual cost/backlog, and local projects (completed and in progress) reports are required to be submitted to ICCB. The college maintained and reported facilities data requests, reports, and other information to the ICCB in formats specified in accordance with standards and principles developed by the ICCB. ICCB did not find any evidence that the college failed to meet the submission requirements for the review period.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

4a. Employee Contracts

According to 110 ILCS 805/3-65, an employment contract entered into with an employee of a community college must not exceed four years and must not include any automatic rollover clauses. All employee contracts, renewals, amendments, addendums, and extensions must be made during an open board meeting and made available to the public.

According to 110 ILCS 805/3-70, employment contracts must be transparent. Actions such as performance-based bonuses, incentive-based compensation, and final actions of the employment contract must be made during an open board meeting, approved by the board, and made available to the public. Board minutes, board packets, and annual performance criteria and goals must be made available to the public on the district's official website.

According to 110 ILCS 805/3-75, an annual performance review of the president must be completed. This annual review must be considered when the board contemplates a bonus, raise, or severance agreement.

According to 5 ILCS 415/10, an employment contract entered into, amended, renewed, or extended with an employee of a community college that includes a provision for severance pay must limit the severance pay to an amount not exceeding 20 weeks of compensation. The employment contract must also specify severance pay is prohibited when a contract employee is fired by the district for misconduct.

Copies of employee contracts, renewals, amendments, and extensions were requested and reviewed for compliance. Board meeting minutes and public notices were also reviewed. Based on the review, there is only one contractual employee position. This is for the President's position. The employment contract met most specifications and most notice provisions required by law. The contract was amended several times with the original start date of 2014. Therefore, the addendums were continuing the contract instead of creating a new contract with a contract length not to exceed four years. In addition, the annual performance goals set for the president each year must be made available to the public on the district's official website.

Compliance Recommendation: The college must ensure employment contracts comply with 110 ILCS 805, 5 ILCS 415 and 23 IL Adm. Code 1501.803 and address the active contract that does not meet the criteria in those laws and regulations. The annual performance goals need to be made available per 23 IL Adm. Code 1501.804.

College Response: Lincoln Land Community College will identify the appropriate place on the district's official website to post the contract and annual performance goals and will post to ensure compliance with 110 ILCS 805, 5 ILCS 415 and 23 IL Adm. Code 1501.803.

4. INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH/REPORTING

General Reporting Requirements

The latest five years of Illinois Community College Board data submissions by Lincoln Land Community College were reviewed—generally this includes fiscal years 2020-2024 unless otherwise stated. Submissions were evaluated on consistency, accuracy, completeness, and timeliness. Timeliness is based on the date of the final submission, not the date the original submission is received. A detailed analysis of individual data submissions is in Appendix A.

ICCB data timeliness and accuracy are vitally important as these submissions are used extensively by ICCB staff to fulfill external reporting requirements on behalf of the colleges. As a value-added service to the colleges ICCB staff reconfigure and combine information collected through routine ICCB submissions into a format that meets the needs of external entities. This approach minimizes duplicate reporting and serves to further strengthen data submission quality and comprehensiveness. For example, ICCB uses information from college

submissions to provide multiple federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reports. It is particularly important to meet federal IPEDS collection deadlines because federal officials have the authority to fine colleges for failure to furnish timely data. There are 14 IPEDS surveys across the fall, winter, and spring collections, and the potential fine in 2024 is up to \$69,733 for each violation. The fine changes annually based on an inflation index. ICCB data also are used in federal Perkins Postsecondary and Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II) performance reporting. Failure to meet these federal reporting deadlines could delay the availability of funds and would remove the state from eligibility for incentive dollars.

Lincoln Land Community College officials have been successful in meeting federal submission timelines over the past five fiscal years. Over the last five years, Lincoln Land Community College officials have met ICCB deadlines for most submissions. Overall, Lincoln Land Community College's final data submissions have been accurate and complete. An Appendix Table contains additional details on actual submission dates.

Part A. Student Data Reporting. The **Annual Enrollment and Completion Data (A1)** submission is the most complex and lengthy of the state data submissions. Accuracy of final submissions has been good over the timeframe of the study. Final A1 submissions did not contain any critical errors in four of the five years reviewed; the fiscal year 2022 submission contained one critical error. This data was verified by college officials as valid and accurate. Lincoln Land Community College's A1 submission met the reporting deadline in each of the past five fiscal years. The submissions took between one and three submissions to finalize. Coverage of Degree Objective was excellent over the timeframe of the study with no unknown records for this variable in five of the five years reviewed. The proportion of records with unknown Highest Degree Previously Earned ranged between two percent and 10 percent. The proportion of records with Pell Recipient was about 24 percent and the proportion of records with Subsidized Stafford Recipient was about 12 percent across the five years reviewed. Consistency between the Annual Enrollment and Completion submission and the **Annual Student Identification (ID)** submission was excellent during each of the past five fiscal years. There were no headcount discrepancies. Annual Student Identification (ID) data were finalized prior to the reporting deadline in each of the past five fiscal years.

The **Annual Completions (A2)** data submission began in fiscal year 2013. Lincoln Land Community College met the reporting deadline in each of the five years reviewed. The number of submissions needed to finalize the data ranged from one to two, and final A2 submissions did not contain any critical errors in five of the five years reviewed. The proportion of records with unknown Race/Ethnicity decreased to three percent in fiscal year 2025 from eight percent in fiscal year 2021. There were more completions on the A2 than on the A1 submission in the four years reviewed. The A2 submission originally collected the same completions as the A1 submission, which was limited to three completions, but the A2 allowed for more than three completions to be reported. Starting in fiscal year 2025, all of the completion details are reported only in the A2, so this check against the A1 is no longer needed.

The **Annual Course (AC)** data submission began in fiscal year 2011. Lincoln Land Community College met the reporting deadline in five of the five years reviewed. The number of submissions needed to finalize the data ranged from one to three, and final AC submissions contained critical errors in each of the five years reviewed; the fiscal year 2025 submission contained three critical errors, the fiscal year 2024 submission contained one critical error, and the fiscal years 2023, 2022, and 2021 submissions each contained two critical errors. This data was verified by college officials as valid and accurate. The **Annual Course (AC)** data submission helps to address the requirements of the Dual Credit Quality Act (Public Act 096-0194).

The **Fall Enrollment (E1)** data submission's timeliness met the reporting deadline in each of the past five years. The number of submissions needed to finalize the data ranged from one to two, and there were no critical errors in the final submissions in five of the five years reviewed. Lincoln Land Community College met the reporting deadline for the **Fall Enrollment Survey** in each of the five years reviewed. There has been consistency between the Fall Enrollment Survey and the E1 submission in four of the five years reviewed; there was a small discrepancy with the fiscal year 2022 submission (1 record).

Noncredit Course Enrollment (N1) data collection began in fiscal year 2000. Lincoln Land Community College data submissions met the reporting deadline in four of the last five fiscal years; the fiscal year 2025 submission was finalized one day late. There were no critical errors in the final submissions. The proportion of records with unknown Age ranged between three percent and seven percent across the five years reviewed. The proportion of records with unknown Race/Ethnicity ranged between 29 percent and 39 percent across the five years studied. Coverage of this variable is an area for further improvement in future submissions.

IPEDS Summer Graduate Reporting data collection began in fiscal year 2000. The final submission met the reporting deadline in five of the past five fiscal years. **Summer Graduate Reporting for the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey (GRS)** provides colleges with an opportunity to raise their graduation rates by including those students who complete programs one summer beyond the end of the fiscal year in rate calculations.

The **Spring Semester Enrollment Survey** was submitted on time in five of the past five fiscal years.

Part B. Faculty/Staff Data Submissions. The **Faculty, Staff and Salary (C1)** electronic data submission met the reporting deadline in four of the past five fiscal years; the fiscal year 2020 submission was finalized four and a half months past the reporting deadline. The number of submissions required to finalize these data ranged from one to four. The **Faculty, Staff, and Salary Supplementary Information** survey data submission was finalized prior to the reporting deadline in four of the past five fiscal years; the fiscal year 2020 submission was finalized 13 days late. Data items in these submissions are very important in generating the annual "Salary Report for Illinois Community Colleges" and related Illinois Board of Higher Education and federal (IPEDS) reports.

The **Annual Faculty, Staff, and Salary (C3)** data submission began in fiscal year 2010. Lincoln Land Community College met the submission deadline in none of the past five years reviewed; the fiscal years 2024 and 2022 submissions were finalized eight days late, the fiscal years 2023 and 2020 submissions were one week late, and the fiscal year 2021 submission was finalized one day past the reporting deadline. The number of submissions needed to finalize the data ranged from two to four. The **Annual Faculty, Staff, and Salary (C3)** submission provides ICCB with data for compliance with Public Act 096-0266 which impacts 110 ILCS 805/3-29.4.

The **African American Employment Plan Survey, Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay Survey, and Hispanic Employment Plan Survey** submissions began in fiscal year 2011, the **Asian American Employment Plan Survey** submission began in fiscal year 2013, and the **Native American Employment Plan Survey** began in fiscal year 2021. ICCB allows two years of data collection for new Research and Analytics submissions prior to being reviewed for Recognition. Lincoln Land Community College met the reporting deadline in five of the five years reviewed for the African American Employment Plan Survey, Asian American Employment Plan Survey, Hispanic Employment Plan Survey, and Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay Survey and in two of the two years reviewed for the Native American Employment Plan Survey. The Employment Plan surveys provide ICCB with data for compliance with Public Acts 096-1341, 096-1286, and 097-0856.

Part C. Other Submissions. The **Underrepresented Groups Report** was submitted on time in each of the past five fiscal years. This report is becoming more important as national and state attention is being increasingly focused on improving the depth and breadth of services provided to members of underrepresented groups.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Advisory Recommendations: Most data submissions have been timely, accurate, and complete. The ICCB is appreciative of this and looks forward to continued timely, accurate, and complete data submissions from Lincoln Land Community College. Focused efforts are recommended to improve the timeliness of the **Annual Faculty, Staff, and Salary Data (C3)**. Furthermore, efforts to improve coverage of race/ethnicity for the **Noncredit Course Enrollment (N1)** are appreciated.

College Response:

Appendix A

Lincoln Land Community College (526) – Recognition Policy Studies Report Due Dates

Noncredit Course Enrollment Data (N1)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (07/15)*	07/16/24	07/13/23	07/11/22	11/10/21	07/15/20
# Submissions to Final	4	2	1	2	2
Timeliness	1 day late	on time	on time	on time	on time
Duplicated Head Count	8638	6793	5982	4005	7578
Unduplicated Head Count	2665	3183	2934	1523	4235
# Error Codes in Final Submission	3	2	2	2	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	3.94 percent	7.05 percent	7.49 percent	5.17 percent	7.98 percent
% Unknown Age in Final Submission no value or .	3.44 percent	6.24 percent	6.89 percent	4.09 percent	7.22 percent
% Unknown Age in Final Submission unknown	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	1.07 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Ethnicity in Final unknown	28.73 percent	33.12 percent	36.41 percent	37.70 percent	39.42 percent

*Due 07/17 in FY 24; adjusted to 11/19 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

Annual Enrollment & Completion Data (A1)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (08/01)*	07/29/24	07/31/23	08/01/22	09/21/21	08/03/20
# Submissions to Final	2	1	2	3	3
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
Head Count (total incl. 0 hrs enroll.)	9718	9018	8563	8793	9742
Discrepancy between A1 & ID	0	0	0	0	0
# Error Codes in Final Submission	2	1	2	4	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	1	0

% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	0.18 percent	0.03 percent	0.29 percent	0.09 percent	0.45 percent
% o Cumulative GPA in Final Sub.	14.07 percent	12.84 percent	10.04 percent	8.04 percent	13.54 percent
% o Cumulative Hours in Final Sub.	11.87 percent	10.55 percent	7.53 percent	5.24 percent	11.35 percent
% Unknown Degree Obj. in Final	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Highest Degree in Final no value or .	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Highest Degree in Final unknown	9.56 percent	4.42 percent	2.11 percent	1.58 percent	6.79 percent
% Pell Recipient Coverage in Final Sub. (codes 2,4,5)	22.69 percent	23.21 percent	24.65 percent	23.76 percent	24.37 percent
% Subsidized Stafford Recipients in Final Sub. (code 2)	10.43 percent	11.50 percent	12.33 percent	12.70 percent	12.50 percent

* Due 8/02 in FY 24; adjusted to 10/13 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays; due 08/03 in FY 21

Annual Completions Data (A2)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (09/01)*	07/31/24	08/15/23	08/03/22	09/21/21	08/10/20
# Submissions to Final	2	1	2	2	2
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
Record Count (duplicate completions)	1615	1729	1623	1520	1554
Total Number of Completions from A1	N/A	1694	1597	1513	1535
More Completions on A2 than on A1 or Equal Number	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# Error Codes in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Ethnicity** in Final no value or .	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent

% Unknown Ethnicity** in Final unknown	3.10 percent	4.34 percent	4.81 percent	5.26 percent	7.66 percent
--	--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------

* Due 09/03 in FY 25; adjusted to 10/13 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

**From Item 17 starting in FY 21 collection (FY 20 data); from Item 18 in prior years.

Annual Student ID Submission (ID)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission (09/01)*	08/29/24	08/24/23	08/10/22	09/09/21	08/25/20
# Submissions to Final	2	4	2	1	1
Timeliness – Data Due	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
Head Count in Final Submission	9718	9018	8563	8793	9742
Discrepancy between A1 & ID	0	0	0	0	0
# Error Codes in Final Submission	1	1	2	0	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0

* Due 09/03 in FY 25; adjusted to 10/13 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

Annual Course Data (AC)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (09/01)*	08/16/24	08/16/23	08/09/22	12/13/21	08/26/20
# Submissions to Final	1	3	2	2	1
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
# Error Codes in Final Submission	4	2	3	2	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	3	1	2	2	2
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	0.03 percent	0.01 percent	0.03 percent	0.21 percent	0.02 percent
% Dual Credit in Final	10.71 percent	10.18 percent	8.49 percent	8.39 percent	7.82 percent
% Remedial (PCS 14) in Final	1.71 percent	2.27 percent	2.47 percent	2.57 percent	3.83 percent

* Due 09/03 in FY 25; adjusted to 01/12 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

Fall Term Enrollment Data (E1)

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (10/01)*	09/19/23	09/22/22	12/07/21	09/30/20	09/26/19
# Submissions to Final	1	1	2	2	2
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
Head Count in Final Submission	5238	4444	4840	4977	5446
Discrepancy between E1 & Survey	0	0	-1	0	0
# Error Codes in Final Submission	2	2	2	2	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	0.15 percent	0.31 percent	0.12 percent	0.08 percent	0.45 percent
Degree Obj. Coverage in Final % coded with no code	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
Scholarship Coverage in Final Sub. % with no scholarship	98.19 percent	97.66 percent	97.93 percent	98.01 percent	98.35 percent

* Due 10/02 in FY 24; 10/03 in FY 23; adjusted to 12/15 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

Fall Term Enrollment (Web) Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (10/01)*	09/20/23	09/08/22	09/14/21	09/29/20	09/27/19
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
Head Count	5238	4444	4841	4977	5446
Discrepancy between E1 & Survey	0	0	+1	0	0

* Due 10/02 in FY 24; 10/03 in FY 23

Summer Graduate Reporting for IPEDS GRS

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission (11/01)*	10/26/23	10/28/22	12/07/21	10/28/20	10/28/19
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

* Adjusted to 12/15 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays; due 11/02 in FY 21

Faculty Staff & Salary Data (C1)

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (11/15)*	11/13/23	10/14/22	11/30/21	10/15/20	02/25/20
# Submissions to Final	3	1	4	4	4
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	133 days late
# Error Codes in Final Submission	4	4	3	3	3
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	2	3	2	2	2
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	6.15 percent	14.94 percent	6.39 percent	6.35 percent	4.85 percent
% Unknown Employment Class (8)	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent

* Due date updated from 10/15 to 11/15 starting FY 24; due 10/17 in FY 23; adjusted to 11/30 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays;
due 10/15 in FY 21 and FY 20

Faculty Staff & Salary Supplementary Information

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (11/15)*	11/13/23	10/17/22	11/30/21	10/14/20	10/28/19
# Submissions to Final	1	1	1	1	1
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	13 days late

* Due date updated from 10/15 to 11/15 starting FY 24; due 10/17 in FY 23; adjusted to 11/30 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays;
due 10/15 in FY 21 and FY 20

African American Employment Plan Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note*	12/05/23	12/15/22	01/07/22	12/04/20	01/10/20
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23; 01/14 in FY 22; 12/09 in FY 21; 01/15 in FY 20

Asian American Employment Plan Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note*	12/05/23	12/15/22	01/07/22	12/04/20	01/10/20
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23; 01/14 in FY 22; 12/09 in FY 21; 01/15 in FY 20

Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note*	12/04/23	12/14/22	12/02/21	12/07/20	01/10/20
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23; 01/14 in FY 22; 12/09 in FY 21; 01/15 in FY 20

Hispanic Employment Plan Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note*	12/05/23	12/15/22	01/07/22	12/04/20	01/10/20
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23; 01/14 in FY 22; 12/09 in FY 21; 01/15 in FY 20

Native American Employment Plan Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note**	12/05/23	12/15/22	N/A*	N/A*	N/C
Timeliness	on time	on time	N/A*	N/A*	N/C

*ICCB allows two years of collection for new Research and Analytics submissions prior to being reviewed for Recognition.

** Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23

Underrepresented Groups Report

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019

Final Submission Varies See Note*	01/29/24	02/09/23	01/28/22	01/28/21	02/11/20
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 02/01 in FY 24; 02/10 in FY23; 02/01 in FY22; 02/02 in FY 21; 02/28 in FY 20

Spring Semester Enrollment Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission (02/15)*	02/07/24	02/01/23	02/01/22	02/04/21	02/03/20
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 02/10 in FY 20

Annual Faculty Staff & Salary Data (C3)

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (6/15)*	06/25/24	06/22/23	06/23/22	06/16/21	06/22/20
# Submissions to Final	4	3	3	2	2
Timeliness	8 days late	7 days late	8 days late	1 day late	7 days late
# Error Codes in Final Submission	4	3	3	3	3
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	3	2	2	2	2
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	6.04 percent	5.25 percent	6.37 percent	4.85 percent	4.46 percent
% Unknown Ethnicity** in Final no value or .	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Ethnicity** in Final unknown	3.38 percent	3.68 percent	5.60 percent	4.35 percent	1.79 percent
% Unknown Employment Class (8)	12.60 percent	12.08 percent	9.78 percent	8.46 percent	16.63 percent

* Due 06/17 in FY 24 and FY 19

**From Item 36 starting in FY 21 collection; from Item 37 in prior years.



RECOGNITION REPORT

ILLINOIS VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 2025

**Illinois Community College Board
Recognition Report
For Illinois Valley Community College
February 2025**

Introduction

During fiscal year 2023-24, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) conducted a recognition evaluation of Illinois Valley Community College, District 513. Due to the number and type of compliance findings in this report, the ICCB staff will recommend that the ICCB issue a finding of *Recognition Continued* to Illinois Valley Community College. The information below describes the recognition process. The report following addresses specific compliance and advisory recommendations.

Recognition is a statutory term describing the status of a district that meets instructional, administrative, financial, facility, and equipment standards as established by the ICCB. A favorable recognition status is a condition of state funding eligibility. There are three categories of recognition status.

- *Recognition Continued*- The district generally meets ICCB standards.
- *Recognition Continued-with Conditions*- The district generally does not meet ICCB standards.
- *Recognition Interrupted*- The district fails to take corrective action to resolve the conditions placed upon it under “recognition continued-with conditions” within a prescribed period.

The standards selected for review during the current cycle include four categories: 1) Academic, 2) Student Services/Academic Support, 3) Finance/Facilities, and 4) Institutional Research/Reporting. The report focuses on the findings and recommendations for each standard. These findings are based on the specific rule(s) or statute(s) being examined as a part of the appropriate standard. For each standard the college may receive one of two types of recommendations: compliance or advisory.

- **Compliance Recommendations** are those for which the college was found to be out of compliance with a given state statute or administrative rule.
- **Advisory Recommendations** consist of instances where the review team identified areas that it believes would be beneficial for the college to examine or pursue, but action is not required.

The staff of the Illinois Community College Board wishes to thank the college for its assistance and efforts in conducting this review. The Board acknowledges that the college is involved in numerous positive activities, processes, and initiatives not reflected in the report and commends the institution for its efforts on behalf of students.

Evaluation Results and Recommendations

1. Instruction

1. Degrees and Certificates

A comparison between Illinois Valley Community College's 2023-2024 catalog and the ICCB Curriculum Master File indicates that all degree and certificate programs have been approved by ICCB. All active and approved degrees and certificates fall within the required credit hour ranges as defined in the ICCB Administrative Rules Section 1501.302 a)3)A)i). No discrepancies between the printed college catalog and the curriculum master file were identified.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

2. Articulation

Illinois Valley Community College offers the Associate in Arts (A.A.), the Associate in Science (A.S.), the Associate in Engineering Science (A.E.S.), and the Associate in General Studies (A.G.S.). Specific degree requirements parallel recommendations of the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI).

According to the ICCB Program Approval Manual, for courses that are offered as part of a transfer program that are not IAI-approved, community colleges are required to keep current (within the *last five years*) articulation documents on file and available upon request from the ICCB. Evidence of articulation includes signed Form 13's or documentation from Transferology indicating a current articulation match.

According to the requisite Recognition standard, the college has provided documentation of articulation for 20 of the 20 baccalaureate/transfer courses requested. Per the college, one (1) course is being withdrawn due to lack of interest. A review of the college's evidence of articulation (Form 13) submissions, IAI codes, and/or Transferology documentation indicates that 20 of 20 courses submitted had the required current transfer agreements in place.

Compliance Recommendations: None.

3. Academic Control

The institution maintains academic control of the units of instruction. The college reviews programs through its Curriculum Committee and a Teaching and Learning Committee that serves as their guide to ensuring academic control of its programs. The college has outlined a faculty evaluation process for pre- and post-tenure, indicated in its Faculty Handbook. These processes were developed by its Educational Excellence Council.

The college has indicated that a review of the Curriculum Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee charters are underway. The college will also complete a Curriculum Management Plan, with training to better understand expectations. This plan and training were slated to be completed by December 2024.

Compliance Recommendations: None.

4. Curriculum

4a) A comparison between Illinois Valley Community College's college catalog and the ICCB Curriculum Master File indicates that all degree programs are within the range of total number of credit hours required for completion of an associate degree curriculum. All active and approved degrees fall within the required credit hour ranges as defined in the ICCB Administrative Rules Section 1501.302, all career and technical education degree offerings are aligned with a career pathway, and all plans of study are aligned with a transfer pathway.

4b) The college indicated there is a systemic process in place to identify the local, state, and federal standards by which curriculum is developed including any associated program accreditation (optional or required) for students to earn related industry-recognized credentials. Furthermore, multiple CTE programs offer stackable credentials, from short-term to advanced certificates to an A.A.S. degree, many of which lead to industry-recognized credentials.

No discrepancies between the college catalog and the ICCB Curriculum Master File beyond what the college identified in their self-evaluation were noted.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

5. Dual Credit

As part of Illinois Valley Community College's 2024 Recognition review, the following dual credit information was examined to determine if institutional policies and practices were in compliance with ICCB Administrative Rules 1501.313: 1) the college's self-evaluation, 2) data from the ICCB Annual Course submission, and 3) an audit of student qualifications and faculty credentials. To examine student qualifications, ICCB utilized the Annual Course submission to select 100 dual credit transfer (1.1 PCS) and career and technical education (1.2 PCS) courses for review; 50 from fiscal year 2022 and 50 from fiscal year 2023. The college was then required to conduct an audit using the dual credit sample and provide information related to student qualifications, relevant pre-requisites, and placement policies. The college was also required to provide a list of all instructors teaching dual credit courses in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, including their credentials.

State Laws and Regulations and Accreditation Standards

Based on the review, staff concluded that the college adheres to all state laws, regulations, and accreditation standards. Dual credit policy at the college is conducted in accordance with the Dual Credit Quality Act, the ICCB Administrative Rules, and the rules set forth by the Higher Learning Commission. Information was compared in the dual credit webpages and both the instructor and student dual credit handbooks.

Instructors

During fiscal years 2023 and 2024 it was reported that 51 instructors taught transfer (1.1) dual credit courses. Staff determined that all instructors appeared to hold the proper qualifications to teach 1.1 dual credit coursework.

Additionally, it was reported that 25 instructors taught career and technical education (1.2) dual credit courses. Staff were unable to determine if any of the 25 instructors were qualified to teach 1.2 dual credit courses as it appears that Illinois Valley Community College copied the formatting from the 1.1 dual credit tab. The 1.2 dual credit tab as it was provided includes a column for describing occupational hours and employment. All instructors who teach 1.2 dual credit courses are required to have at least 2,000 hours of related, qualified work experience, regardless of the level of degree-attainment.

Students

After a review of the college self-study report and the additional audit materials requested by the ICCB, it was determined that all students from fiscal year 2023 and 2024 met the required placement test score and or prerequisite coursework.

Course Offerings and Requirements

Courses were selected from transfer courses and career and technical education courses consistent with requirements for dual credit offerings. The course prerequisites (including placement policies), descriptions, outlines, and student outcomes utilized for these courses aligned with the courses offered on campus and at other off-campus sites.

Compliance Recommendation: In order to be in compliance with Administrative Rule 23 Ill Adm. Code 1501.313, the college must ensure all dual credit instructors have adequate credentials to teach the courses they are assigned, and that those credentials match those required to teach courses on campus.

- For CTE (1.2 PCS) courses these qualifications shall include 2,000 hours of work experience regardless of the highest educational degree attainment. This means that even if an individual has a master's degree in each field, they must still have the required 2,000 hours of applicable work experience.

College Response: The College has a VACCT (Verification of Academic Credentials for College Teaching) process that had been developed to provide a systemic review of all faculty credentials, including dual credit instruction. This process includes a review of all credit hours in the discipline, licenses and certifications, teaching experience, and

qualified work experience. However, the work experience is in number of years—not in hours of work. This will be updated in the process.

In addition to this issue, the process has not been completed consistently. As part of the onboarding process, Human Resources will track and confirm receipt of completed VACCT for all faculty prior to employment start date.

Related to dual credit instructors, IVCC is currently revising its process for verifying the credentials for all dual credit instructors. While those teaching transfer courses have been updated as of this submission, the Dual Credit office is working with Human Resources to further develop the onboarding procedures for dual credit instructors to ensure compliance.

6. Assessment Plans

The college has both ongoing and periodic reviews of processes to assess student learning in each degree and certificate program it offers. The college has outlined a systemic, college-wide approach to assessment of student learning of its four goals: communication, inquiry, social consciousness, and responsibility. In addition, the college has 10 Institutional Learning Outcomes.

Assessment plans are created at the course level by the faculty or person responsible for maintaining the master course syllabus. The college uses its Assessment Committee to oversee assessment of student learning through institutional assessment, program assessment, course assessment, and co-curricular assessment.

The college added Brightspace in 2023. They note it slowed some implementation but also provided greater opportunity in the areas of accountability, standardization, and the implementation of co-curricular assessment.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

7. Student Evaluation

Illinois Valley Community College has a well-documented policy for evaluating and recording student performance. The evaluation process is directly tied to the official course learning objectives and goals. Both faculty and student handbooks were thoroughly reviewed to ensure that the practices comply with and align with ICCB Rule 1501.405 as per the College Policy and Administrative Procedure.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

8. Faculty Qualifications/Policies

The college employs qualified faculty for each of its units of instruction. The faculty credentialing policies meet the minimum requirements of the ICCB Administrative Rules, and the institution has in place a credential verification process to ensure that faculty maintain appropriate credentials for all units of instruction. The college has a review process for dual credit instructors, as well as transfer and Career and Technical Education faculty. Faculty are documented via the Verification and Academic Credentials for College Teaching form and faculty credentials and transcripts stored with each appropriate division. The college had identified the need to move from a more manual process to one that allows for a more streamlined process to access information. This work is underway. The college did not discuss its process for approving or assigning professional development.

The ICCB staff requested that the college provide faculty credentials to verify that the instructors of record met the criteria. ICCB staff requested the transcripts of a listing of active courses that were taught during the review period to confirm faculty qualifications. The college provided transcripts and relevant work experience evidence for all the courses requested. The ICCB review of the faculty transcripts and work experience provided by the college showed that three faculty members did not appear to meet the minimum faculty requirements or were missing documentation of credentials outlined by the ICCB. It is of note that the ICCB does not have a rule in place to allow for Tested or Equated Experience in the way that the Higher Learning Commission does, which is likely the basis for qualifying some faculty members.

Compliance Recommendation: In order to be in compliance with Administrative Rule 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1501.303(f), Illinois Valley Community College must ensure all faculty have the proper credentials to teach. ICCB Recognition Standard 8a Faculty Qualifications/Policies states:

Professional staff shall be educated and prepared in accordance with generally accepted standards and practices for teaching, supervising, counseling, and administering the curriculum or supporting system to which they are assigned. Such preparation may include collegiate study and professional experience. Graduate work through the master's degree in the assigned field or area of responsibility is expected, except in such areas in which the work experience and related training is the principal learning medium.

The ICCB interpretation throughout the enforcement of these rules is that instructors teaching courses that are designated as transfer (1.1) courses must meet the master's degree requirement and must have a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the discipline. Regarding areas in which the work experience and related training is the principal medium, otherwise referred to as Career and Technical Education, instructors (1.2) must hold the appropriate credential and 2,000 hours of demonstrated experience in the field. Please note that if an instructor is teaching a CTE course with an AAS degree, there must also be accompanying work experience to meet the faculty qualification standards. Please ensure that there are mechanisms in place to verify work experience in addition to academic qualifications.

College Response: The College has a VACCT (Verification of Academic Credentials for College Teaching) process that had been developed to provide a systemic review of all faculty credentials. This process includes a review of all credit hours in the discipline, licenses and certifications, teaching experience, and qualified work experience. However, the work experience is in number of years—not in hours of work. This will be updated in the process.

In addition to this issue, the process has not been completed consistently. As part of the onboarding process, Human Resources will track and confirm receipt of completed VACCT for all faculty prior to employment start date.

9. Cooperative Agreements and Contracts

As part of the recognition review for standard 9, Cooperative Agreements, Illinois Valley Community College reviewed their cooperative agreement process. Illinois Valley Community College participates in the CAREER Agreement, which has been adopted by all 39 Illinois community college districts. The college also has interdistrict cooperative agreements with Sauk Valley Community College and Kankakee Community College for radiologic technology and medical laboratory technology, respectively.

The following items of the college were reviewed: the college's website and the college's course catalog (online). Illinois Valley Community College participates in the Comprehensive Agreement Regarding the Expansion of Educational Resources (CAREER Agreement) which has been approved by the ICCB and agreed upon by the 39 community college districts in the state. The web link provided in the college's self-study takes you to a page that lists the names of the other 39 districts that comprise the CAREER Agreement. Illinois Valley Community College noted that in the last Recognition cycle they received an advisory recommendation related to information posted to the college's website regarding the CAREER Agreement; the college included links to the website as well as the applicable section of the course catalog.

All Indicators of Compliance and Indicators of Quality were met.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

10. Program Review/Results

After reviewing Illinois Valley Community College's program review process and submissions, staff concluded that all instructional programs have been reviewed utilizing a systematic, college-wide process. The college meets the minimum requirements of need, cost, and quality for evaluating their instructional programs. Program reviews submitted are thorough in nature supporting the notion that there is adequate coordination and support from administrative leadership and institutional effectiveness. The college includes student and academic support services and administrative functions in their review cycle. No

discrepancies between the college's program review process and schedule and the ICCB five-year program review were identified.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

2. STUDENT SERVICES/ACADEMIC SUPPORT

1. Student Services/Academic Support

Part 1A: Advising/Counseling

Illinois Valley Community College's advising and counseling program is comprehensive and organized to address the academic planning and transitional needs of new students and the continued success of all students as they progress through their program. Illinois Valley Community College offers a comprehensive advising and counseling program to support students' academic planning and success. The counseling office provides walk-in services on a first-come, first-served basis, with extended hours on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The college employs three full-time and five part-time counselors, including one at the Ottawa Center. The Project Success office (TRiO Student Support Services) also has two counselors and a director for targeted student support.

Counselors assist students across all academic programs, offering general advising, career counseling, and services for undecided students. Each full-time counselor is assigned to an academic division and two in-state senior institutions for articulation and rotating assignments every two years. Counseling services are available in person, via Zoom, or by phone.

Beyond academic advising, the college provides mental health support through Transformative Growth and resources for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault via Safe Journeys. Counselors also participate in student events, orientation, and recruitment efforts across campus.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

B: Financial Aid

The financial aid program provides students with information and access to financial support. The office hours are listed as 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Thursday, and Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, with walk-in appointments available. The Financial Aid Office works with area high schools to provide information at "College Nights." Financial aid services are also offered at the Outreach Centers. Additionally, FAFSA completion workshops and financial aid checks are provided periodically at the Outreach Centers.

The Financial Aid office also houses the Coordinator of Veterans and Military Personnel. The coordinator explains the services offered, which include explaining and certifying military benefits, enrollment assistance, and general questions and concerns.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Advisory Recommendation: The college did not report on their current loan default rate. The ICCB recommends including this data in future reports.

College Response: We will include this in our future reports.

C: Career Placement

The Career Services Center provides job placement, career advising, and exploration support. The Career Services Associate promotes job opportunities via email and the College Central Network, while regularly updating college counselors and stakeholders. The office also assists with internships, attends advisory council meetings for career and technical programs, and organizes targeted job fairs to meet local workforce needs.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

D: Support Services

Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) offers various support services to assist students academically and personally.

1. **Academic Support** – The Academic Support Center includes a tutoring center, student help desk, and library. The tutoring center has seen a significant increase in usage, and it has updated furniture to support flexible learning. Tutors include both student peers and professionals.
2. **Center for Accessibility and Neurodiversity** – This center provides services such as interpreters, note-takers, testing accommodations, and specialized technology. It also offers mentoring through the Get Set Program.
3. **TRiO Student Support Services (Project Success)** – Designed for first-generation students, low-income students, and students with disabilities, this program helps students identify strengths, set goals, and develop academically, socially, and personally to enhance retention, graduation, and transfer rates.
4. **Basic Needs and Additional Support** – IVCC has designated liaisons for housing insecurity, undocumented students, and benefits navigation. The Special Populations Transition Coordinator assists students facing economic or personal challenges, manages the on-campus Food Bank, and connects students with resources through Single Stop.
5. **Strategic Enrollment Management** – This committee establishes goals and activities to recruit, retain, and support students, particularly those from underrepresented demographics.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

2. Student Programming, Co-Curricular Activities, and Support Services for Students

IVCC provides students with extracurricular opportunities in athletics and student activities. The college supports 10 intercollegiate sports teams—five for men (baseball, basketball, golf, soccer, and tennis) and five for women (basketball, soccer, softball, tennis, and volleyball).

Beyond athletics, IVCC offers over 40 student organizations, including academic honor societies, multicultural groups, service and social organizations, recreational clubs, and arts and literature clubs. These organizations help students develop leadership, social skills, and character, with faculty or staff advisors overseeing activities.

The Student Activities department hosts events in the Student Life Center and supports Student Government, which actively engages in college decisions and communicates with the Board of Trustees through reports and a student newspaper column.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

3. Admission of Students and Student Records

IVCC implemented a new application in fiscal year 2024 to improve data management for the Admissions Office and streamline the student enrollment process. The Admissions and Enrollment pages have been updated and organized into eight student categories: high school students (including dual credit), first-time students, adult students, visiting students, international students, veterans, continuing education students, and GED/ESL students. Additional resources have also been introduced, including an enrollment checklist and a parent guide.

A separate page has been created for limited admissions programs, such as Nursing (RN and LPN), Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting, and Medical Assisting, ensuring an objective admissions process. The Admissions Office continues to coordinate open houses, high school visits, and targeted outreach events.

Additionally, IVCC is expanding alternative credit options. In fiscal year 2023, a team was established to develop a comprehensive prior learning assessment system using Credit Predictor Pro. Stakeholder training occurred in June 2023, and faculty training in September 2023. While further implementation is needed, this remains a priority project for fiscal year 2024.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

3. FINANCE/FACILITIES

1. Credit Hour Claim Verification

The Illinois Community College Board staff conducted an on-site visit at Illinois Valley Community College on January 15, 2025. During this visit, ICCB staff performed a finance and facilities assessment and discussed the processes relating to financial planning and credit hour claims. The college performed a demonstration of key systems to show how students are coded in the systems for residency and reporting credit hour claims. ICCB staff reviewed a sample of credit hours reported and certified by the college as semester unrestricted (SU) and semester restricted (SR). The credit hour certifications are used by ICCB annually to determine system funding calculations and college allocations.

The college has documented and verifiable processes for proper classification of credit hours reported to ICCB and for determining residency. The college makes a distinction between residency classifications for tuition and state funding purposes. When residency comes into question, students are asked for verification. This can be a voter's registration card, tax filing, or other supporting documents that the student provides to the college for proof of residence. These processes were evaluated, and no evidence of inaccuracies was found.

ICCB staff reviewed the Instructional Credit Hour Claim Reports to select a sample of individual course sections per funded instructional category, semester, and student residency classification to verify the accuracy of the submissions that are used to compile the certified reports (SU/SR claim reports). The sample consisted of 18 course sections and 216 students in fiscal year 2021 for the summer, fall, and spring semesters. Mid-term class lists, final grade sheets, and transcripts were reviewed for reporting accuracy. Information reported on the SU/SR claim reports agreed with the certified mid-term class lists.

Interdepartmental communications were appropriate regarding changes in laws, regulations, or internal operations that could impact the SU/SR claim reports. ICCB has not found any evidence that the college failed to meet the reporting or certification requirements over the period of the review. Overall, the college has generally complied with applicable laws, regulations, and rules for claiming credit hours for funding. Based on the review, ICCB staff find, with a confidence level of 95 percent, that compliance with the reporting of certified hours is between 95 and 100 percent accurate. (Note: the statistical margin of error or confidence interval is five percent.)

The college has generally complied with laws, regulations, and rules for claiming credit hours for funding. Based on the review, ICCB staff find, with a confidence level of 95 percent, that compliance with the reporting of certified hours is between 95 and 100 percent accurate. (Note: the statistical margin of error or confidence interval is five percent.)

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Midterm Certification

According to 110/ILCS 805/2-16.02, courses eligible for reimbursement are those which the district pays 50 percent or more of the program costs from unrestricted funds.

To determine the college's procedure for determining reimbursement eligibility, a written explanation of the methodology used to classify student credit hours, a listing of faculty which identified the percent of salary applied for selected course sections, and the midterm certification instructions sent to faculty were reviewed. Mid-term class lists and final grade sheets were reviewed and compared to ICCB internal reports.

Based on the review, instructors for SU courses were funded with more than 50 percent of unrestricted funds and appropriately reported.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Student Residency

The written procedure for residency verification and a summary of tuition/fee rates charged to students in-district, out-of-district, and out-of-state were reviewed. Student demographics and transcript information were reviewed to support residency status, funded instructional category placement, and final grade postings. To determine if certain categories of students were properly excluded from the reimbursable credit hour claim report, ICCB staff reviewed samples with specific criteria.

All residency classifications were documented and determined to be accurate. Based on the review, the college properly classifies students for reporting purposes. However, the college does not have a detailed residency policy that addresses all of the general, district, and special provisions of students.

Compliance Recommendation: The ICCB recommends that the college clarify its residency policy with respect to aspects of the definition of residency not explicitly reflected in the current policy.

College Response: The policy for residency has been updated to be more detailed and in alignment with the system rules. These will be presented to the Board of Trustees in March 2025. In addition, the procedures for the office have been updated with more specific scenarios to include the aspects not currently reflected.

Course Repeats

The credit hour claims written procedure for excluding students who repeat a course was reviewed. Based on this review, there is a suitable process and procedure in place.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment

The written procedure for dual credit and dual enrollment was reviewed along with intent to enroll instructions and enrollment forms. Based on the review, no issues were found.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

2. Financial Planning

The Facilities Master Plan, annual budgets, close-out reports, uniform financial statements, strategic planning reports, certification of publications, instructional cost reports, Tax and Budget Survey reports, Certificates of Tax Levy, and annual external audits were reviewed.

All college departments are included in the financial planning and accountability process. Documentation on the college's website confirms that the Board of Trustees meets and discusses financial conditions and strategies monthly.

Report submissions were made in a timely manner. ICCB staff did not find any evidence indicating issues with financial planning requirements.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

3. Financial Compliance Annual External Audit

For fiscal years 2021-2023, ICCB staff reviewed the annual external audits and consolidated year-end financial reporting (CYEFR) reconciliations and evaluated overall outcomes and timeliness of completion.

To ensure that any audit findings indicating the need for actions were addressed, evidence of corrective action plans (CAP) was reviewed by ICCB staff for all findings. There were only three findings noted over the three-year period. The CAP for each finding was provided and appears to be adequate.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

4. A & B Facilities

A. Approval of Construction Projects

ICCB's administrative rules at 23 IAC 1501.602b require an updated District Site and Construction Master Plan be filed with ICCB by July 1st of the year in which the district

undergoes its recognition evaluation. It should be updated when a project is completed or added to the plan. Due to the pandemic, ICCB has made this plan not due until July 1, 2022. The college submitted its 2018 Facilities Master Plan and their self-study, which were found to be in good order. The college is in the process of updating the FMP and will send a copy to ICCB when it is finalized.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

B. Facilities Data Submissions:

Effective January 21, 2021, regulations on reporting requirements at Illinois Administrative Code Title 23, Section 1501.607 were revised. The requirement to submit reports “F3, F6, B3, and R3” for facility inventory records and building layouts was eliminated.

Annual facility data, project updates, estimated deferred maintenance, annual cost/backlog, and local projects (completed and in progress) reports are required to be submitted to ICCB. The college maintained and reported facilities data requests, reports, and other information to the ICCB in formats specified in accordance with standards and principles developed by the ICCB. ICCB did not find any evidence that the college failed to meet the submission requirements for the review period.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

4a. Employee Contracts

According to 110 ILCS 805/3-65, an employment contract entered into with an employee of a community college must not exceed four years and must not include any automatic rollover clauses. All employee contracts, renewals, amendments, addendums, and extensions must be made during an open board meeting and made available to the public.

According to 110 ILCS 805/3-70, employment contracts must be transparent. Actions such as performance-based bonuses, incentive-based compensation, and final actions of the employment contract must be made during an open board meeting, approved by the board, and made available to the public. Board minutes, board packets, and annual performance criteria and goals must be made available to the public on the district's official website.

According to 110 ILCS 805/3-75, an annual performance review of the president must be completed. This annual review must be considered when the board contemplates a bonus, raise, or severance agreement.

According to 5 ILCS 415/10, an employment contract entered into, amended, renewed, or extended with an employee of a community college that includes a provision for severance pay must limit the severance pay to an amount not exceeding 20 weeks of compensation.

The employment contract must also specify severance pay is prohibited when a contract employee is fired by the district for misconduct.

Copies of employee contracts, renewals, amendments, and extensions were requested and reviewed for compliance. Board meeting minutes and public notices were also reviewed. Based on the review, there are several contractual employee positions.

The employment contracts met most specifications and all the notice provisions required by law. The contracts must be clear on what compensation is to be paid to the employee if the contract is terminated due to misconduct and limit severance pay to no more than 20-weeks of compensation.

Compliance Recommendation: The college must ensure employment contracts comply with 110 ILCS 805, 5 ILCS 415 and 23 IL Admin. Code 1501.803 and amend any active contracts that do not meet the criteria in those laws and regulations.

College Response: The contracts will be updated to include the reference to 5 ILCS 415/10 limitation on severance. For those contracts not being fully reviewed this year, an addendum will be made so that all contracts will be in compliance going forward.

4. INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH/REPORTING

General Reporting Requirements

The latest five years of Illinois Community College Board data submissions by Illinois Valley Community College were reviewed—generally this includes fiscal years 2020-2024 unless otherwise stated. Submissions were evaluated on consistency, accuracy, completeness, and timeliness. Timeliness is based on the date of the final submission, not the date the original submission is received. A detailed analysis of individual data submissions is in Appendix A.

ICCB data timeliness and accuracy are vitally important as these submissions are used extensively by ICCB staff to fulfill external reporting requirements on behalf of the colleges. As a value-added service to the colleges ICCB staff reconfigure and combine information collected through routine ICCB submissions into a format that meets the needs of external entities. This approach minimizes duplicate reporting and serves to further strengthen data submission quality and comprehensiveness. For example, ICCB uses information from college submissions to provide multiple federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reports. It is particularly important to meet federal IPEDS collection deadlines because federal officials have the authority to fine colleges for failure to furnish timely data. There are 14 IPEDS surveys across the Fall, Winter, and Spring collections, and the potential fine in 2024 is up to \$69,733 for each violation. The fine changes annually based on an inflation index. ICCB data also are used in federal Perkins Postsecondary and Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II) performance reporting. Failure to meet these federal reporting deadlines could delay the availability of funds and would remove the state from eligibility for incentive dollars.

Illinois Valley Community College officials have been successful in meeting federal submission timelines over the past five fiscal years. Over the last five years, Illinois Valley Community College officials have met ICCB deadlines for most submissions. Overall, Illinois Valley Community College's final data submissions have been accurate and complete. An Appendix Table contains additional details on actual submission dates.

Part A. Student Data Reporting. The **Annual Enrollment and Completion Data (A1)** submission is the most complex and lengthy of the state data submissions. Accuracy of final submissions has been good over the timeframe of the study. Final A1 submissions did not contain any critical errors in three of the five years reviewed; the fiscal year 2024 and 2022 submissions each contained two critical errors. This data was verified by college officials as valid and accurate. Illinois Valley Community College's A1 submission met the reporting deadline in one of the past five fiscal years; the fiscal year 2025 and 2023 submissions were finalized one week late, the fiscal year 2024 submission was two months late, and the fiscal year 2021 submission was finalized 11 days past the reporting deadline. The submissions took between three and five submissions to finalize. Coverage of Degree Objective was excellent over the timeframe of the study with no unknown records for this variable in five of the five years reviewed. The proportion of records with unknown Highest Degree Previously Earned ranged between four percent and nine percent. The proportion of records with Pell Recipient was about 20 percent and the proportion of records with Subsidized Stafford Recipient was about two percent across the five years reviewed. Consistency between the Annual Enrollment and Completion submission and the **Annual Student Identification (ID)** submission was excellent during each of the past five fiscal years. There were no headcount discrepancies. Annual Student Identification (ID) data were finalized prior to the reporting deadline in four of the past five fiscal years; the fiscal year 2024 submission was finalized one month past the reporting deadline.

The **Annual Completions (A2)** data submission began in fiscal year 2013. Illinois Valley Community College met the reporting deadline in four of the five years reviewed; the fiscal year 2024 submission was finalized one month late. The number of submissions needed to finalize the data ranged from two to seven, and final A2 submissions did not contain any critical errors in three of the five years reviewed; the fiscal year 2024 and 2022 submissions each contained one critical error. This data was verified by college officials as valid and accurate. The proportion of records with unknown Race/Ethnicity ranged between two percent and six percent across the years reviewed. There were more completions on the A2 than on the A1 submission in the four years reviewed. The A2 submission originally collected the same completions as the A1 submission, which was limited to three completions, but the A2 allowed for more than three completions to be reported. Starting in fiscal year 2025, all of the completion details are reported only in the A2, so this check against the A1 is no longer needed.

The **Annual Course (AC)** data submission began in fiscal year 2011. Illinois Valley Community College met the reporting deadline in four of the five years reviewed; the fiscal year 2024 submission was finalized one month past the reporting deadline. The number of submissions needed to finalize the data ranged from two to three, and final AC submissions

did not contain any critical errors in five of the five years reviewed. The **Annual Course (AC)** data submission helps to address the requirements of the Dual Credit Quality Act (Public Act 096-0194).

The **Fall Enrollment (E1)** data submission's timeliness met the reporting deadline in three of the past five years; the fiscal year 2024 submission was finalized one day late, and the fiscal year 2020 submission was finalized three days past the reporting deadline. The number of submissions needed to finalize the data ranged from one to four, and there were no critical errors in the final submissions in five of the five years reviewed. Illinois Valley Community College met the reporting deadline for the **Fall Enrollment Survey** in each of the five years reviewed. There has been consistency between the Fall Enrollment Survey and the E1 submission in four of the five years reviewed; there was a small discrepancy with the fiscal year 2021 submission (2 records).

Noncredit Course Enrollment (N1) data collection began in fiscal year 2000. Illinois Valley Community College data submissions met the reporting deadline in each of the last five fiscal years. There were no critical errors in the final submissions. The proportion of records with unknown Age ranged between less than one percent and 18 percent across the five years reviewed. The proportion of records with unknown Race/Ethnicity ranged between 20 percent and 45 percent across the five years studied. Coverage of this variable is an area for further improvement in future submissions.

IPEDS Summer Graduate Reporting data collection began in fiscal year 2000. The final submission met the reporting deadline in five of the past five fiscal years. **Summer Graduate Reporting for the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey (GRS)** provides colleges with an opportunity to raise their graduation rates by including those students who complete programs one summer beyond the end of the fiscal year in rate calculations.

The **Spring Semester Enrollment Survey** was submitted on time in five of the past five fiscal years.

Part B. Faculty/Staff Data Submissions. The **Faculty, Staff and Salary (C1)** electronic data submission met the reporting deadline in each of the past five fiscal years. The number of submissions required to finalize these data ranged from one to two. The **Faculty, Staff, and Salary Supplementary Information** survey data submission was finalized prior to the reporting deadline in each of the past five fiscal years. Data items in these submissions are very important in generating the annual "Salary Report for Illinois Community Colleges" and related Illinois Board of Higher Education and federal (IPEDS) reports.

The **Annual Faculty, Staff, and Salary (C3)** data submission began in fiscal year 2010. Illinois Valley Community College met the submission deadline in two of the past five years reviewed; the fiscal year 2023 submission was finalized five days late, the fiscal year 2022 submission was six days late, and the fiscal year 2020 submission was finalized over two weeks past the reporting deadline. The number of submissions needed to finalize the data ranged from two to three. The **Annual Faculty, Staff, and Salary (C3)** submission

provides ICCB with data for compliance with Public Act 096-0266 which impacts 110 ILCS 805/3-29.4.

The **African American Employment Plan Survey**, **Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay Survey**, and **Hispanic Employment Plan Survey** submissions began in fiscal year 2011, the **Asian American Employment Plan Survey** submission began in fiscal year 2013, and the **Native American Employment Plan Survey** began in fiscal year 2021. ICCB allows two years of data collection for new Research and Analytics submissions prior to being reviewed for Recognition. Illinois Valley Community College met the reporting deadline in five of the five years reviewed for the African American Employment Plan Survey, Asian American Employment Plan Survey, and Hispanic Employment Plan Survey, in four of the five years reviewed for the Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay Survey, and in two of the two years reviewed for the Native American Employment Plan Survey. The Employment Plan surveys provide ICCB with data for compliance with Public Acts 096-1341, 096-1286, and 097-0856.

Part C. Other Submissions. The **Underrepresented Groups Report** was submitted on time in four of the past five fiscal years; the fiscal year 2024 submission was finalized two days late. This report is becoming more important as national and state attention is being increasingly focused on improving the depth and breadth of services provided to members of underrepresented groups.

Compliance Recommendation: None.

Advisory Recommendations: Most data submissions have been timely, accurate, and complete. The ICCB is appreciative of this and looks forward to continued timely, accurate, and complete data submissions from Illinois Valley Community College. Focused efforts are recommended to improve the timeliness of the **Annual Enrollment and Completion Data (A1)** and the **Annual Faculty, Staff, and Salary Data (C3)**. Furthermore, efforts to improve coverage of race/ethnicity for the **Noncredit Course Enrollment (N1)** are appreciated.

College Response: We will continue to improve the timeliness in this area. Changes in the department and procedures have been made to improve our accuracy and timeliness for all reports. The Noncredit Course Enrollment data coverage of race/ethnicity will continue to improve, as this data field is now required by the application for online registration in non-credit courses.

Appendix A

Illinois Valley Community College (513) – Recognition Policy Studies Report Due Dates

Noncredit Course Enrollment Data (N1)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (07/15)*	07/15/24	07/12/23	07/14/22	06/29/21	07/09/20
# Submissions to Final	2	2	2	1	1
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
Duplicated Head Count	3884	3840	2653	2247	3083
Unduplicated Head Count	2921	2831	2238	1876	2218
# Error Codes in Final Submission	2	3	2	2	3
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	2.32 percent	47.58 percent	17.90 percent	0.80 percent	1.10 percent
% Unknown Age in Final Submission no value or .	2.06 percent	3.93 percent	17.87 percent	0.13 percent	0.94 percent
% Unknown Age in Final Submission unknown	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Ethnicity in Final unknown	42.87 percent	44.74 percent	45.31 percent	35.38 percent	19.85 percent

*Due 07/17 in FY 24; adjusted to 11/19 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

Annual Enrollment & Completion Data (A1)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (08/01)*	08/08/24	10/03/23	08/08/22	09/29/21	08/14/20
# Submissions to Final	5	5	3	4	5
Timeliness	7 days late	62 days late	7 days late	on time	11 days late
Head Count (total incl. o hrs enroll.)	4069	3930	3805	3824	4404
Discrepancy between A1 & ID	0	0	0	0	0
# Error Codes in Final Submission	0	2	0	3	4
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	2	0	2	0

% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	0.00 percent	0.15 percent	0.00 percent	0.49 percent	19.66 percent
% o Cumulative GPA in Final Sub.	13.12 percent	13.56 percent	12.27 percent	9.83 percent	13.74 percent
% o Cumulative Hours in Final Sub.	12.83 percent	13.16 percent	11.56 percent	9.75 percent	9.83 percent
% Unknown Degree Obj. in Final	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Highest Degree in Final no value or .	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Highest Degree in Final unknown	4.47 percent	4.76 percent	4.05 percent	6.35 percent	8.76 percent
% Pell Recipient Coverage in Final Sub. (codes 2,4,5)	20.50 percent	20.64 percent	22.21 percent	22.12 percent	22.77 percent
% Subsidized Stafford Recipients in Final Sub. (code 2)	1.60 percent	1.27 percent	1.31 percent	1.41 percent	2.25 percent

* Due 8/02 in FY 24; adjusted to 10/13 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays; due 08/03 in FY 21

Annual Completions Data (A2)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (09/01)*	08/06/24	10/03/23	08/05/22	09/30/21	08/19/20
# Submissions to Final	2	7	2	4	2
Timeliness	on time	32 days late	on time	on time	on time
Record Count (duplicate completions)	1237	1052	1057	1036	776
Total Number of Completions from A1	N/A	995	1033	1012	757
More Completions on A2 than on A1 or Equal Number	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# Error Codes in Final Submission	0	1	0	2	0
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	1	0	1	0
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	0.00 percent	0.57 percent	0.00 percent	0.29 percent	0.00 percent

% Unknown Ethnicity** in Final no value or .	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Ethnicity** in Final unknown	3.80 percent	5.70 percent	2.65 percent	2.61 percent	2.19 percent

* Due 09/03 in FY 25; adjusted to 10/13 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

**From Item 17 starting in FY 21 collection (FY 20 data); from Item 18 in prior years.

Annual Student ID Submission (ID)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission (09/01)*	08/12/24	10/03/23	08/05/22	09/07/21	08/14/20
# Submissions to Final	1	3	2	1	2
Timeliness – Data Due	on time	32 days late	on time	on time	on time
Head Count in Final Submission	4069	3930	3805	3824	4404
Discrepancy between A1 & ID	0	0	0	0	0
# Error Codes in Final Submission	0	0	0	1	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0

* Due 09/03 in FY 25; adjusted to 10/13 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

Annual Course Data (AC)

Fiscal Year Collected	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (09/01)*	08/08/24	10/03/23	08/12/22	12/16/21	08/19/20
# Submissions to Final	2	3	2	2	3
Timeliness	on time	32 days late	on time	on time	on time
# Error Codes in Final Submission	0	0	0	1	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.34 percent	0.02 percent
% Dual Credit in Final	10.62 percent	9.49 percent	9.48 percent	8.11 percent	8.42 percent

% Remedial (PCS 14) in Final	3.01 percent	3.21 percent	2.69 percent	2.12 percent	2.85 percent
------------------------------	--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------

* Due 09/03 in FY 25; adjusted to 01/12 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

Fall Term Enrollment Data (E1)

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (10/01)*	10/03/23	09/20/22	11/29/21	10/01/20	10/04/19
# Submissions to Final	4	2	1	2	4
Timeliness	1 day late	on time	on time	on time	3 days late
Head Count in Final Submission	2594	2371	2470	2413	2841
Discrepancy between E1 & Survey	0	0	0	-2	0
# Error Codes in Final Submission	2	0	4	2	3
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	0	0	0	0	0
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	0.07 percent	0.00 percent	2.02 percent	0.45 percent	0.77 percent
Degree Obj. Coverage in Final % coded with no code	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
Scholarship Coverage in Final Sub. % with no scholarship	97.19 percent	96.33 percent	98.06 percent	97.93 percent	98.45 percent

* Due 10/02 in FY 24; 10/03 in FY 23; adjusted to 12/15 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays

Fall Term Enrollment (Web) Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (10/01)*	10/02/23	09/14/22	09/07/21	09/30/20	09/03/19
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
Head Count	2594	2371	2470	2415	2841
Discrepancy between E1 & Survey	0	0	0	+2	0

* Due 10/02 in FY 24; 10/03 in FY 23

Summer Graduate Reporting for IPEDS GRS

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
-----------------------	------	------	------	------	------

Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission (11/01)*	08/16/23	09/13/22	11/29/21	10/15/20	10/16/19
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

* Adjusted to 12/15 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays; due 11/02 in FY 21

Faculty Staff & Salary Data (C1)

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (11/15)*	11/07/23	10/17/22	11/22/21	10/14/20	10/15/19
# Submissions to Final	1	1	2	1	2
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time
# Error Codes in Final Submission	4	5	4	3	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	2	3	3	2	2
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	13.67 percent	8.56 percent	5.04 percent	4.40 percent	4.14 percent
% Unknown Employment Class (8)	3.42 percent	1.53 percent	3.26 percent	3.14 percent	3.59 percent

* Due date updated from 10/15 to 11/15 starting FY 24; due 10/17 in FY 23; adjusted to 11/30 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays;
due 10/15 in FY 21 and FY 20

Faculty Staff & Salary Supplementary Information

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (11/15)*	11/15/23	10/11/22	11/23/21	10/14/20	10/04/19
# Submissions to Final	1	1	1	1	1
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

* Due date updated from 10/15 to 11/15 starting FY 24; due 10/17 in FY 23; adjusted to 11/30 in FY 22 due to ICCB processing delays;
due 10/15 in FY 21 and FY 20

African American Employment Plan Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019

Final Submission Varies See Note*	12/01/23	12/09/22	12/13/21	12/02/20	12/17/19
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23; 01/14 in FY 22; 12/09 in FY 21; 01/15 in FY 20

Asian American Employment Plan Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note*	12/01/23	12/09/22	12/13/21	12/03/20	12/17/19
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23; 01/14 in FY 22; 12/09 in FY 21; 01/15 in FY 20

Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note*	12/12/23	12/13/22	12/13/21	12/07/20	12/17/19
Timeliness	4 days late	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23; 01/14 in FY 22; 12/09 in FY 21; 01/15 in FY 20

Hispanic Employment Plan Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note*	12/01/23	12/09/22	12/13/21	12/07/20	12/17/19
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23; 01/14 in FY 22; 12/09 in FY 21; 01/15 in FY 20

Native American Employment Plan Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note**	12/01/23	12/09/22	N/A*	N/A*	N/C
Timeliness	on time	on time	N/A*	N/A*	N/C

*ICCB allows two years of collection for new Research and Analytics submissions prior to being reviewed for Recognition.

** Due 12/08 in FY 24; 12/15 in FY 23

Underrepresented Groups Report

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Final Submission Varies See Note*	02/03/24	02/09/23	01/31/22	01/29/21	02/27/20
Timeliness	2 days late	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 02/01 in FY 24; 02/10 in FY23; 02/01 in FY22; 02/02 in FY 21; 02/28 in FY 20

Spring Semester Enrollment Survey

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission (02/15)*	02/09/24	02/07/23	02/07/22	02/08/21	01/24/20
Timeliness	on time	on time	on time	on time	on time

*Due 02/10 in FY 20

Annual Faculty Staff & Salary Data (C3)

Fiscal Year Collected	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Fiscal Year <i>of Data</i>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Final Submission – (6/15)*	06/13/24	06/20/23	06/21/22	06/15/21	06/30/20
# Submissions to Final	3	2	3	2	3
Timeliness	on time	5 days late	6 days late	on time	15 days late
# Error Codes in Final Submission	2	1	1	1	2
# Critical Errors in Final Submission	1	1	1	1	1
% Records with Errors in Final Sub.	8.92 percent	5.64 percent	5.62 percent	3.12 percent	42.34 percent
% Unknown Ethnicity** in Final no value or .	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent	0.00 percent
% Unknown Ethnicity** in Final unknown	3.35 percent	2.48 percent	2.81 percent	5.29 percent	1.58 percent
% Unknown Employment Class (8)	2.68 percent	2.93 percent	3.04 percent	2.88 percent	4.05 percent

* Due 06/17 in FY 24 and FY 19

**From Item 36 starting in FY 21 collection; from Item 37 in prior years.

Item #12.1
March 21, 2025

UNAPPROVED

Agenda
464th Meeting of the
Illinois Community College Board

Illinois Central College
Room 212C
1 College Dr
East Peoria, IL

January 31, 2025

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the following motion be adopted:

The Illinois Community College Board hereby approves the Board minutes of the January 31, 2025, meeting as recorded.

Item #1 – Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

Chair Lopez called the Board meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and asked Ann Knoedler to call roll. The following Board members were present: Maureen Banks, Mara Botman, Craig Bradley, An-Me Chung, Marlon McClinton, George Evans, Lisa Dziekan, Teresa Garate, and Sylvia Jenkins were present. Larry Peterson was absent. A quorum was declared.

Item #3 - Welcoming Remarks from Dr. Sheila Quirk-Bailey, President, IL Central College

Chair Lopez moved item #3 up in the agenda due to Dr. Quirk-Bailey currently being out of state at a conference. She joined the meeting via webex. Dr. Quirk-Bailey welcomed and thanked the Board members for holding their ICCB Board meeting at IL Central College. She also announced there will be a tour of the workforce development center at 11:30, immediately following the Board meeting.

Item #2 - Announcements and Remarks by Dr. Lazaro Lopez, Board Chair

Chair Lopez welcomed everyone to the March Board meeting. He welcome new Board Member Lisa Dziekan. Lisa works at Lamar Johnson Collaborative which is an architecture firm based in Chicago. The Board is excited to have her on the Board. The Board members welcomed her and each introduced themselves.

With the recent inauguration of the Trump Administration, the landscape of higher education has been thrown into flux, made worse by the debacle of freezing federal funds. However, it was rescinded yesterday. There are many executive orders are targeting DEI programs, or related efforts. In that context, it is important for ICCB to remember that the Board's first Goal is focused on equity for all underserved students—minorities, first generation, and low-income students and closing equity gaps. Much like the community colleges ICCB serves, the commitment to the equity goals must continue.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education has the statutory requirement to submit a budget recommendation to the Governor's Office and General Assembly on behalf of all of higher education. This includes the ICCB (inclusive of the community colleges), ISAC, the Public Universities, and IMSA, and a few other higher education entities. The Governor's Budget address is scheduled for February 19th.

Food insecurity remains a widespread issue affecting college students across the country, with estimates suggesting that 33 percent to 51 percent of college students experience food insecurity (Inside Higher Ed). Nationwide, 48 percent of students at both community colleges and universities reported food insecurity in the previous 30 days, with 25 percent of community college students experiencing very low food security. The issue disproportionately impacts students of color, with 57 percent of Black or African American students reporting food insecurity. This is one of the many ways in which community colleges have stepped up to help students meet their basic needs, empowering them to be successful academically. To this end, the ICCB kicked off an annual contest where CCs that chose to participate, will engage a food drive. For this inaugural year, 24 of the 45 colleges chose to participate and collected over 91,000 individual food items. The top 5 colleges: John Wood Community College (Quincy), Elgin Community College (Elgin), College of DuPage (Glen Ellyn), Waubesa Community College (Sugar Grove), and Shawnee Community College (Ullin). The winner, John Wood Community College, collected over half of those. A plaque was presented to the college President and staff involved.

Finally, for the January meeting, there is an annual mid-year update on the Board Goals. Brian will give his report as a part of his comments.

Item #2.1 - Recognition of John Wood Community College for Top Spot In Feed The Need Food Drive

Illinois Community Colleges are helping address food insecurity on campuses across the state through the inaugural Feed the Need, Food Drive, an initiative aimed at combating food insecurity on college campuses. Collectively, participating colleges collected more than 91,000 individual nonperishable food items for local campus and community food banks. John Wood Community College took home the top spot in the inaugural Feed the Need Food Drive, collecting the most items, and will receive a commemorative plaque during the board meeting.

Item #4 - Board Member Comments

There were no Board comments

Item #4.1 - Illinois Board of Higher Education Report

Dr. Sylvia Jenkins stated the last meeting was held on January 22, 2025 at Chicago State University and during this meeting the Board heard an update from Dr. Keith Cornille, President, Heartland Community College and Chair of the Community College Presidents' Council; Zaldwaynaka "Z" Scott, J.D., President, Chicago State University and Convener, Public University Presidents; took action on a number of items; and received a presentation on the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Recommendations.

Item #4.2 -ICCB's Adequacy and Equity in Community College Funding Work Group

Mr. George Evans stated the fourth and final meeting of the CC Funding Working Group met on January 23rd virtually, after a winter storm in Tallahassee Florida forced the consultants online. The meeting started with the consultants laying out the agenda which included most importantly finalizing the recommendations and providing some sense of their priority. Under each of the five recommendations there was some discussion:

- Recommendation 1: Conduct comprehensive funding analyses. Analysis really underpins any work going forward. After a lot of discussion about how to analyze the data, the group agreed to move this recommendation forward, with the understanding that it was really about analysis for the additional recommendations and looking across multiple funding categories.
- Recommendation 2: Establish a base funding model. In this context, the group discussed institutional size, equalization, and operational costs.

Item #12.1
March 21, 2025

- Recommendation 3: Implement an equity-driven funding model. There was consensus on supporting all student types, including adult and non-credit learners.
- Recommendation 4: Enhance equalization formula for stability. There were concerns expressed about property tax fluctuations and funding predictability.
- Recommendation 5: Analyze and improve dual credit funding structures. There was a lot of discussion on a need for greater consistency, sustainability, and faculty credentialing. This is very much tied to legislative conversations that are taking place.

All Recommendations were approved and will be incorporated into what is presented to the Board.

ICCB staff presented very preliminary funding models for state support, inflation adjustments, and equalization over 10 years. There was some Discussion on the necessity of increased state contributions to reduce reliance on tuition.

Finally, the group considered some additional considerations for the Board including. Guiding Principles: The adoption of some guiding principles, Transition Planning: Discussions about how any changes to formulas (with existing or new money) had to consider how to transition to those models (transition planning), Ramp / Timeline: What a funding ramp or timeline for new funding might look like. There was also some discussion forming taskforces or groups to consider equalization and dual credit.

TSG Advisors will compile a final report for ICCB review and Working Group feedback. The final report will be presented to the Board in March.

Item #5 – Executive Director Report

Executive Director Brian Durham stated he will go straight into item #5.1-Mid-Year Board Goals Update.

Item #5.1 - Mid-Year Board Goals Update

Executive Director Brian Durham explained the Illinois Community College Board staff periodically update the Board on the agency's progress toward the three adopted goals. Each year, during the first Board meeting of the calendar year the Board meeting provides an opportunity to share a midyear update on progress toward the goals. A presentation that detailed progress toward the goals was provided. Subsequently, the report summarizes a few of the agency's core responsibilities and related tasks that contribute to the effective support of the Board Goals.

Item #5.2 - Workforce Equity Initiative Showcase – Student Panel

The Board heard from five Workforce Equity Initiative (WEI) students from five participating colleges in the state. These five of the approximately 15,883 students served through the WEI shared their experiences from their backgrounds, the comprehensive supportive services they have received, to their success. Public Act 101-0637 provided for \$18.7 million dollars to respond to the increasing need to ensure workforce equity for African Americans in Illinois. Since 2020, the Illinois Community College Board has provided funding to approximately 20 community colleges statewide. The major goals of the WEI are to 1). accelerate the time for the targeted population to enter and succeed in postsecondary education/training programs that lead to employment in high skilled, high wage, and in-demand occupations that pay 30% above the regional living wage or on an educational pathway leading to 30% above the regional living wage, and 2) of the population to be served under this grant, a minimum of 60% must be African American. The outcomes of the WEI program have been phenomenal with over 120 WEI programs offered by the 20 participating colleges throughout the state, and 68% of completers (10,737) were employed at an average wage of over \$23.00 per hour. As of November 30, 2024, approximately 15,883 students have been served in the program which includes 11,595 (73%) African American students.

At this time, the Board took a break at 10:47 a.m. and returned at 10:56 a.m

Item #6 - Advisory Organizations

Item #6.1 - Illinois Council of Community College Presidents

During the meeting on January 24, 2025, Dr. Josh Bullock gave an update on legislative activities. A second lobbyist, Vojas Taylor, was recently contracted for one month, but a short contract through mid-February was approved for the second lobbyist. Now, approval is being sought from the ICCCP to approve a contract through June. The addition of this second lobbyist is crucial at this time, some stated, given the importance of the BAS and other key issues. Stephanie Stuart shared a list of the membership of the Legislative Committee and information about its structure. The Legislative Committee anticipates meeting on Mondays during the spring. During the Monday meetings, the Legislative Committee follows up on action items from the Friday calls.

Updates on three major legislative initiatives were shared: Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS), Common Course Numbering, and Dual Credit. On Common Course Numbering, a group has been meeting and working on items to move this forward. There is consensus around starting with community colleges (as opposed to waiting for universities). On Dual Credit, there is continuing conversation about the qualifications for instructors. Dr. Boyd thinks CAOs need better structure around what is asked from them and suggested considering expanding the group working on this issue. Again in regards to Dual Credit, HB 5020 is dead, but the concept is not. The new language that is or will be drafted/submitted is different because it is being drafted by the ICCCP. President Cornille stated that a smaller group is being pulled together on this to work on language to move a bill forward.

George Evans gave an update on the upcoming fall Presidents retreat. It will be at Walkers Bluff. There was discussion of the impact of recent federal Executive Orders and their impact on campuses and communities. Registration is now open for the current and upcoming cohorts for the Aspiring Leaders program. They are looking for one or two participants from each campus if possible. Jason Dockter gave IMWE update. Dr. Josh Bullock gave a Marketing Collaborative update on various activities. Dr. Ken Trzaska will give a full report on Competency Based Education in March. He is still planning a state summit for late spring/early summer. Dr. Spearman is serving as the PTK liaison and the PTK reception will be in April. Dr. Spearman will be sending sponsorship info out to colleges soon.

Item #6.2 - Illinois Community College Trustees Association

Mr. Jim Reed discussed the strategic plan for 2025-2027 and legislative priorities of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association. There was an emphasis on the community college baccalaureate - they reviewed the status of this initiative which is embodied in House Bill 3717 and Senate Bill 2482. CCB advocates are awaiting the Governor's State of the State address on February 19 for indications of the Pritzker administration's support. Also areas of interest are enhancing transfer and articulation policies, and preparing for the future workforce. The trustees will be traveling to Washington, DC in February to meet with U.S. Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth. Their next meeting is on March 14-15 in Naperville.

Item #7 - Committee Reports

Item #7.1 - Finance, Budgeting, Accountability and External Affairs

The committee met on the morning of January 31st at 8:00a with Sylvia, Jenkins, George Evans, Lisa Dziekan and An-Me Chung in attendance. The following items were discussed: Public Relations and Marketing Update which included Recent Press Releases, Career and Technical Education Month, and the 60th Anniversary of the Community College System, Spring 2025 Legislative Update, IBHE's Fiscal Year 2026 Higher Education Budget Recommendations, Adequacy and Equity in Funding Workgroup Update, and the FY24 ICCB Annual Student Enrollment and Completion Report.

Item #7.1a - Career and Technical Education Resolution

Item #12.1
March 21, 2025

George Evans made a motion, which was seconded by Maureen Banks, to approve the following resolution with the correction of changing the word “week” to “month” in the title:

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ~~WEEK~~ MONTH RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, February is nationally recognized as Career and Technical Education (CTE) month; and

WHEREAS, CTE’s origins stem from the signing of the Smith-Hughes Vocation Education Act of 1917, which was the first major federal investment in CTE; and

WHEREAS, CTE continues today through the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for 21st Act; and

WHEREAS, approximately 396,000 students participated in CTE across the State of Illinois and over 41,000 students graduate each year from these programs; and

WHEREAS, CTE in Illinois is instrumental in ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities, supporting students and local communities, fostering innovation, and promoting continuous improvement; and

WHEREAS, CTE programs lead in providing instruction for careers in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand occupations in fields such as, healthcare, business and finance, information technology, agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and education; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Illinois Community College Board do hereby proclaim February 2025 as Career and Technical Education Month in Illinois to raise public awareness about the important role CTE plays in preparing students for tomorrow’s careers and driving economic growth; and be it further

RESOLVED, the we recognize the teachers, students, employers, and community partners for their efforts, persistence, and accomplishments.

The motion was approved via unanimous voice vote.

Item #7.2 - Academic, Workforce, and Student Support

The committee met on the morning of January 31st at 8:00a with Mara Botman, Teresa Garate, Marlon McClinton, Maureen Banks, and Craig Bradley in attendance. The committee discussed the following: Transfer and IAI Report, Equity Plan, New Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access Plan, Workforce Equity Initiative, and New Units of Instruction.

Item #8 - New Units

Craig Bradley made a motion, which was seconded by Maureen Banks, to approve the following motion:

Item #8.1 - Lake Land College, McHenry County College, Triton College, Harry S. Truman College

The Illinois Community College Board hereby approves the following new units of instruction for the community colleges listed below:

PERMANENT PROGRAM APPROVAL

Lake Land College

- Environmental Health and Safety Services Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree (60 credit hours)
- Building Maintenance Certificate (31 credit hours)
- Maintenance Supervisor Certificate (44 credit hours)

McHenry County College

- Architectural Technology A.A.S. degree (60 credit hours)
- Radiologic Technology A.A.S. degree (60 credit hours)
- Respiratory Therapy A.A.S. degree (65 credit hours)
- Video Production and Editing A.A.S. degree (61 credit hours)
- Video Production and Editing Certificate (37 credit hours)

Triton College

- Associate in Engineering Science (A.E.S.) degree (61 credit hours)

Harry S Truman College

- Cloud Computing A.A.S. degree (60 credit hours)
- Cloud Computing Advanced Certificate (30 credit hours)

The motion was approved via unanimous voice vote.

Item #9 - Recognition of the Illinois Community Colleges

Mara Botman made a motion, which was seconded by An-Me Chung, to vote on Shawnee Community college separately and approve the following motion:

Item #9.1 - City Colleges of Chicago

The Illinois Community College Board hereby grants a status of “recognition continued” to the following districts:

City Colleges of Chicago, District 508
01 Kennedy-King College
02 Harold Washington College
03 Malcolm X College
04 Harry S Truman College
05 Olive-Harvey College
06 Richard J Daley College
07 Wilbur Wright College

The motion was approved via unanimous voice vote.

Item #9.1 - Shawnee Community College

George Evans made a motion, which was seconded by Teresa Garate, to approve the following motion:

The Illinois Community College Board hereby grants a status of “recognition continued” to the following districts:

Shawnee Community Colleges, District 531

The motion was approved via unanimous voice vote. Craig Bradley abstained.

Item #10 - Adoption of Minutes

Marlon McClinton made a motion, which was seconded by Sylvia Jenkins, to approve the following motion:

Item #10.1 - Minutes of the September 27, 2024 Board Meeting

The Illinois Community College Board hereby approves the Board minutes of the December 6, 2024, meeting as recorded.

The motion was approved via unanimous voice vote. Board member Lisa Dziekan abstained.

Item #11 - Information Items

There was no discussion.

Item #11.1 - Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Statements

Item #11.2 - FY24 ICCB Annual Student Enrollment and Completion Report

Item #11.3 - Basic Certificate Program Approval approved on behalf of the Board by the Executive Director

Item #11.4 - ICCB Annual Joint Report of the Illinois Articulation Initiative

Item #11.5 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access (DEIA) Plan

Item #12 - Other Business

There was no other business.

Item #13 - Public Comment

There was a public comment from Frank H. Brooks from the IL Education Association.

Item #14 - Executive Session

The Board did not go into Executive Session.

Item #15 - Executive Session Recommendations

There were no recommendations.

Item #15.1 - Employment/Appointment Matters

Item #16 - Adjournment

Mara Botman made a motion, which was seconded by Craig Bradley, to adjourn the Board meeting at 11:33 a.m.

The motion was approved via unanimous voice vote.

Illinois Community College Board
FISCAL YEAR 2025 APPROPRIATION SUMMARY REPORT
July 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025

	FY 2025 Appropriation	Year -to-Date Expenditures	% Expended
<u>STATE GENERAL FUNDS*</u>			
GENERAL REVENUE FUND			
GRANTS TO COLLEGES AND PROVIDERS	\$ 139,076,460	\$ 55,606,218	40.0%
ADULT EDUCATION	35,582,100	34,571,799	97.2%
GED TESTING PROGRAM	1,348,420	952,381	70.6%
CAREER & TECH EDUCATION	18,972,900	18,421,616	97.1%
OFFICE ADMINISTRATION	3,675,510	2,033,799	55.3%
TOTAL	\$ 198,655,390	\$ 111,585,813	56.2%
EDUCATION ASSISTANCE FUND			
GRANTS TO COLLEGES AND PROVIDERS	\$ 182,233,610	\$ 117,295,906	64.4%
TOTAL	\$ 182,233,610	\$ 117,295,906	64.4%
<u>SPECIAL STATE FUNDS *</u>			
CONTRACTS AND GRANTS FUND	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 910,304	9.1%
GED TESTING FUND	100,000	3,160	3.2%
ICCB RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY FUND	100,000	1,960	2.0%
PERSONAL PROPERTY REPLACEMENT TAX FUND	105,570,000	79,177,500	75.0%
TOTAL	\$ 115,770,000	\$ 80,092,924	69.2%
<u>FEDERAL FUNDS*</u>			
FEDERAL ADULT EDUCATION FUND	\$ 24,559,497	\$ 9,033,895	36.8%
FEDERAL CAREER & TECH ED FUND	20,367,341	3,810,934	18.7%
ICCB FEDERAL TRUST FUND	625,000	191,724	30.7%
TOTAL	\$ 45,551,838	\$ 13,036,553	28.6%
GRAND TOTAL, ALL FUNDS	\$ 542,210,838	\$ 322,011,197	59.4%

* See detail on following pages.

Illinois Community College Board
FISCAL YEAR 2025 APPROPRIATION SUMMARY REPORT
State General Funds
July 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025

	FY 2025 Appropriation	Year-to-Date Expenditures	% Expended
<u>GENERAL REVENUE FUND</u>			
GRANTS TO COLLEGES AND PROVIDERS			
City Colleges of Chicago	\$ 15,201,800	\$ 11,401,350	75.0%
PATH Grants	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 11,249,964	75.0%
Bridge and Transition	9,224,336	150,000	1.6%
Workforce Equity Initiative	19,570,064	19,196,364	98.1%
East St. Louis Educational Center	1,447,900	474,037	32.7%
Illinois Veterans Grant	4,264,400	-	0.0%
ILDS	650,360	278,357	42.8%
Small College	548,400	548,396	100.0%
Performance Grants	359,000	358,990	100.0%
Lincoln's Challenge Program	60,200	8,000	13.3%
Alternative Schools Student Re-enrollment	4,000,000	2,700,000	67.5%
Transitional Math and English Development (TIME and DEV)	1,000,000	197,176	19.7%
SWIC Lindenwood Center	5,900,000	2,950,000	50.0%
Advanced Manufacturing & Electric Vehicles	9,000,000	1,369,097	15.2%
Mental Health Early Action on Campus Grant	6,000,000	2,250,000	37.5%
Trade Schools	5,000,000	-	0.0%
Digital Instruction for Adult Education	2,000,000	250,000	12.5%
Noncredit Workforce Program	5,175,000	2,151,404	41.6%
Dual Credit Grants	3,175,000	73,083	2.3%
English Language Services	750,000	-	0.0%
Rock Valley Science	500,000	-	0.0%
Homelessness Prevention	250,000	-	0.0%
Workforce DEV Program 1	15,000,000	-	0.0%
Workforce DEV Program 2	15,000,000	-	0.0%
TOTAL	\$ 139,076,460	\$ 55,606,218	40.0%
OFFICE ADMINISTRATION			
TOTAL	\$ 3,675,510	\$ 2,033,799	55.3%
ADULT EDUCATION			
Adult Education Basic Grants	\$ 23,483,600	\$ 23,015,128	98.0%
Adult Education Basic Admin	300,000	70,291	23.4%
Adult Education Performance Grants	11,798,500	11,486,380	97.4%
TOTAL	\$ 35,582,100	\$ 34,571,799	97.16%
GED TESTING PROGRAM			
TOTAL	\$ 1,348,420	\$ 952,381	70.6%
CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION			
CTE LPN RN	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	100.0%
CTE Administration	644,450	148,868	23.1%
CTE Formula	16,753,500	16,753,500	100.0%
CTE Early School Leavers Grants	190,000	190,000	100.0%
CTE Early School Leavers Administration	84,950	29,248	34.4%
CTE Corrections	800,000	800,000	100.0%
TOTAL	\$ 18,972,900	\$ 18,421,616	97.1%

EDUCATION ASSISTANCE FUND

GRANTS TO COLLEGES AND PROVIDERS

Base Operating	\$ 100,636,010	\$ 62,897,506	62.5%
Equalization	81,597,600	54,398,400	66.7%
TOTAL	\$ 182,233,610	\$ 117,295,906	64.4%

GRAND TOTAL	\$ 380,889,000	\$ 228,881,720	60.1%
--------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	--------------

Illinois Community College Board
FISCAL YEAR 2025 APPROPRIATION SUMMARY REPORT

Federal Funds
July 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025

FEDERAL FUNDS*

	FY 2025 Appropriation	Carryover/Transfer	Year-to-Date Expenditures	% Expended
FEDERAL ADULT EDUCATION FUND				
GRANTS TO PROVIDERS				
Federal Basic	\$ 17,685,580		\$ 6,364,594	36.0%
Federal Basic Leadership	1,490,000		1,086,519	72.9%
EL Civics Grants	2,951,769	1,356,461	798,015	18.5%
	<u>\$ 22,127,349</u>	<u>\$1,356,461.00</u>	<u>\$ 8,249,127</u>	<u>35.1%</u>
ADMINISTRATION				
Federal Basic	\$ 632,031		\$ 481,780	76.2%
EL Civics	155,356		63,151	40.6%
Leadership	288,300		239,837	83.2%
	<u>\$ 1,075,687</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 784,768</u>	<u>73.0%</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 23,203,036</u>	<u>\$ 1,356,461</u>	<u>\$ 9,033,895</u>	<u>36.8%</u>
FEDERAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FUND				
GRANTS				
Perkins Program Grants	\$ 18,365,838		\$ 2,894,048	15.8%
Perkins Leadership	1,050,330		731,450	69.6%
Perkins Corrections	403,120		-	0.0%
Reserve	-		-	0.0%
	<u>\$ 19,819,288</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 3,625,498</u>	<u>18.3%</u>
ADMINISTRATION				
CTE Federal	\$ 548,053		\$ 185,437	33.8%
TOTAL	<u>\$ 20,367,341</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 3,810,934</u>	<u>18.7%</u>
ICCB FEDERAL TRUST FUND				
ADMINISTRATION	\$ 625,000		\$ 191,724	30.7%
TOTAL	<u>\$ 625,000</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 191,724</u>	<u>30.7%</u>
GRAND TOTAL, FEDERAL FUNDS	<u>\$ 44,195,377</u>	<u>\$ 1,356,461</u>	<u>\$ 13,036,553</u>	<u>28.6%</u>

** Expenditures from these funds cannot exceed receipts.*

**Illinois Community College Board
FISCAL YEAR 2025 APPROPRIATION SUMMARY REPORT**

**Special State Funds
July 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025**

SPECIAL STATE FUNDS*

	FY 2025 Appropriation	Year-to-Date Expenditures	% Expended
CONTRACTS AND GRANTS FUND*			
GRANTS			
ILCCO	\$ -	\$ -	
Lumina Grant		13,606	
Department of Energy IAC Grant		-	
ISAC FAFSA Grant		158,076	
IBHE Data Dashboard		-	
Tutoring Initiative		716,994	
ADMINISTRATION			
Tutoring Initiative		-	
ILCCO		21,629	
Department of Energy IAC Admin		-	
	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 910,304	9.1%
GED TESTING FUND*	\$ 100,000	\$ 3,160	3.2%
ICCB RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY FUND*	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,960	2.0%
PERSONAL PROPERTY REPLACEMENT TAX FUND	\$ 105,570,000	\$ 79,177,500	75.0%
GRAND TOTAL, SPECIAL FUNDS	\$ 115,770,000	\$ 80,092,924	69.2%

** Expenditures from these funds cannot exceed receipts.*

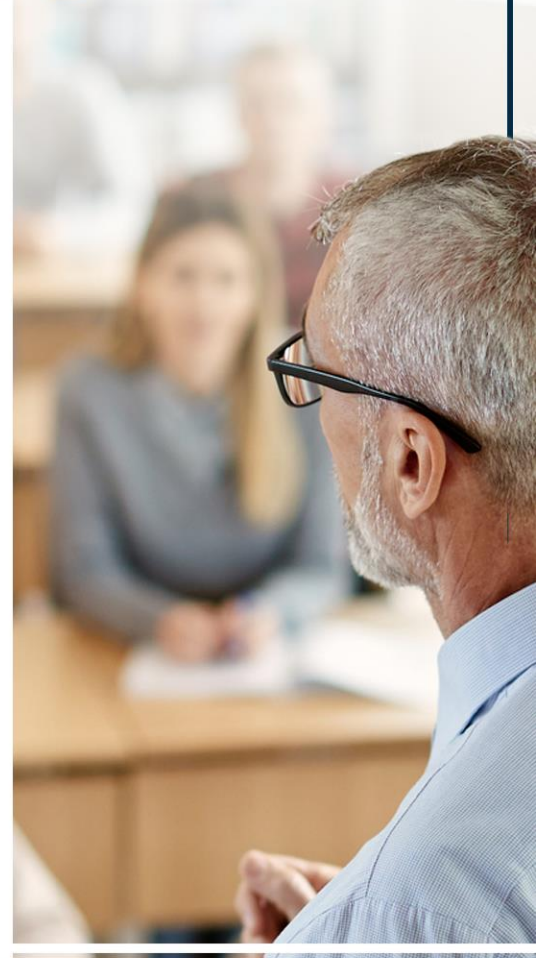
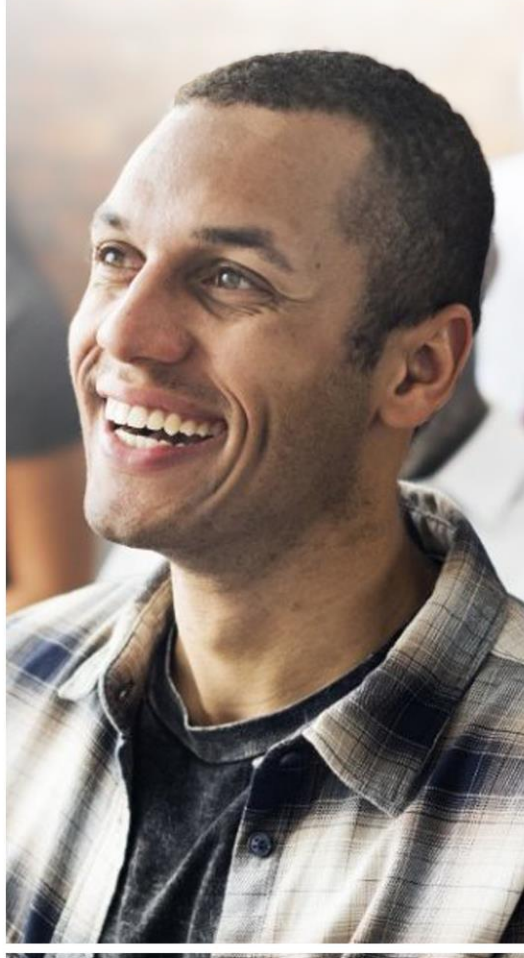
Illinois Community College Board

**FISCAL YEAR 2024 ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR
AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The ICCB staff is submitting to the Board the annual FY2024 Adult Education and Literacy Report to the Governor and General Assembly. The Annual Report represents a summary of the Adult Education and Literacy System and the services it provides. This report is submitted annually on March 1 in compliance with Public Act 91-0830, 105 ILCS 405/2- 4 and contains an overview of Adult Education and Literacy activities during fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024). These activities include: a summary of Adult Education needs and programs; federal WIOA activities under Title II Adult Education; the number of students served; High School Equivalency (HSE) information; the credit hours or units of instruction delivered; total adult education allocations; performance data; the criteria for program approval; and recommendations for future initiatives.



FY 2024 ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY



Report to the Governor
& General Assembly

ABOUT THE ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is the state coordinating organization for the Illinois Community College System - the third largest in the country and the leading public workforce development trainer in the state. The ICCB has statutory responsibility for administering state and federal grants to community college districts and adult education providers and managing high school equivalency testing for Illinois. Illinois community colleges serve over 600,000 residents each year in credit, noncredit, and continuing education courses. Illinois is home to 48 colleges in 39 community college districts which provide high quality, accessible, cost-effective educational opportunities to the entire state.

Dr. Lazaro Lopez

Chair

Dr. Brian Durham

Executive Director

Jennifer K. Foster

Deputy Executive Director

Whitney Thompson

Deputy Director for Workforce Education

Dr. Kathy Olesen-Tracey

Senior Director for Adult Education and Literacy

Contact Information:

Illinois Community College Board
401 East Capitol Avenue
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1711

Voice 217-785-0123

TDD 217-782-5645

FAX 217-524-4981

This report is available on the ICCB website at <https://www.iccb.org/>

Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois 2/27/2020–200c. For the purpose of compliance with Section 511 of Public Law 101-166 (the Stevens Amendment), approximately 100% of federal funds were used to produce this publication.



Illinois Adult Education and Literacy: Fiscal Year 2024 Executive Summary

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is the coordinating organization for the Illinois Community College System and administers Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The ICCB recognizes the importance of preparing residents with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce. The emphasis on increased literacy, English language acquisition, career development, integrated educational pathways, and work-based training reflects a commitment to addressing the evolving demands of the 21st Century economy. The expansion and scale of comprehensive adult basic education programming, English language instruction that supports the influx of new arrivals and existing immigrants, and implementation of in-demand industry training led to adult learners meeting the changing demands of local and statewide business and industry priorities. During SFY2024, ICCB Adult Education programs enrolled 63,830 students in adult basic, secondary, and English language acquisition programs. Along with the enrollment increases, Illinois has continued to improve in Measurable Skill Gains through the implementation of high-quality instruction, improved data practices, and ongoing technical assistance

The purpose of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act under WIOA Title II is:

- To assist adults to become literate and to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency.
- To assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skills needed to become full partners in the educational development of their children and that lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their families.
- To assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to post-secondary education and training, through career pathways.
- To assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their reading, writing, speaking and comprehension skills in English, mathematical skills, and acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

Additionally, as a component of the Adult Education and Literacy Program, the ICCB oversees the Integrated English Language Acquisition and Civics Education program. The IELCE program is designed to prepare English Language Learners for, and to be placed in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency through integrating with the local workforce development system.

Adult education and literacy enrollment demonstrated a consistent and upward trend since SFY 2021 with a 13.97% increase in enrollment between State Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024.



Investment in Adult Education

The ICCB led all Title II initiatives, serving adult education students working toward their high school credentials, expanding Bridge and Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System programming, providing English Language Acquisition and Civics instruction, supporting and guiding Integrated English Language and Civics Education programming, expanding workplace literacy programming, and providing basic education services for justice-involved individuals in the Illinois Department of Corrections, county jails, and transitional housing programs. Table 1 illustrates Illinois' investment in Adult Education and Literacy.

Table 1: FY2024 Adult Education and Literacy Resources Federal and State Funding	
Federal Basic	\$ 20,847,863.00
Federal IELCE	\$ 3,864,660.00
State Basic	\$ 23,483,600.00
State Performance	\$ 11,798,500.00
TOTAL	\$ 59,994,623.00

The annual Index of Need, a research project using data from the United States Census and the American Community Survey, identified 1,378,951 Illinois residents at risk with 403,256 individuals over 16 who are reading at less than a 9th grade level and 538,356 residents who are reading above 9th grade but lack a High School Diploma

SFY24 was the final year in a multi-year Adult Education and Family Literacy and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education grant. To be selected for funding, applicants were required to demonstrate past effectiveness in providing adult education instruction with the goal of transitioning adult learners to postsecondary education, training, and into employment. The following program types were funded in SFY24.

- Community-Based Organizations (17)
- Community Colleges (38)
- Correction and Reentry-Focused Programs (3)
- Illinois Department of Corrections (1)
- Faith-based Organizations (3)
- Four-Year Colleges or University (1)
- Local Education Agencies (8)

In the Spring of SFY24, a competition was held for both AEFLA and IELCE programming. Eligible applicants were required to meet demonstrated effectiveness in prior adult education service. The AEFLA grant cycle includes SFY25 and SFY26. The IELCE grant cycle is from SFY25 through SFY28. Continuation of these grants are contingent on sufficient funding and submittal and approval of an official end-of-year report that includes a demonstration of adequate and effective performance in the prior year.



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: Title II—Adult Education Activities

The ICCB is the state-level entity responsible for Title II, a member of the state of Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), and is represented on all state-level major WIOA workgroups and committees. Title-II-funded providers fulfill membership responsibilities on each Local Workforce Innovation Board (LWIB) by providing Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, High School Credit Recovery, English as a Second Language, and Vocational activities and services outlined in the Unified State Plan as well as the goals and strategies in the Expanding Career Pathway Opportunities in Adult Education Strategic Plan. The ICCB continues to work with other partners around service integration to reduce duplication and to ensure effective collaboration around the expansion and scaling of comprehensive career pathways in each local area.

The continuum of key AELA Services include:

- Adult Basic Education for learners at the most basic literacy levels.
- Adult Secondary Education to prepare learners for their High School Equivalency Certificate.
- English as a Second Language instruction.
- Integrated Education and Literacy / Civics instruction for English Language Learners.
- Bridge Programming for ABE learners to provide work-based contextualized instruction.
- College and career readiness instruction to prepare learners to transition to post-secondary education or training.
- Employability Skills instruction is embedded in all elements of Adult Education and Literacy instruction.
- Integrated Education and Training [through the ICCB's Integrated Career & Academic Preparation System (ICAPS)] that blends adult education instruction and workforce training, leading to an industry recognized credential and community college certificates at those programs administered by the state's community colleges.

Adult Education Enrollment and Performance

One of the key indicators of student success is the measurement of Education Functioning Levels. With the increase of instructional units, combined with the support for workforce preparation in integrated education and training programs, adult education programs met the WIOA Performance Targets.

Table 2: FY2024 Adult Education and Literacy Performance

Performance Indicator	Actual Performance	Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter: Participants who exited programs were in unsubsidized employment during second quarter.	24.80%	27.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter: Participants who exited programs were in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter.	27.89%	27.6%
Median Earnings: The median earnings of program participants who were in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from program.	\$6,974.00	\$4,829.00



Credential Obtainment: Participants eligible to be included in this measure obtained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within one year after exit from the program.	35.76%	30.9%
Measurable Skill Gains: Participants who were in an education or training program achieved measurable skill gains toward a recognized postsecondary credential or employment or increased their Education Functioning Level.	43.39%	37.10%

Contributing to the increased Measurable Skill Gains reported to the United States Department of Education is the 2,780 adult learners obtaining their Illinois High School Diploma. This is a 26% increase from State Fiscal Year 2023. Adult Education providers are supported in their High School Equivalency instructional programming and High School Credit Recovery programming through technical assistance from the Professional Development Network, access to the i-Pathways project (i-pathways.org) a web-based High School Equivalency Preparatory System available to all ICCB funded programs, and state facilitated outreach.

Additionally, in SFY24, 100% of adult learners in the Second Quarter Employment identified at least one barrier to employment. Using the State Performance Report from the State Adult Education Data System, the increased number of adult learners identifying barriers to employment as displaced homemakers, ex-offenders, long-term unemployed, and single parents are also notable.

Table 3: FY2024 Adult Education and Literacy Barriers to Employment			
	SFY22	SFY23	SFY24
Displaced Homemakers	616	867	968
Ex-offenders	1,015	1,333	1,667
Long-term unemployed	814	825	1,060
Single parents	2,671	3,001	3,143

Strategies to assist Illinois in meeting and exceeding Performance Outcomes include working our core partners with the Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) partners on barrier reduction. Additionally, we have exceeded the Measurable Skill Gain and Credential Attainment targets through implementing comprehensive technical assistance through the annual NRS Institute that supports improved data practices at the local level, the annual year-long Transition Academy which provides time for peer to peer sharing of promising practices along with State guidance.

Enrollment and Units of Instruction for SFY24

State Fiscal Year 2024 continued the three year increased enrollment trend and closed with a 13% increase of student enrollment compared to State Fiscal Year 2023 and led to a 13% increase in Units of Instruction.



Table 4: Enrollment and Units of Instruction

	Reimbursement Rate for FY24	SFY23 Enrollment	SFY24 Enrollment	SFY23 Units of Instruction ²	SFY24 Units of Instruction ²
ABE	\$136.39	10,891	11,613	104,003.76	111,631.75
ASE	\$122.75	5,653	6,487	49,832.55	59,680.66
ESL	\$136.39	37,646	43,796	329,112.54	381,103.36
HSCR	\$122.75	1,637	1,498	31,316.94	30,071.15
VOC	\$170.49	627	233	4,494.77	3,935.77
TOTAL		56,454	63,830	518,760.56	586,422.69

² One unit of instruction equals 15 hours of enrollment.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)

WIOA authorized and codified the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program in 2016. In an IELCE Program, literacy, English language acquisition, and civics education must be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities, accommodating services for professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries. The ICCB continued to provide guidance, research, professional development, and technical assistance to IELCE funded adult education programs to ensure the state IELCE services are meeting the guidelines of WIOA 243 regulations.

As required with this funding, local providers were required to address all components of the IELCE funding- English Language Instruction, contextualized instruction for the workplace, civics education, and access to Integrated Education and Training. Together, 33 IELCE funded programs throughout the state served 3,996 English learners.

In SFY24, the ICCB facilitated a statewide IELCE Institute, sharing promising practices for program delivery, bringing in experts from the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education and ICCB leadership, and members of the Professional Development Institute. In May of 2024, Illinois Adult Education staff were invited participants OCTAE's Enhancing Access for Refugees and New Americans (EARN) Convening to share Illinois' model of effective leadership.

Workforce Preparation

The ICCB continues to lead and support the development of work-based educational programs for the most vulnerable Illinois residents. Using key labor and market trends, the Workforce Education Division, comprised of Workforce Development, Adult Education and Literacy, and Career and Technical Education worked collaboratively to expand Illinois' talent pipeline and provide adult learners with opportunities to improve their academic, English language, and workplace skills. The ever-changing employer and workforce scenario provide the rationale for the ICCB to develop and expand the Integrated Career & Academic Preparation System (ICAPS) that accelerate and connect adult literacy instruction with workforce training leading to industry-



recognized and/or postsecondary credentials. Adult education programs are supported through the following strategies:

- **Annual Transitions Academy**, convening in the Fall with ongoing professional development and technical assistance for ICAPS and Bridge Programming throughout the year.
- **ICAPS Office Hours** - a monthly opportunity for programs to reach out with questions about processes, policies, implementation, expectations, etc.
- **Cohort Convos**, convening in late Fall to help local program leaders in both Adult Education and Literacy and Career and Technical Education have a focused and support time to plan and build their ICAPS programs.

State Fiscal Year 2024 also saw an increase in Workplace Literacy Programs, a response to specific employer needs where Adult Education and Literacy Programs partner with participating employers to provide combined literacy and job embedded instruction at employer work sites.

One funded community-based organization, World Relief, partners with over 200 different regional employers to hire their adult English learners. In SFY24, they placed 300+ English Language Learners into employment using a work-based literacy program, the Workforce Readiness Bridge. They project serving over 400 immigrants in SFY25.



World Relief students participating in a field trip to Feed My Starving Children to practices packing, weighing, and other workplace skills while giving back to their local community.



Through this process, World Relief collect local employers' needs for contextualized language and skills, and then integrate those skills into a 6-week, rolling enrollment class. Each week focused on critical U.S. workplace language and skills development, integrating hands-on practice (e.g. assembly line and quality control exercises, etc.) and project-based learning (resume creation, interview skills practice, calling in sick, digital timecard reporting, etc.). In addition to core skills for the workplace which included cultural and digital literacy skills, the program integrated trauma-informed instructional practices to provide tools to navigate stress-triggers on the job to avoid trauma responses. These trauma-informed services included interpreted mental health counseling presentations, interpreted career navigation, and interpreted success coaching.

All newly arrived refugees and asylees take this class; upon completion of the bridge, the students immediately start their first jobs in the United States. The class covers everything an onsite workplace literacy program covers and potentially more because it's curated for more than one employer and has upskilling in mind. The program is available in-person with transportation, hybrid, fully remote, and in an asynchronous format. The fully remote and asynchronous options include a hotspot and iPad for loan, as well as instructional support, 1:1 success coach sessions and transitions navigation.

Focus on SFY25

In SFY24, the ICCB and Title II programs focused on establishing Workplace Literacy programming throughout the state. Specifically, workplace literacy combines either foundational skill instruction or English language acquisition with contextualized employer related skill instruction aligned with the set of skills employees need to be successful at their jobs. Adult Education Programs and business partnerships include the following:

- *City Colleges of Chicago (Wright College):* Eli's Cheesecake Factory
- *College of DuPage:* Victor Envelope, Bensenville; Now Health Group, Bloomindale; Devanco Foods, Carol Stream; United Business Mail, Itasca; The CH Hanson Company, Naperville; and Champion Packaging, Woodridge
- *Kaskaskia College:* Swan and Butcher Engineering
- *Kishwaukee Community College:* Suter Company in Sycamore
- *Lake Land College:* CHI Overhead Doors, Arthur; Graphic Packaging International, Shelbyville
- *Literacy Chicago:* Revolution Workshop; UNITE HERE, Local 1 Union
- *McHenry County College:* Amazon in Huntly
- *Mundelein High School District #120:* D&W Fine Pack; Termax, and Smalley
- *Parkland College:* Carle Hospital in Urbana
- *Regional Office of Education #33:* Smithfield Foods, Monmouth
- *Triton College:* Dynamic Manufacturing
- *Waubensee Community College:* NEUCO (HVAC Manufacturer), Freudenberg Household Products, and General Mills

In SFY25, the ICCB will continue to focus on the development of workplace literacy programming, utilizing the Behind Every Employer – Illinois campaign. This digital campaign is designed to connect employers with Adult Education programming to improve the talent pipeline and create sustainable employee pathways.

Illinois Community College Board

**EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCESS CONSORTIUM FOR EQUITY (ECACE) REPORT AND
SCHOLARSHIP POLICY BRIEF**

The Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) released its second annual report and Scholarship Policy Brief, which provides a comprehensive picture of the work of ECACE Consortium schools and Advisory Committee. ECACE is a multifaceted effort by 62 public and private higher education institutions, six state agencies, and community partners to create and align systems and programs to meet the state's workforce needs in early childhood education and care settings and is a key strategy in the state's higher education strategic plan, "A Thriving Illinois." The Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity was created through Illinois Public Act 102-0174.

The report includes all legislatively required reporting, including but not limited to enrollment, persistence, and completion of students; outreach to students and employers; institutions' work to redesign the programs to support working adults, and employment information for enrolled workforce members.

The Scholarship Policy Brief highlights recipients of the ECACE scholarship from Academic Year 2021 through Academic Year 2024. It includes a breakdown by totals per year and demographics by race, geography, higher education sector and program enrollment.



ECACE
EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCESS
CONSORTIUM FOR EQUITY

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

of the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	5
State Agency Partners.....	5
Supplement/Infographic with Key Takeaways.....	6
Executive Summary.....	7
Findings in Brief.....	7
Report Contents, Requirements, and Methodology.....	8
Goals and Outcomes: Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion.....	8
Incumbent Workforce Enrollment.....	9
Pell Status and Adult Learners.....	10
Program Creation, Design, and Modality.....	10
Access and Engagement.....	11
Leveraging Competencies and Prior Learning.....	11
Financial Supports.....	12
ECACE Scholarship.....	12
Debt Relief.....	13
Mentors and Student Academic and Wrap-Around Supports.....	14
Outreach and Engagement.....	14
Engagement With and Responsiveness to Employers.....	16
Looking Ahead.....	16
Conclusion.....	16
Introduction.....	17
Report Contents, Requirements, and Methodology.....	18
ECACE Infrastructure.....	20
Consortium.....	20
Vision and Guiding Principles.....	20
Goal.....	20
Working Groups.....	20
Communities of Practice.....	21
Advisory Committee.....	21
Goals and Outcomes: Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion.....	22
Key Findings.....	22
Enrollment Patterns for the EC Workforce Across All Consortium Member Institutions.....	22
Incumbent Students at Community Colleges and Four-Year Institutions.....	24
Race and Ethnicity of Incumbent Workforce Members.....	25
Community Colleges.....	25
Four-Year Institutions.....	26
Pell Status.....	27
Adult Learners.....	27
Persistence and Completion of Incumbent Workforce Members.....	28
Employment Information for EC Workforce Members at Consortium College and Universities.....	28
Position Type: Most Recent Position.....	29
Job Tenure.....	29
Employer Type/Job Setting.....	30

Success and Progress of ECACE.....	32
Program Changes to Increase Access	32
Course Modalities	32
New Courses and Programs.....	33
Pathways for Student Advancement	33
Credit for Prior Learning.....	35
Course Sharing.....	36
Supervised Field Experiences	37
Collaboration Within and Across Institutions	38
Financial Supports.....	39
ECACE Scholarship Program	39
Tuition and Net Price Data to Demonstrate Cost of Attendance.....	42
Debt Relief.....	43
Providing Academic and Wrap-Around Supports	44
Role of the Mentor	45
Outreach and Engagement	47
Navigators	47
Institutional Outreach	48
Engagement With and Responsiveness to Employers	50
Funding and Budget for ECACE	51
Consortium Budget.....	51
Consortium Member Contributions	51
Grants to Community Colleges and Universities	52
Institutional Grants	52
Early Childhood Faculty Preparation Grants	52
Looking Ahead.....	54
Communities of Practice and Working Groups	54
Course Sharing/Hy-Flex Community of Practice	54
Creative Course Delivery Working Group.....	54
Reporting Working Group.....	55
ECACE Recruitment and Marketing.....	55
Consortium Sustainability	55
Institution Sustainability	55
Conclusion.....	57
References	58
Appendix A. Consortium Members.....	59
Appendix B. Advisory Committee Members, <i>as of 12/31/23</i>	61
Appendix C. IBHE Original Institutional Grant Awards	62
Appendix D. ICCB Original Institutional Grant Awards	63
Appendix E. Class Level Distribution and Degree Seeking Information.....	64
Community Colleges	64
Four-year Institutions.....	65
Degree vs. Certificate Seeking at Community Colleges.....	65



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

State Agency Partners

ECACE is administered by the Illinois Community College Board and Illinois Board of Higher Education and supported by a steering committee that additionally includes the Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC).



This report was authored by staff from Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Board of Higher Education, and Afton Partners.



ECACE HIGHLIGHTS

Reporting Period: AY22-23 (July 2022-December 2023)

The **Early Childhood Consortium for Equity (ECACE)** was created to upskill the early childhood incumbent workforce to meet the demand for well-qualified early educators in Illinois.

By the numbers...

8,229

Number of incumbent and non-incumbent workforce members **enrolled in an early childhood program** in AY22-23

4,694

Number of students who **received scholarships** in AY23-24

56.5%

Increase in **incumbent enrollment** from AY19-20 to AY22-23

1,205

Number of students whose **debt was removed**

Consortium Membership

41 Community Colleges
11 Public Universities
10 Private, Non-Profit Institutions

"I have worked in a daycare facility for over 10 years, but the pay barely allows me to cover my monthly bills, let alone have money leftover for schooling. Receiving the ECACE scholarship meant I could continue my schooling without having to get a second job to support my family!"

—Lincoln Land Community College Student

Through ECACE, higher education institutions:

Adjusted programming to meet incumbent workforce needs, including clarifying transfer pathways and recognizing prior learning.

Removed financial barriers to enrollment through scholarships and debt relief.

Increased collaboration within and across institutions to better serve incumbent workers.

Conducted outreach to incumbent workers and early childhood employers, becoming more responsive to their needs.

Provided academic and wrap around supports such as mentors to ensure student persistence and completion.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The [Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity \(ECACE\)](#) was created through [Illinois Public Act 102-0174](#) in July 2021 with the purpose of upskilling the early childhood incumbent workforce to meet the demand for well-qualified early educators in the state.¹ The Consortium is made up of 62 higher education institutions, including community colleges, public universities, and private not-for-profit institutions, working together to remove barriers for early childhood workers to enroll, persist, and complete credentials and degrees. ECACE is administered by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), in partnership with other state agencies and is also supported by an Advisory Committee of early childhood employers, advocates, state agency partners, and others.

This report includes all legislatively required reporting, including but not limited to enrollment, persistence, and completion of students; outreach to students and employers; institutions' work to redesign the programs to support working adults, and employment information for enrolled workforce members.

Findings in Brief

During this 18-month reporting period, ECACE achieved many notable things in service of upskilling early childhood incumbent workers in Illinois. Key work included the following.

- **Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion:** Supported members of the incumbent workforce to enroll, persist, and complete. From baseline (AY 2019-20) to AY 2022-23, Consortium institutions saw a **56.5 percent increase in enrollment**. In just one year – the first full year of the Consortium (AY 2022-23) – Consortium institutions experienced a **33.9 percent increase** in workforce member enrollment. Nearly **73 percent (72.9 percent)** of incumbent members of the workforce persisted or completed during this time.
- **Financial Supports:** Removed financial barriers to higher education by distributing **\$76.4 million in scholarships to 4,694 recipients** as of July 2024 and removing **outstanding debt for 1,205** total students as of December 2023.
- **Program Design and Modality:** Redesigned early childhood post-secondary programs and courses to be **more accessible** to the early childhood incumbent workforce. This included offering more **flexible formats** and modalities, ensuring seamless transfer pathways, and recognizing prior learning.
- **Transfer Pathways:** **Transferred over 2,053 students** into four-year early childhood programs, over 30 percent of whom held an AAS degree.
- **Outreach and Engagement with the Workforce and Employers:** Conducted outreach through over **2,100 events with over 40,000 members** of the incumbent workforce participating. Engagement with employers (11,382 reported connections) to be more responsive to their hiring, retention, and professional development needs.
- **Relationships:** Built stronger relationships within and across higher education institutions, **strengthening the system** to better serve incumbent workers.
- **Student Supports:** Offered holistic student supports, including mentors, coaches, and tutors that met with students over **50,000 times** and provided guidance and assistance to enrolled early childhood students, navigators to recruit and direct students to institutions, and other academic and wraparound supports to ensure persistence and completion.

In addition to these accomplishments, ICCB and IBHE, along with the institutional members, overcame challenges and learned important lessons that can inform future work supporting early educators in higher education.

- **Mentors:** Mentors were **critical in supporting students** to be successful and to persist and complete.

¹ "'Incumbent workforce' means an individual or a group of individuals working or having worked in the early childhood industry, including family child care and center-based care settings, Preschool for All school-based settings, and HeadStart, that serves children from birth to age 5 and includes teachers, assistant teachers, directors, family child care providers, and assistants" (Illinois General Assembly, 2021).

- **Scholarship:** Scholarship funds were **essential for many early childhood educators** to affordably pursue higher education.
- **Time and Resources:** **Significant time and staff resources** were required to make changes within higher education institutions. Redesigning courses or implementing a new transfer policy required lengthy approval processes across one or more terms.
- **Collaboration:** Collaboration across internal institutional teams **supported ECACE's success** at the institution.
- **Institutional Teams:** Those institutions that built **strong institutional teams reported more progress** and more student support.

Report Contents, Requirements, and Methodology

This report covers successes, challenges, and outcomes for an 18-month period from July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023, to meet Section 30 requirements of the ECACE Act. Enrollment, persistence, and completion data, however, are only for Academic Year (AY) 2022–23. Additionally, the report provides a broader narrative of the work of ECACE, including outcomes, successes, and challenges. IBHE and ICCB engaged Afton Partners to help support the data analysis and writing of this annual report. In most cases, disaggregated information is provided for community colleges and four-year Consortium public and private institutions. The Executive Summary provides limited data; more information can be found in the full report and in the appendices.

Throughout the report, we show both the change from the “baseline year” (AY 2019–20) through AY 2022–23 and the change from the “soft launch” year of the Consortium (AY 2021–22) through AY 2022–23, which was the year the Consortium work fully launched. ECACE used AY 2019–20 as a baseline year for which to measure progress, even though most of the work of ECACE was implemented beginning in AY 2022–2023.² While the ECACE Scholarship was partially awarded in AY 2021–22, AY 2022–23 was the first complete academic year that students could access the scholarship funds and in which students could access redesigned programs. AY 2019–20 was chosen as a baseline year because it was pre-pandemic and may be a better baseline for institutions to measure progress than during the pandemic, which challenged both institutions and students.

Figure 1. Timeline for the Consortium Launch and Baseline/Comparison Data



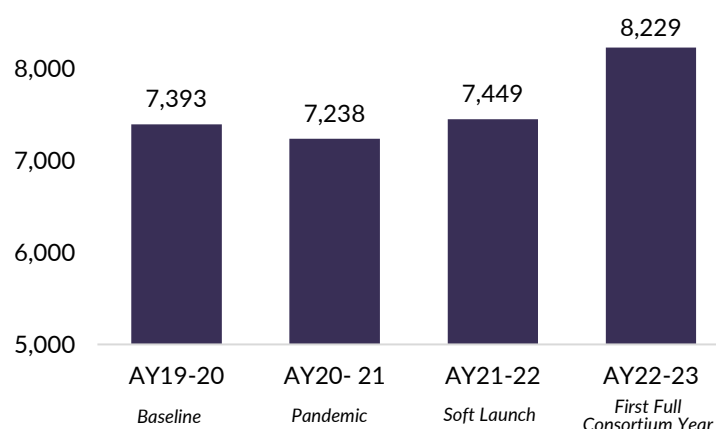
Goals and Outcomes: Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion

ECACE has set a goal to enroll 4,933 students that persist or complete by September of 2024. The data in this section suggests that the Consortium is well on its way. For context, the report first looks at overall enrollment (incumbent and non-incumbent) in early childhood programs at Consortium institutions.

Early childhood programs saw a 11.4 percent increase in overall (incumbent and non-incumbent) enrollment from 7,393 in the baseline year of AY 2019–20 through AY 2022–23. From AY 2021–22 to AY 2022–23, enrollment of all students in early childhood programs increased by 10.6 percent, from 7,449 to 8,229.

² AY 2021–2022 is considered a “soft launch” year for ECACE, as much of the year was used for planning. The first scholarships were awarded in March 2022, and institutions received grant funding to support student upskill in the Spring of 2022.

Figure 2. Overall Enrollment for Early Childhood Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Workers, AY19-20 to AY22-23³

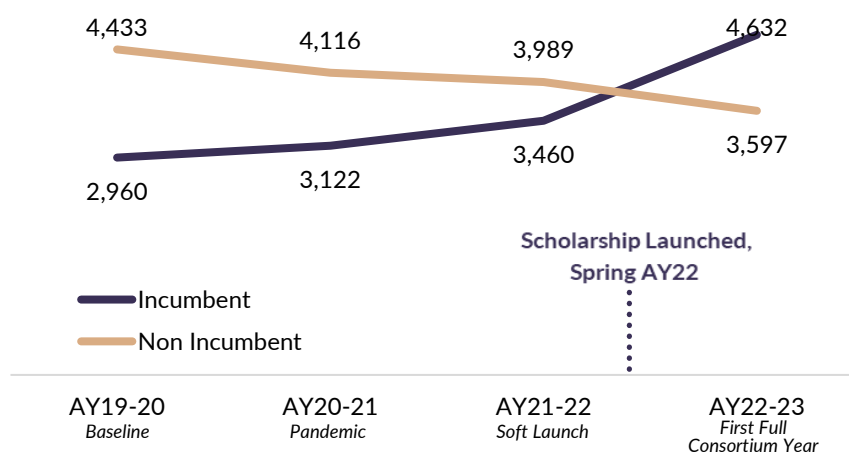


Incumbent Workforce Enrollment

Increased enrollment by incumbent workforce members seems to have driven increases in enrollment overall. Figure 3 disaggregates the enrollment data by the incumbent and non-incumbent student population. From AY 2019-20 (baseline) to AY 2022-23, Consortium institutions saw a **56.5 percent increase in enrollment** from 2,960 to 4,632 in incumbent workforce members. Interestingly, during this time, enrollment of non-incumbent workforce members decreased by 18.9 percent, from 4,433 to 3,597, a consistent downward trend from AY 2019-20.

In just one year, from AY 2021-22 to AY 2022-23, early childhood incumbent workforce members **increased by 33.9 percent** from 3,460 to 4,632. Importantly, AY 2022-23 was the first full year of the Consortium and the ECACE Scholarship. Enrollment data by sector can be found in the [Enrollment Section](#) of the full report.

Figure 3. Incumbent and Non-incumbent Worker Enrollment in All Consortium Early Childhood Programs, AY19-20 to AY22-23



The proportion of students who are members of the incumbent workforce increased as well, from 40 percent in AY 2019-20 to 56.3 percent in AY 2022-23. This held true for both community colleges and four-year colleges and universities.

³ Duplication and/or overlap of student records may exist when combining higher education sector datasets (via ICCB and IBHE) as students may concurrently enroll across sectors in the same academic year.

Table 1. Proportion of Students Who are Incumbent Workforce Members, by Sector, AY19-20 to AY22-23

	AY19-20 Baseline	AY20-21 Pandemic	AY21-22 Soft Launch	AY22-23 First Full Consortium Year
Community Colleges	44.1%	47.8%	50.7%	57.1%
Four-Year	36.1%	39.4%	43.1%	55.4%
Overall	40.0%	43.1%	46.4%	56.3%

Race and Ethnicity of Incumbent Workforce Members

As shown in Table 2, the enrollment of incumbent workers across all races increased from AY 2019-20 (baseline) to AY 2022-23, with the greatest increases in enrollment of African American students (+66.8 percent). African American incumbent students increased by 41.2 percent during the first full year of the Consortium, an increase from 633 to 894 students. Enrollment data race/ethnicity and sector can be found in [Enrollment Section](#) of the full report.

Table 2. Illinois Community College Enrollment of Incumbent Members of the Early Childhood Workforce by Race/Ethnicity, AY19-20 to AY22-23

Race/ Ethnicity	AY19-20 Baseline	AY20-21 Pandemic	AY21-22 Soft Launch	AY22-23 First Full Consortium Year	Percent Change AY19-20 to AY22-23	Percent Change AY21-22 to AY22-23
Asian	93	106	96	119	+28.0%	+24.0%
African American	536	571	633	894	+66.8%	+41.2%
Latino	849	987	1,083	1,324	+55.9%	+22.3%
White	1,287	1,278	1,452	2,007	+55.9%	+38.2%
More Than One Race	58	49	51	94	+62.1%	+84.3%
Other	137	131	145	194	+41.6%	+33.8%
Total	2,960	3,122	3,460	4,632	+56.5%	+33.9%

Pell Status and Adult Learners

The percentage of incumbent workforce members that received federal Pell grants remained relatively consistent over time at approximately 42 percent in AY 2019-20 and 44 percent in AY 2022-23. At community colleges, the percentage of Pell eligible students increased from 40.1 percent to 42.9 percent in AY 2022-23. Pell recipients remained relatively stable at four-year institutions, with 44.8 percent eligible in AY 2019-20 and 45.4 percent eligible in AY 2022-23. This may indicate that the income levels across enrolled members of the incumbent workforce have remained relatively stable with increases in enrollment.

Overall, enrollment of adult learners (age 25 and older) and non-adult learners (under age 25) increased from AY 2019-20; however, enrollment rates of those under 25 increased at a greater rate. The proportion of adult learners (over 25) who are incumbent workers decreased from 84.8 percent in AY 2019-20 to 64.0 percent in AY 2022-23.

Program Creation, Design, and Modality

Colleges and universities recognized that working adults (and their employers) benefit from a variety of modalities and program offerings and put in place programs and supports to increase access and to recognize their prior learning and competencies.

Access and Engagement

Consortium institutions took an array of approaches to support incumbent workforce members’ access to higher education, including:

- Offering **evening, weekend, and online** (both synchronous and asynchronous) courses;
- Developing **innovative online modules** designed to ensure consistent learner experience and high student engagement;
- Leveraging technology to offer **Hy-flex courses**, which allow students to choose whether to attend a class in person or virtually at a scheduled time;
- Providing **on-site courses** at child care centers, in communities, and through cohorts;
- Including opportunities for workforce members to **build community and rapport**, access instructors, and ask questions of faculty and peers, during online synchronous café-style meetings; this was important for online students, particularly those enrolled in asynchronous courses;
- Offer **accelerated courses** (typically 8 weeks) and summer courses;
- Providing **new courses and options** to meet student and provider needs, such as courses in Spanish, opportunities for more hands-on experience, apprenticeship programs, and virtual observations.

As of September 2023, institutions offered courses across the following formats: daytime in-person, evenings or weekends in person, online – both synchronously and asynchronously, and hybrid (see Table 3).

Table 3. Percentage of Institutions Offering Various Course Modalities to the Incumbent Workforce, by Sector, Fall 2022–Fall 2023

Sector	In Person	In-Person Evening or Weekend	Online Asynchronous	Online Synchronous	Hybrid
Community Colleges	85%	71%	88%	59%	N/A ⁴
Public Universities	92%	54%	92%	77%	46%
Private Institutions	80%	60%	80%	50%	70%
All Institutions	86%	66%	88%	61%	N/A

Illinois Community College Online (ILCCO)

To increase student access to courses, many community colleges began offering and accepting courses offered through ILCCO and the Online Course Exchange (OCE) or increased the number of courses offered.⁵ As of March 2024, 133 early childhood courses (up from 79 in March of 2023), were made accessible through ILCCO by 22 Consortium schools (up from 14 institutions in March of 2023). Overall, 1,683 ILCCO courses, primarily from the General Education Core Curriculum (GECC), were offered at 28 colleges (up from about 1,600 ILCCO courses at 20 colleges in March of 2023).⁶

Leveraging Competencies and Prior Learning

Colleges and universities spent considerable time developing and providing opportunities to recognize and provide credit for competencies developed prior to entering their institutions.

⁴ At least three community college institutions qualitatively reported offering hybrid courses. This choice was not an option in two-year institutional reporting forms.

⁵ Illinois Community Colleges Online (ILCCO) is a membership organization available to all Illinois community college districts. The statewide system, called the Online Course Exchange (OCE), allows community college students access to online courses at other schools when the course is unavailable online at the student’s home institution.

⁶ It is only possible to pull a point-in-time report of ILCCO courses, so this data is from March 2024 which is outside of the reporting period (July 1, 2022, to December 31, 2023).

Transfer Pathways

All Consortium four-year institutions implemented at least one pathway to support the full transfer of the applied associate degree (AAS) to the bachelor's degree. Many four-year institutions modified their early childhood programs to create better alignment with the AAS degree through modularizing courses, removing requirements for redundant coursework, and redesigning courses to reflect competencies earned and still needed. Interestingly, institutions reported that only approximately 31.7 percent of students transferring into four-year institutions held an AAS in early childhood, up from 29 percent from our first annual report. It will be interesting to see whether these patterns change over time and whether more students earn and transfer AAS degrees.

Table 4. Four Year Institutions Transfer Students, by Degree

Degree	Number of Transfer Students	Percentage of Transfer Students
AAS	650	31.7%
AA	589	28.7%
AS	75	3.7%
60+ credits	486	23.7%
Other	253	12.3%
Total	2053	100%

Credit for Prior Learning

Many institutions reported working on ways to provide course credit for prior learning. The most notable way was through providing credit for the national Child Development Associate (CDA). The CDA is a national credential that recognizes foundational competencies acquired through work experience and training as demonstrated through assessment, observation, and portfolio. While all institutions implemented a way to provide six semester hours (or the equivalent number of quarter hours) for the CDA, most credits were awarded through community colleges.

Table 5. Number of Students Receiving Credit for CDA, by Sector

Sector	# of students receiving credit for CDA
Community Colleges	321
Public Universities	6
Private, Non-Profit Institutions	22
Total	349

Financial Supports

Students benefitted from substantial funding to help them access higher education, including scholarships to take courses and debt relief, to allow them to address financial holds.

ECACE Scholarship

Whereas most sections of the report focus on work through December 2023, this section on the ECACE Scholarship covers the full 2023-24 academic year, since data was readily available. The ECACE Scholarship is intended to mitigate the often-prohibitive costs of higher education that extend beyond tuition and fees to include expenses such as books and supplies, housing, transportation, and more. In AY 2023-24, the

scholarship covered up to the full cost of attendance for both undergraduate and graduate students who are members of the incumbent early childhood workforce.⁷

For AY 2023-24, \$76.4 million in ECACE Scholarship funds were distributed to nearly 4,700 members of the incumbent workforce, 89 percent of whom were women.⁸ During this time, 41 percent of scholarship recipients attended community colleges, 35 percent attended private, nonprofit institutions, and 24 percent attended public universities. This is a large increase from AY 2022-23, in which \$29.6 million in scholarship funds were distributed to nearly 2,100 members of the incumbent workforce and from AY 2021-22 (the soft launch of the ECACE scholarship) where only \$5.7 million in scholarship funds were distributed to a little over 400 members of the incumbent workforce.

Table 6. Scholarship Data by Sector, AY23-24

Sector	Applications	Recipients	Total Awards	Average Award per Student	Institutions with Scholarship Students
Community Colleges	3,105	1,930	\$18,991,428	\$6,116	41 of 41 Institutions
Public Universities	1,450	1,142	\$26,021,054	\$17,946	11 of 11 Institutions
Private, Non-Profit Institutions	2,079	1,622	\$31,399,956	\$19,359	10 of 10 Institutions
TOTAL	6,634	4,694	\$76,412,438	\$16,279	62 of 62 Institutions

For AY 2023-24, 45 percent of scholarship recipients were persons of color. Of all recipients, 43 percent identified as White, 21 percent Black or African American, 17 percent Hispanic or Latino, 2 percent Asian, 5 percent more than one race or ethnicity, and 12 percent either preferred not to answer or did not provide a response. The racial makeup of scholarship recipients was relatively similar to that of Illinois early childhood workforce members in licensed child care centers overall, as reported in 2020. One notable difference: 43 percent of scholarship recipients identify as White; whereas 54 percent of early childhood classroom staff and directors in licensed child care centers identify as White (Whitehead, 2021).

Debt Relief

Institutions were encouraged to use ECACE grant funds to eliminate outstanding account balances and financial holds for early childhood students to ensure unpaid balances did not prevent them from completing their degree or credential. From July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023, 1,205 total students were awarded debt relief. Some institutions experienced challenges eliminating student debt due to issues of privacy, debt already sent to collections, debt held at other (non-Consortium) institutions, the potential tax burden, and students' concerns about the legitimacy of the offer of funding.

Because of the ECE Scholarship I have earned, I am one semester away from my 2nd degree, I earned a substantial raise at work and got promoted to the center Director. NONE of this would have been possible if this grant was not available. It is because of this grant that I also have enrolled in ISU for the fall to pursue my B.A in ECE. This grant has changed the trajectory of my life and has impacted my family's life tremendously. Because of this grant I can continue to grow and advance in a field that I absolutely enjoy. My current and future students at my center deserve to have the best educators in their classroom. This grant is making that possible.

– Student Testimony, Joliet Junior College

⁷ Students attending participating private, not-for-profit institutions were eligible to receive a scholarship amount that did not exceed the cost of the most expensive early childhood program at an Illinois public university.

⁸ Less than 1% were men; the remaining 9% did not respond.

Mentors and Student Academic and Wrap-Around Supports

Consortium institutions provided academic and holistic support to ensure that workforce members can acquire needed skills to be successful in academic and workplace settings and to persist and complete credentials and degrees. Mentors played a key role in providing students with these supports. From July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023, mentors met with Consortium students more than 50,000 times to provide technical assistance, support, and coaching through text messaging, phone calls, and emails; in-person and virtual meetings; office hours; and group workshops in ways that met their preferences and schedules.

Mentor roles varied by institution; examples of services provided include but are not limited to the following.

- Enrollment support and active assistance to apply for and access the ECACE scholarship.
- Monitoring of academic process, intervening, and providing assistance to access services.
- Tutoring for coursework and the content test required for teacher licensure.
- Opportunities to connect with faculty and peers to create a sense of community.
- Academic advising.
- Non-academic supports such as professional development in time management, resume development, financial management, opportunities to engage with industry professionals.
- Wellness and emotional supports, as many mentors reported high rates of stress for those going to school and working; mentors also reported high rates of burnout and mental health related challenges.

...the second thing I want to address is the importance of the ECE mentors. I cannot tell you how many times my mentor has sent me reminders to get something in and where to apply for the ECE scholarship, helped me get a loaner laptop, checked in for other ways that she can help me be successful. They are a need for the Early Childhood department to be successful. I would not have started classes to begin with without my mentor reaching out to me and letting me know this program was available. She has brought in new students that would've never went to college if she would not have made that effort.

- Student Testimony (Highland Community College)

Outreach and Engagement

Outreach and engagement with the incumbent workforce were conducted by both ECACE higher education navigators and institutions. Both groups worked to make connections with early childhood employers and to be responsive to their needs.

Between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023, institutions held 2,137 outreach events to engage employers and the workforce and reported 40,253 individuals participating in these events.⁹ Additionally, institutions reported connections with 11,382 employers and/or schools over that same period.¹⁰ Institutions have increased their outreach efforts over time, as last year, between July and December 2022, they held just under 500 events, engaged 7,800 participants, and connected with over 1,000 employers.

⁹ The number of individuals is **not** an unduplicated count.

¹⁰ The number of employers and schools is **not** an unduplicated count.

Table 7. Institutions' Outreach Events, Participants, and Connections with Employers, by Sector, July 2022 – December 2023

Sector	# Outreach Events	# Participants	# Connections with employers or schools
Community Colleges	1,233	28,756	10,191
Public Universities	383	8,223	575
Private, Non-Profit Institutions	521	3,274	616
Total	2,137	40,253	11,382

Between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023, navigators conducted outreach and provided extensive technical assistance to the incumbent workforce and early childhood providers. Specifically, navigators held 1,580 general information sessions and an additional 975 outreach meetings. Other outreach methods included mailing information materials (2,231 times), calling providers and workforce members (7,279 times), and sending emails (29,028 times).

Over the 18-month reporting period, navigators sent 39,950 emails to provide technical assistance (TA), held 2,877 in person meetings and another 1,874 virtual meetings, sent 617 texts and made 1,063 phone calls. This resulted in providing over 5,253 workforce members with technical assistance.¹¹ A total of 821 students were known to have been directly connected to institutions by a navigator. We know that more students benefited from connections, as navigators only began officially collecting and reporting this information as of the fall of 2023.

Table 8. Outreach Activities, Technical Assistance Provided, and Workforce Members Served by Navigators, July 2022 – December 2023

Category	Activity	Number
Outreach Activities	General Information Sessions	1,580
	Outreach Meetings	975
	Mailing Information Materials	2,231
	Phone Calls to Providers and Incumbent Workforce	7,279
	Sending Emails	29,028
	Interest Form Requests	4,914
Technical Assistance Provided	Emails	39,950
	In-Person Meetings	2,877
	Virtual Meetings	1,874
	Texts	617
	Phone Calls	1,063

Table 8, continued

Category	Activity	Number
Workforce Members Served	# Workforce Members Receiving TA	5,253
	# Students Connected to Institution by Navigator	821

¹¹ This information only started being collected in April 2023, so the true number of workforce members assisted is likely much higher.

Engagement With and Responsiveness to Employers

Nearly all institutions engaged with local early childhood providers for recruitment into their programs. Cognizant of employer demands, many institutions scheduled their outreach during times most convenient for them, including during staff meetings and nap and break times.

Additional ways of engaging with and being responsive to employer needs included the following.

- Collecting feedback from employers on industry trends, training, and hiring needs.
- Incorporating additional training on topics identified as areas of need by employers.
- Participating in local advisory boards or attending committee meetings related to early childhood topics to stay attuned to industry demands.
- Creating and engaging in collaborations across employers and technical assistance providers, workshops and curriculum counseling.
- Establishing and/or continuing advisory boards to solicit feedback on their curriculum

Finally, institutions served employers by helping fill their open positions. A few institutions integrated job preparation into their program, offering resume development, interview preparation, and sharing job openings with their students. Additionally, several institutions hosted job fairs with local employers to try to connect their students with those job openings.

Looking Ahead

While the Consortium and its institutions have accomplished much since the inception of ECACE, and especially over this reporting period, there is still more to do to remove barriers and increase opportunities to access degrees and credentials of the incumbent workforce, as laid out in legislation and identified by institutions and state agencies. The institutional grants and scholarships provided to students have had a huge impact on enrollment, persistence, and completion and institutions' ability to support students and remove barriers. Institutional grants expired in June 2024, and scholarship funds were significantly reduced, even with the state investment of \$5 million appropriated in the FY 2024-25 budget. Institutions and state agencies have been planning for how to best sustain the most important elements of the work, continue to accomplish the goals and activities set out in legislation, and continue to support and upskill the incumbent workforce.

Specifically, the Consortium is standing up communities of practice and working groups in AY 2024-25 and strategically thinking about a longer-term sustainability plan for how the Consortium will work together and accomplish the goals laid out in the Act. Similarly, institutions have developed individual sustainability plans to continue to support the incumbent workforce and remove barriers to their enrollment, persistence, and completion.

Conclusion

In this reporting period, the Consortium and its institutional members increased enrollment, persistence and completion of the early childhood workforce; adjusted program and course design to be more accessible to working adults; provided scholarships and debt relief to students to remove financial barriers to higher education; conducted outreach and engaged with early childhood employers to best meet their needs; and provided students supports to assist early childhood workforce members to persist and complete.

While AY 2024-25 will prove challenging with the end of institutional grants, the Consortium is making plans to continue supporting the incumbent early childhood workforce by maintaining student supports and program changes where possible, adjusting strategies such as recruitment messaging, collecting data to measure the progress and value of ECACE, and innovating additional strategies to make higher education more accessible for the early childhood workforce. Additionally, as the Consortium looks toward "Phase 2", it envisions additional collaborative, cross-consortium work to continue to network, learn, share, and create seamless pathways for working adults.

INTRODUCTION

The Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) was created by [Illinois Public Act 102-0174](#) with the purpose of upskilling the early childhood incumbent workforce to meet the demand for well-qualified early educators in the state.¹² The Consortium is made up of 62 higher education institutions, including community colleges, public universities, and private not-for-profit institutions, working together to remove barriers for early childhood workers to enroll, persist, and complete credentials and degrees. ECACE is administered by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) in partnership with other state agencies and is also supported by an Advisory Committee of early childhood employers, advocates, state agency partners, and others. ECACE builds on previous Illinois initiatives to bring together higher education institutions to support the incumbent early childhood workforce through credential and degree attainment.

The early childhood workforce is made up primarily of women, many of whom are women of color. According to a 2020 report from the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA), about 96 percent of those working in licensed child care settings are women, and 47 percent of teaching staff in licensed child care settings identify as people of color (Whitehead, 2021). Many of these early childhood workers are balancing full-time employment, family needs, and other responsibilities that have historically made it difficult to pursue and complete postsecondary credentials. Additionally, low wages in the early childhood field serve as a barrier to accessing higher education. As of July 2023, median teacher wages in Illinois range from \$15.40-17.00/hour, depending on the region of the state (IDHS Division of Early Childhood, 2024). ECACE was created to address these barriers and upskill the early childhood workforce in Illinois.

The ECACE Act went into effect on July 28, 2021. From Academic Years (AY) 2022-24, IDHS allocated over \$200 million in federal child care funding to support ECACE activities. ECACE was “soft launched” in AY 2021-22, with ECACE Scholarship awards first made in March 2022. This report highlights enrollment of students in AY 2022-23, from fall 2022 through summer 2023 – the first full year of the Consortium; additionally, it highlights work accomplished by the Consortium between July 2022 and December 2023.

During this 18-month reporting period, ECACE achieved many notable things in service of upskilling early childhood incumbent workers in Illinois. Key work included the following.

During this 18-month reporting period, ECACE achieved many notable things in service of upskilling early childhood incumbent workers in Illinois. Key work included the following.

- **Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion:** Supported members of the incumbent workforce to enroll, persist, and complete. From baseline (AY 2019-20) to AY 2022-23, Consortium institutions saw a **56.5 percent increase in enrollment**. In just one year – the first full year of the Consortium (AY 2022-23) – Consortium institutions experienced a **33.9 percent increase** in workforce member enrollment. Nearly **73 percent (72.9 percent)** of incumbent members of the workforce persisted or completed during this time.
- **Financial Supports:** Removed financial barriers to higher education by distributing **\$76.4 million in scholarships to 4,694 recipients** as of July 2024 and removing **outstanding debt for 1,205** total students as of December 2023.
- **Program Design and Modality:** Redesigned early childhood post-secondary programs and courses to be **more accessible** to the early childhood incumbent workforce. This included offering more **flexible formats** and modalities, ensuring seamless transfer pathways, and recognizing prior learning.

¹² "'Incumbent workforce' means an individual or a group of individuals working or having worked in the early childhood industry, including family child care and center-based care settings, Preschool for All school-based settings, and HeadStart, that serves children from birth to age 5 and includes teachers, assistant teachers, directors, family child care providers, and assistants" (Illinois General Assembly, 2021).

- **Transfer Pathways:** Transferred over 2,053 students into four-year early childhood programs, over 30 percent of whom held an AAS degree.
- **Outreach and Engagement with the Workforce and Employers:** Conducted outreach through over 2,100 events with over 40,000 members of the incumbent workforce participating. Engagement with employers (11,382 reported connections) to be more responsive to their hiring, retention, and professional development needs.
- **Relationships:** Built stronger relationships within and across higher education institutions, strengthening the system to better serve incumbent workers.
- **Student Supports:** Offered holistic student supports, including mentors, coaches, and tutors that met with students over 50,000 times and provided guidance and assistance to enrolled early childhood students, navigators to recruit and direct students to institutions, and other academic and wraparound supports to ensure persistence and completion.

In addition to these accomplishments, ICCB and IBHE, along with the institutional members, overcame challenges and learned important lessons that can inform future work supporting early educators in higher education.

- **Mentors:** Mentors were critical in supporting students to be successful and to persist and complete.
- **Scholarship:** Scholarship funds were essential for many early childhood educators to affordably pursue higher education.
- **Time and Resources:** Significant time and staff resources were required to make changes within higher education institutions. Redesigning courses or implementing a new transfer policy required lengthy approval processes across one or more terms.
- **Collaboration:** Collaboration across internal institutional teams supported ECACE's success at the institution.
- **Institutional Teams:** Those institutions that built strong institutional teams reported more progress and more student support.

Looking ahead, the Consortium as a whole and its makeup of individual institutions are developing sustainability plans to continue to support the incumbent early childhood workforce since federal funding ended in June 2024. The General Assembly included \$5 million in scholarships for students in AY 2024-25, substantially less than the federal grant funding, and no funding was provided for institutions.

Report Contents, Requirements, and Methodology

The Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Act delineates requirements pertaining to the work of the Consortium and related reporting. Section 30 of the Act requires the Consortium to “report to the General Assembly, the Senate and House Committees with oversight over higher education, the Governor, and the Advisory Committee on the progress made by the Consortium” (Illinois General Assembly, 2021). This document includes all required reporting. It additionally provides a broader narrative of the work of ECACE, including outcomes, successes, and challenges.

This report is intended to cover successes, challenges, and outcomes for an 18-month period from July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023. Enrollment, persistence, and completion data, however, is only for AY 2022-23. Data for the report was compiled from various sources, including IBHE and ICCB standard collections, institutions' quarterly grant reports, navigator monthly reports, surveys of institutions, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission's (ISAC) ECACE Scholarship data, meetings, and other sources.

IBHE and ICCB engaged Afton Partners to help support the data analysis and writing of this annual report. Afton Partners analyzed six quarters of both quantitative and qualitative data from each of the institutions. Qualitative data was anonymized and entered into an artificial intelligence (AI) platform, AILYZE, to identify themes. Afton staff subsequently read through all raw data to validate themes and identify specific quotes and examples.

In addition, to report on incumbent workforce member enrollment and job status for enrolled students, IBHE and ICCB implemented an innovative cross-agency data matching project, which included data from three state agencies – IBHE, ICCB, and ISAC – and the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA). The data matching project included early childhood enrollment and completion information at the student level derived from IBHE’s Illinois Higher Education Information System and ICCB’s Centralized Data System.¹³ It also included ECACE scholarship information on both application and receipt at the student level from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission and Gateways to Opportunity employment information at the individual level from INCCRRA. Matching data with INCCRRA allowed the Consortium to determine which students have been employed in licensed child care settings. For this first report, the Consortium was not able to access ISBE data, which would enable the Consortium to include information on enrollment of the incumbent workforce in a school/district setting. For future reports, there are plans to potentially include additional information from ISBE on ECEC paraprofessionals working in school district settings.

Throughout the report, we show both the change from the “baseline year” (AY 2019–20) through AY 2022–23 and the change from the “soft launch” year of the Consortium (AY 2021–22) through AY 2022–23, which was the year the Consortium work fully launched. ECACE used AY 2019–20 as a baseline year for which to measure progress, even though most of the work of ECACE was implemented beginning in AY 2022–2023.¹⁴ While the ECACE Scholarship was partially awarded in AY 2021–22, AY 2022–23 was the first complete academic year that students could access the scholarship funds and in which students could access redesigned programs. AY 2019–20 was chosen as a baseline year because it was pre-pandemic and may be a better baseline for institutions to measure progress than during the pandemic, which challenged both institutions and students.

Figure 4. Timeline for the Consortium Launch and Baseline/Comparison Data



¹³ Data from Rockford University was not available at the time of this report.

¹⁴ AY 2021–2022 is considered a “soft launch” year for ECACE, as much of the year was used for planning. The first scholarships were awarded in March 2022, and institutions received grant funding to support student upskill in the Spring of 2022.

ECACE INFRASTRUCTURE

The ECACE Act established two bodies that, with the support of state agencies, provide the infrastructure for the ECACE Initiative: the Consortium and the Advisory Committee. Additionally, a Steering Committee made up of five state agencies – Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) – met bi-weekly and then bi-monthly starting in 2021 to advise on overall ECACE activities, plan for Advisory Committee meetings, and discuss shared workforce issues to promote increased alignment.¹⁵

Consortium

The legislative charge of the Consortium is to “serve the needs of the incumbent early childhood workforce and the employers of early childhood educators and to advance racial equity while meeting the needs of employers by streamlining, coordinating, and improving the accessibility of degree completion pathways for upskilling and the sustained expansion of educational pipelines at Illinois institutions of higher education” (Illinois General Assembly, 2021).

Consortium members include all public universities and community colleges in the state that offer early childhood programs. Membership of private, not-for-profit universities is optional and encouraged. As of December 2023, there were 62 Consortium members: 41 community colleges, 11 public universities, and ten private non-profit institutions. IBHE and ICCB convene and provide administrative support to the Consortium, which met in-person three times between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023. Meeting materials can be found on the website: www.ecace.org.

Vision and Guiding Principles

The vision for the Consortium is for institutions to collectively and individually address opportunities and barriers for the early childhood workforce to access, persist, and complete credentials and degrees. Guiding Principles ground the work, inform how the Consortium operates, and shape how institutions interact with each other. More information can be found on the [website](#).

- Center student success;
- Share leadership;
- Behave as equals;
- Respect Consortium agreements while accommodating institutional differences; and
- Simplify student navigation.

Goal

The collective goal of the Consortium, as determined by the Board of Higher Education's Strategic Plan Educator Workforce subgroup, is to enroll 4,933 students that persist or complete an early childhood credential or degree by September 2024.

Working Groups

Working Groups were created to develop strategies, metrics, and implementation plans for discrete projects of the Consortium. In AY 2022, two working groups were convened: the first developed the Guiding Principles for the Consortium, the second developed a policy framework for institutions to provide higher education credit to those who have an active Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, a requirement

¹⁵ The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development was part of the original Steering Committee; the office sunset in September 2023.

of the legislation. Additional Working Groups are planned for AY 2023-24 related to Creative Course Delivery and Reporting (see more details in the [Looking Ahead](#) section).

Communities of Practice

Organized by topic, Communities of Practice were a place for institutions to share challenges, uplift best practices, and engage in collective problem solving. Several Communities of Practice have been formed since the start of ECACE, including ones on AAS Transfers, Curriculum Redesign, Debt Relief, and Mentoring (all described in the [Success and Progress of ECACE](#) section).

Advisory Committee

The ECACE Act originally charged five state agencies – IBHE, ICCB, ISBE, IDHS, and the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development – with jointly convening and co-chairing the Advisory Committee to provide guidance on the operation of the Consortium. The Advisory Committee fosters dialogue between statewide partners and ensures Consortium members recognize a myriad of perspectives – including employers, working adult students, advocates, and state agencies – as they develop policies and processes to support early childhood students at their institutions.¹⁶ The Advisory Committee has formally adopted the following responsibilities.

- Act as champions for the Consortium and purposes of PA 102-0174.
- Review reports submitted by the Consortium.
- Provide advice and recommendations to the lead agencies and higher education institutions as they meet their responsibilities as detailed in the Act.
- Provide a forum to bring together employers in the early childhood care and education industry, higher education, and other stakeholders to share perspective to best support the work of the Consortium.
- Provide consultation and feedback to the state agencies charged with setting new metrics and goals for the Consortium after the close of the 2024-25 academic year.

The Advisory Committee’s member composition, as defined in the legislation, includes representation from child care providers, school districts, early childhood advocates, legislators, other state agencies, labor unions, public and private colleges and universities, and other experts. The Advisory Committee’s unique membership brings together cross-sector stakeholders that provide different and representative perspectives to issues facing the field of early childhood. Members are appointed by legislatively designated co-chairs of the Committee, state agency members, or the chairperson of the Illinois Senate and House Higher Education Committees. The Advisory Committee met six times between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023.

¹⁶ GOECD closed in September 2023. Since then, the Advisory Committee has been co-chaired by representatives from the other four state agencies. As of July 2024, legislation was amended to remove the now defunct department as co-chair, replaced with a representative from the newly formed Department of Early Childhood.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES: ENROLLMENT, PERSISTENCE, AND COMPLETION

Key Findings

- **Enrollment of Incumbent Workforce Members:** From AY 2019-20 (baseline) to AY 2022-23, Consortium institutions saw a **56.5 percent increase in enrollment** from 2,960 to 4,632 in student incumbent workforce members in their EC programs.
- **Proportion of Incumbent Workforce Members:** The proportion of students who are members of the incumbent workforce **increased 40 percent in AY 2019-20 to 56.3 percent in AY 2022-23**. Substantial increases were also seen for both community colleges (44.1 percent to 57.1 percent) and four-year colleges and universities (36 percent to 55.4 percent).
- **African American Incumbent Workforce Members:** The enrollment of incumbent workers across all races increased from AY 2019-20 (baseline) to AY 2022-23, with **the greatest increases in enrollment of African American students (66.8 percent)**. African American incumbent students increased by 41.2 percent during the first full year of the Consortium, an increase from 633 to 894 students.
- **Latino Incumbent Workforce Members:** Strong gains were made by Latino students, with a **55.9 percent increase in enrollment** from baseline (AY 2019-20) of 849 to 1,324 and 22.3 percent increase during the first full year of the Consortium from 1,083 to 1,324.
- **Pell Grant Receipt:** The percentage of incumbent workforce members that received federal Pell grants experienced a slight uptick with approximately 42 percent in AY 2019-20 and 44 percent in AY 2022-23.
- **Adult Learners:** The proportion of adult learners (over age 25) who are incumbent workers decreased from 84.8 percent in AY 2019-20 to 64.0 percent in AY 2022-23. This trend is consistent at both community colleges and four-year institutions, with greater decreases at four-year institutions.
- **Persistence and Completion:** Nearly **73 percent (72.9 percent)** of incumbent members of the workforce persisted or completed from AY 2021-22 to AY 2022-23. Completion and impact of the initiative will continue to be closely monitored in future years as it will allow the needed timeframe for measurement (this is particularly critical in the four-year sector, in allowing four years for graduation).¹⁷

The ECACE Act requires the Consortium to report on enrollment and persistence and/or completion of the early childhood workforce at Consortium institutions. In addition, the Consortium is charged with reporting on background information about the early childhood workforce, including years worked and type of employer. Information in this section includes full Consortium enrollment from the baseline year of AY 2019-20 through AY 2022-23. ECACE uses AY 2019-20 as a baseline year for which to measure progress, even though most of the work of ECACE was implemented beginning in AY 2022-2023.¹⁸ This year was chosen because it was pre-pandemic and may be a better baseline for institutions to measure progress than during the pandemic, which challenged both institutions and students.

The impact on student enrollment and success due to the Consortium was fully measured in AY 2022-23, with colleges executing grant agreements in late Spring 2022. Beginning in AY 2022-23, colleges and universities redesigned and built their early childhood program infrastructure to engage in outreach and engagement efforts and wholly provide student financial and academic supports. Additionally, while the ECACE Scholarship was partially awarded in AY 2021-22, AY 2022-23 represented the first complete academic year that students could access the scholarship funds.

Enrollment Patterns for the EC Workforce Across All Consortium Member Institutions

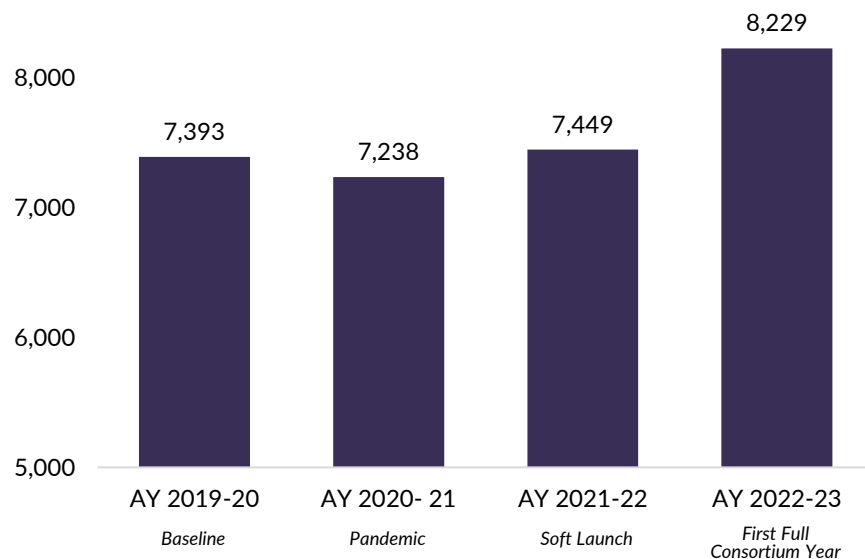
For context, we start with overall enrollment (incumbent and non-incumbent). Early childhood programs across Consortium institutions saw a 11.4 percent increase in overall enrollment from 7,393 in the baseline

¹⁷ Completion data was not available for AY 2022-2023 for several institutions at the time of the report and is therefore not included.

¹⁸ AY 2021-2022 is considered a “soft launch” year for ECACE, as much of the year was used for planning. The first scholarships were awarded in March 2022, and institutions received grant funding to support student upskill in the Spring of 2022.

year of AY 2019–20 through AY 2022–23. From AY 2021–22 to AY 2022–23, enrollment of all students in early childhood programs increased by 10.6 percent, from 7,449 to 8,229.

Figure 5. Overall Enrollment for Early Childhood Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Workers, AY19-20 to AY22-23 ¹⁹

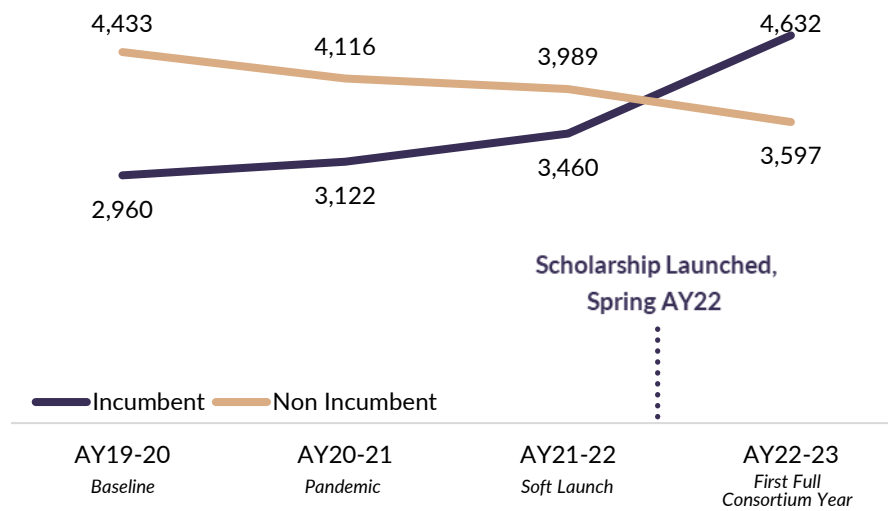


When looking at incumbent workforce members, the increases were even more substantial. From AY 2019-20 (baseline) to AY 2022-23, Consortium institutions saw a 56.5 percent increase in enrollment from 2,960 to 4,632 in incumbent workforce members. Interestingly, during this time, enrollment of non-incumbent workforce members decreased by 18.9 percent, from 4,433 to 3,597, a consistent downward trend from AY 2019-20.

In just one year, from AY 2021-22 to AY 2022-23, early childhood incumbent workforce members increased by 33.9 percent from 3,460 to 4,632. Importantly, AY 2022-23 was the first full year of the Consortium and the ECACE Scholarship.

¹⁹ Duplication and/or overlap of student records may exist when combining higher education sector datasets (via ICCB and IBHE) as students may concurrently enroll across sectors in the same academic year.

Figure 6. Incumbent and Non-incumbent Worker Enrollment in All Consortium Early Childhood Programs, AY19-20 to AY22-23

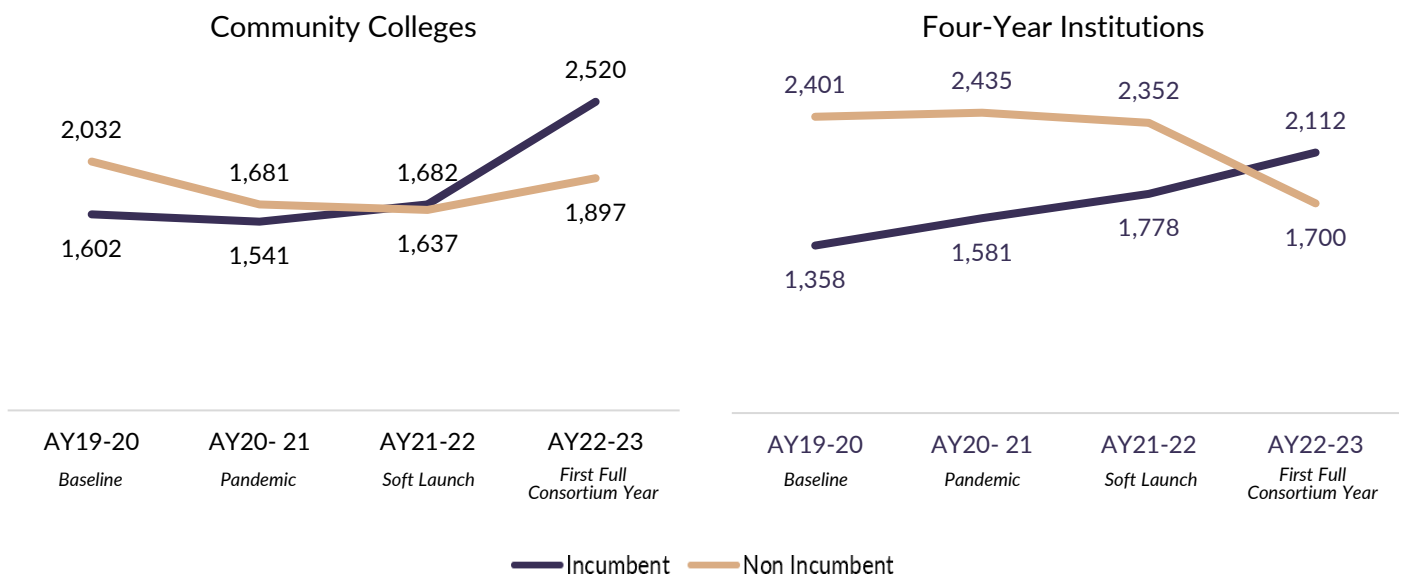


Incumbent Students at Community Colleges and Four-Year Institutions

Community colleges saw a substantial increase in incumbent enrollment, 57.3 percent from 1,602 in AY 2019-20 (baseline) to 2,520 in AY 2022-23 (first full year of the Consortium); non-incumbent enrollment declined 6.6 percent. In just the first full year of the Consortium, Community colleges experienced a 49.8 percent increase, from 1,682 to 2,520 in incumbent enrollment.

Four-year institutions saw a similar increase in enrollment of 55.5 percent from 1,358 in AY 2019-20 (baseline) to 2,112 in AY 2022-23. During this time, non-incumbent enrollment decreased significantly, by 29.2 percent. During just the first full year of the Consortium, incumbent enrollment in four-year early childhood programs increased by 18.8 percent, from 1,778 to 2,112.

Figure 7. Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Enrollment in EC Programs at Community Colleges and Four-Year Institutions, AY19-20 to AY22-23



Both community colleges and four-year institutions experienced a significant shift in the proportion of students that are part of the incumbent workforce, with incumbent workforce members increasing from 44.1 percent to 57.1 percent in community colleges and from 36.1 percent to 55.4 percent at four-year institutions from AY 2019-20 to AY 2022-23.

The most significant shift in enrollment composition happened during the first full year of the Consortium, with incumbent enrollment in community colleges increasing by 6.4 percentage points (from 50.7 to 57.1 percent for incumbent) and four-year institutions increasing by 12.3 percentage points (from 43.1 to 55.4 percent for incumbent).

Table 9. Proportion of Students Who are Incumbent Workforce Members, by Sector, AY19-20 to AY22-23

	AY19-20 Baseline	AY20-21 Pandemic	AY21-22 Soft Launch	AY22-23 First Full Consortium Year
Community Colleges	44.1%	47.8%	50.7%	57.1%
Four-Year	36.1%	39.4%	43.1%	55.4%
Overall	40.0%	43.1%	46.4%	56.3%

Race and Ethnicity of Incumbent Workforce Members

As shown on Table 10, the enrollment of incumbent workers across all races increased from AY 2019-20 (baseline) to AY 2022-23, with the greatest increases in enrollment of African American students (66.8 percent). African American incumbent students increased by 41.2 percent during the first full year of the Consortium, an increase from 633 to 894 students.

Strong gains were also made by Latino students, with a 55.9 percent increase in enrollment from baseline (AY 2019-20) of 849 to 1,324 and 22.3 percent increase during the first full year of the Consortium from 1,083 to 1,324.

Table 10. Consortium Enrollment of Incumbent Members of the Early Childhood Workforce, by Race/Ethnicity, AY19-20 to AY22-23

Race/ Ethnicity	AY19-20 Baseline	AY20-21 Pandemic	AY21-22 Soft Launch	AY22-23 First Full Consortium Year	Percent Change AY19-20 to AY22-23	Percent Change AY21-22 to AY22-23
Asian	93	106	96	119	+28.0%	+24.0%
African American	536	571	633	894	+66.8%	+41.2%
Latino	849	987	1,083	1,324	+55.9%	+22.3%
White	1,287	1,278	1,452	2,007	+55.9%	+38.2%
More Than One Race	58	49	51	94	+62.1%	+84.3%
Other	137	131	145	194	+41.6%	+33.8%
Total	2,960	3,122	3,460	4,632	+56.5%	+33.9%

Community Colleges

Enrollment across race/ethnicity increased for incumbent workforce members at community colleges. As shown on Table 11, while the greatest increases were among White students (60.7 percent) from 721 to 1,159, community colleges enrolled significantly more African American students (56.4 percent) and Latino students (56.7 percent) since AY 2019-20.

During the first full year of the Consortium (AY 2022-23), enrollment increased by 50.9 percent for African American students, 43.2 percent for Latino students and 50.5 percent for White students. Notably, enrollment of Asian students increased by 36.4 percent, though the overall number of Asian incumbent workforce members enrolled is relatively small (75).

Table 11. Illinois Community College Enrollment of Incumbent Members of the Early Childhood Workforce, by Race/Ethnicity, AY19-20 to AY22-23

Race/ Ethnicity	AY19-20 Baseline	AY20-21 Pandemic	AY21-22 Soft Launch	AY22-23 First Full Consortium Year	Percent Change AY19-20 to AY22-23	Percent Change AY21-22 to AY22-23
Asian	72	71	55	75	+4.2%	+36.4%
African American	305	294	316	477	+56.4%	+50.9%
Latino	425	423	465	666	+56.7%	+43.2%
White	721	679	770	1,159	+60.7%	+50.5%
More Than One Race	29	25	24	63	+117.2%	+162.5%
Other	50	49	52	80	+60.0%	+53.8%
Total	1,602	1,541	1,682	2,520	+57.3%	+49.8%

Four-Year Institutions

Four-year institutions also saw enrollment increases of incumbent workforce members of all race/ethnicity, most notably increases in the enrollment of African American incumbent workforce members, whose enrollment increased by 80.5 percent to 417 since the baseline year and 31.5 percent since AY 2021-22. Enrollment of Latino incumbent members has steadily increased since baseline (55.2 percent) and enrollment increased 6.5 percent from 618 to 658 since AY 2021-22. See Table 12.

White incumbent members of the early childhood workforce saw enrollment increases as well, with a 49.8 percent increase since AY 2020. Notably, Asian student enrollment more than doubled since AY 2019-20 (109.5 percent), though the overall number of Asian incumbent workforce members enrolled is relatively small, increasing from 21 to 44 students.

Table 12. Four-Year Institution Enrollment of Incumbent Members of the Early Childhood Workforce, by Race/Ethnicity, AY19-20 to AY22-23

Race/ Ethnicity	AY19-20 Baseline	AY20-21 Pandemic	AY21-22 Soft Launch	AY22-23 First Full Consortium Year	Percent Change AY19-20 to AY22-23	Percent Change AY21-22 to AY22-23
Asian	21	35	41	44	+109.5%	+7.3%
African American	231	277	317	417	+80.5%	+31.5%
Latino	424	564	618	658	+55.2%	+6.5%
White	566	599	682	848	+49.8%	+24.3%
More Than One Race	29	24	27	31	+6.9%	+14.8%
Other	87	82	93	114	+31.0%	+22.6%
Total	1,358	1,581	1,778	2,112	+55.5%	+18.8%

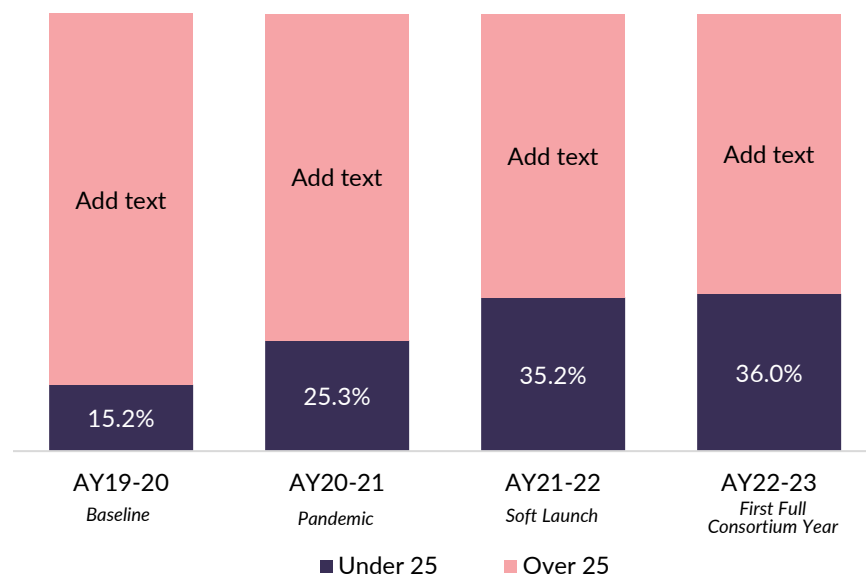
Pell Status

The percentage of incumbent workforce members that received federal Pell grants remained relatively consistent over time at approximately 42 percent in AY 2019-20 and 44 percent in AY 2022-23. At community colleges, the percentage of Pell eligible students increased from 40.1 percent to 42.9 percent in AY 2022-23. Pell recipients remained relatively stable at four-year institutions, with 44.8 percent eligible in AY 2019-20 and 45.4 percent eligible in AY 2022-23. This may indicate that the income levels across enrolled members of the incumbent workforce have remained relatively stable with increases in enrollment.

Adult Learners

Overall, enrollment of adult learners (age 25 and older) and non-adult learners (under age 25) increased from AY 2019-20; however, enrollment rates of those under 25 increased at a greater rate. As shown in Figure 8 below, the proportion of adult learners (over 25) who are incumbent workers decreased from 84.8 percent in AY 2019-20 to 64.0 percent in AY 2022-23.

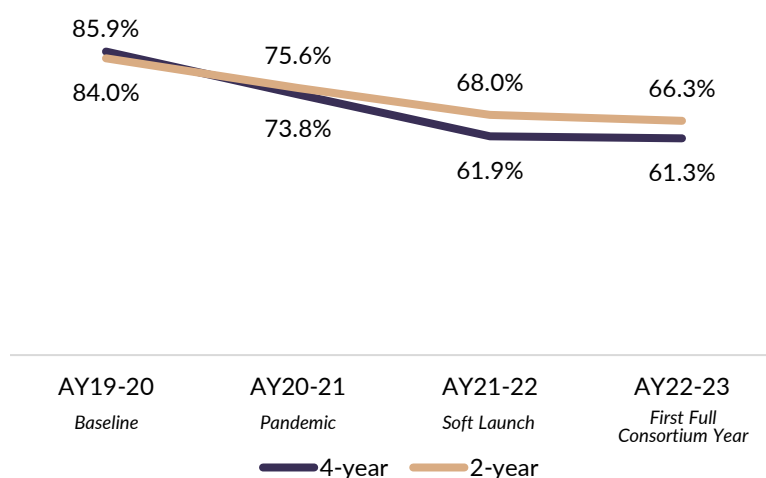
Figure 8. Proportion of Adult Learners, Incumbent Workforce Members at Consortium Institutions, AY19-20 to AY22-23



This trend is consistent at both community colleges and four-year institutions, with greater decreases at four-year institutions. As shown in Figure 9, for both sectors, the sharpest decline in adult learners who were incumbent workforce members happened from AY 2019-20 (baseline) to AY 2020-21 and AY 2021-22. This may be the result of the pandemic; potentially more older working adults had increased responsibilities, such as children and families, and these responsibilities became a barrier to enrollment during the pandemic.

From AY 2021-22 to AY 2022-23, the proportion of adult learners at community colleges and four-year institutions remained relatively consistent (68.0 percent to 66.3 percent and 61.9 percent to 61.3 percent respectively), even as enrollment increased.

Figure 9. Proportion of Adult Learners in the Incumbent Workforce at Two- and Four-Year Institutions, AY19-20 to AY22-23

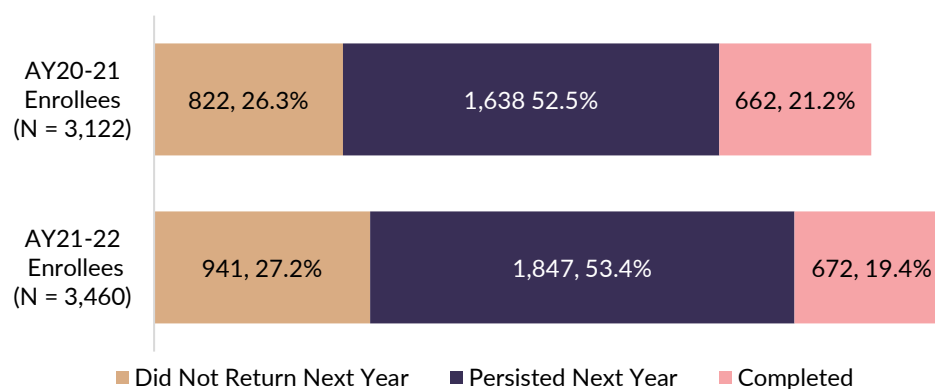


Persistence and Completion of Incumbent Workforce Members

Persistence and completion are important measures for the Consortium to ensure students are making timely progress toward upskilling credentials. Figure 10 depicts the workforce members enrolled in one academic year and whether they 1) completed a degree or credential; 2) returned/persisted the next year, or 3) did not return the next year. The combined rate of students enrolled in AY 2020-21 who completed or persisted in AY 2021-22 was 73.7 percent (21.2 percent completing and 52.5 percent persisting); the combined rate from AY 2021-22 to AY 2022-23 was to 72.8 percent (19.4 percent completing and 53.4 percent persisting).

It is not surprising that numbers stayed relatively consistent year to year, considering the timing of when grants were provided (late Spring 2022) and mentors hired (generally Fall 2022-Spring 2023). With the hiring of mentors and increased support provided students during AY 2022-23, we anticipate seeing increased persistence rates from AY 2022-23 to AY 2023-24. Completion rates, which take a longer time horizon to measure success, will continue to be tracked into AY 2023-24 and thereafter. It is anticipated that completion rates will display similar upticks in performance like enrollment and persistence in AY 2023-24.

Figure 10. Outcomes for Incumbent Members of the EC Workforce Enrolled in AY20-21 and AY21-22 at All Consortium Member Institutions



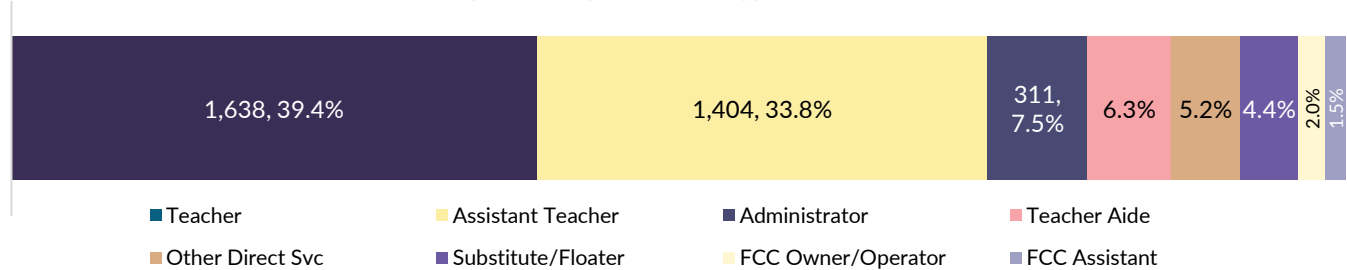
Employment Information for EC Workforce Members at Consortium College and Universities

To better understand the students the Consortium serves, this report analyzes the employment experience of the enrolled EC incumbent workforce members.

Position Type: Most Recent Position

As demonstrated in Figure 11, teachers and assistant teachers comprise the two largest groups of students, accounting for 73.2 percent (of incumbent workforce members at Consortium institutions). Slightly more students reported being teachers (1,638) than assistant teachers (1,404). The next largest groups include administrators (7.5 percent), teacher aides (6.3 percent), other direct service positions (5.2 percent), and substitute/floaters (4.4 percent).

Figure 11. Distribution of Overall Enrolled EC Workforce Population by Gateways Position Type (N=4,158)



Note: The total sample size was 4,221, however, 63 people enrolled fell into positions of unknown, other indirect, other, youth development practitioner, and school age site coordinator, but due to such small numbers, they were excluded from the figure.

Teachers and assistant teachers comprise most incumbent members at both community colleges (39.3 percent and 37.2 percent, respectively) and four-year institutions (39. 6 percent and 29.6 percent, respectively). Interestingly, the next largest group at four-year institutions were teacher aides (8.2 percent); whereas at community colleges, it was directors (8.3 percent).

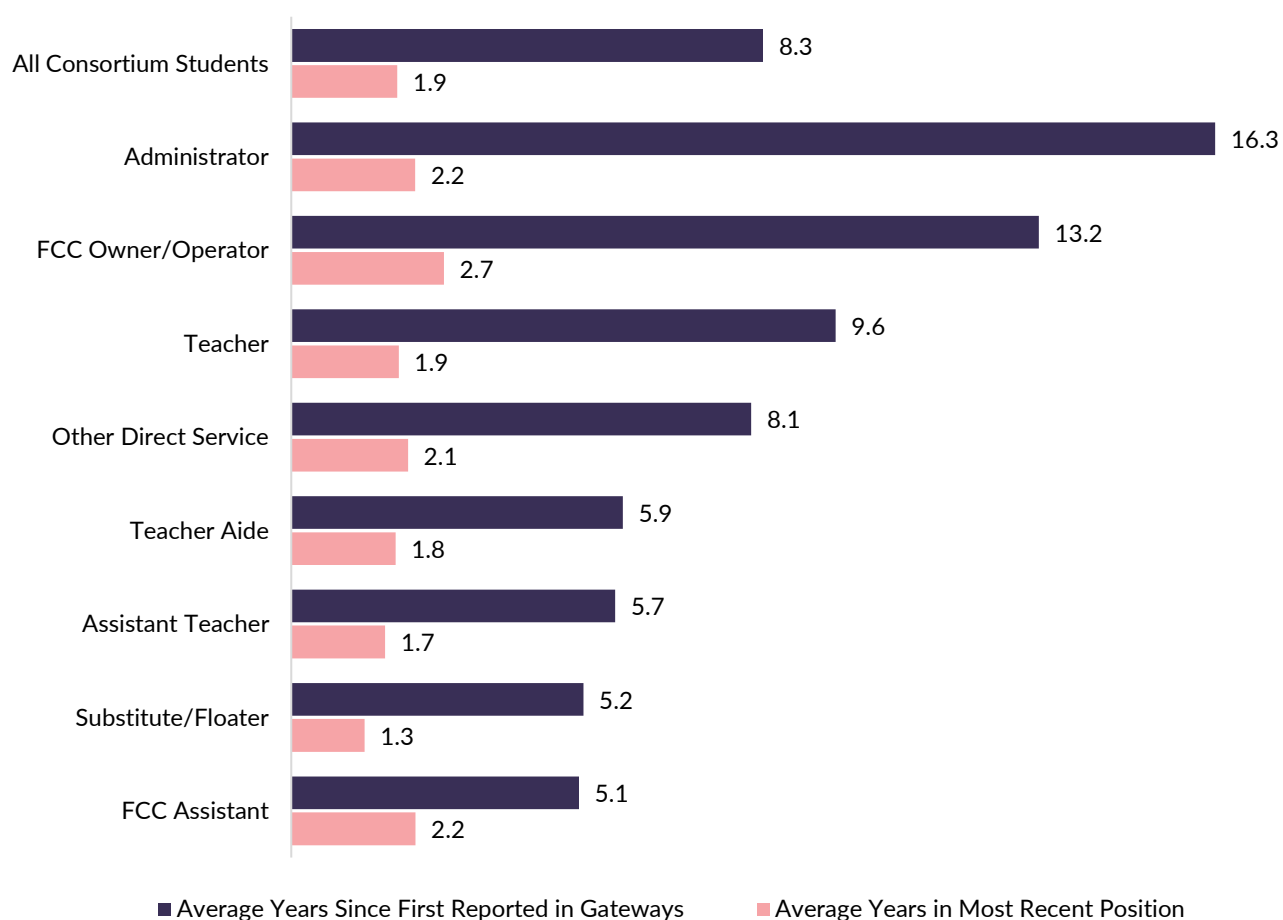
See [Appendix F](#) for a breakdown of enrolled incumbent workers by position and by community colleges and four-year institutions.

Job Tenure

As demonstrated in Figure 12, students who were members of the EC workforce averaged 8.3 years in the field overall (as measured by their first position in the Gateways Registry) and 1.9 years in their most recent position.²⁰ The data also shows that tenure in recent positions and in the field for Consortium students varies substantially by position, with those in administrative and ownership positions having the longest tenure in the field. Of note, “years in most recent position” is somewhat low across positions, indicating relatively frequent turnover; it’s unclear if workforce members are moving into new roles with their current employer or finding employment with another provider.

²⁰ First job reported in Gateways is being used as a proxy for time in the field. However, it should be noted that this data is self-reported and that entering information in the Gateways Registry was not required until 2012 and operationalization of the mandate took several years. Therefore, this may underestimate tenure in the field.

Figure 12. Average Job Tenure in the Field for EC Workforce Members at Consortium Institutions (N=4,158)



Note: The total sample size was 4,221, however, 63 people enrolled fell into positions of unknown, other indirect, other, youth development practitioner, and school-age site coordinator; due to such small numbers, they were excluded from the figure.

When looking at employment tenure by sector, the trends are similar. However, workforce members at four-year institutions tend to have more years in the field overall (10.5) than those at community colleges (6.6). Administrators had the most time in the field across sectors; the amount of time varied between two-year institutions (12.3 years) and four-year institutions (22.6 years). This seems to mirror data indicating that early childhood workforce members tend to increase their education more slowly over time than traditional students. Data from the Gateways Registry indicates that older workforce members are much more likely to hold a bachelor's degree than younger members.²¹

Time in current position was highest for family child care owners/operators averaging 2.8 years for those enrolled in community colleges and 2.6 years for those enrolled at four-year institutions. See [Appendix F](#) for more information about average job tenure by position and by sector.

Employer Type/Job Setting

The vast majority of EC workforce members who were Consortium students (86.3 percent) worked in child care settings in their most recent job. As shown in Table 13, an additional 4.4 percent worked in family child care settings, and 9.2 percent fell into the "other" category, which included those with a not applicable, missing

²¹ Whitehead, J. (2021). Illinois' Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Report. Bloomington, IL: INCCRRA. https://www.inccrra.org/images/datareports/Illinois_Early_Childhood_Education_Workforce_2020_Report.pdf

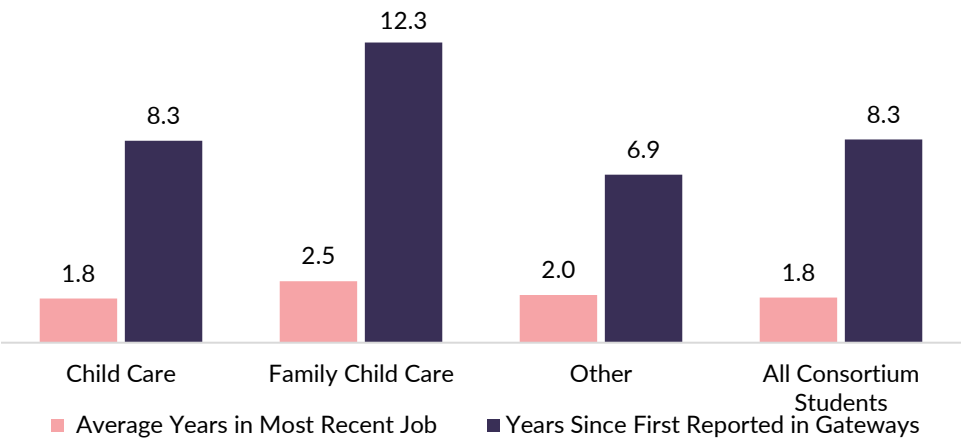
employer type, or in school-based settings in the Gateways Registry. This trend was similar across both community colleges and four-year institutions, though community colleges had a larger percent working in child care (88.2 percent) and less in “other” settings (7.2 percent); while four-year institutions drew slightly less from child care (83.9 percent) and more from “other” settings (11.8 percent).

Table 13. Distribution of EC Workforce Members from Consortium Institutions by Employer Type and Sector (N=4,221)

	Community Colleges		Four-Year Institutions		All Consortium Institutions	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Child Care	2,054	88.2%	1,593	83.9%	3,647	86.3%
Family Child Care	106	4.6%	80	4.3%	186	4.4%
Other	168	7.2%	220	11.8%	388	9.3%
Total	2328		1893		4221	

Although they comprised the smallest group (186, 4.4 percent), students working in family child care had a longer average experience in the field (12.3 years) and in their most recent job (2.5 years) compared to those in child care settings, as depicted in Figure 13. Members of the child care workforce (3,617) averaged 8.3 years in the field and 1.8 years in their current position.

Figure 13. Job Tenure by Employer Type for EC Workforce Members from Consortium Institutions (N=4,221)



The same holds true when looking at employer type by sector. The average tenure in the field was greatest for those working in family child care enrolled in community colleges (10.2 years) and four-year institutions (15 years). Those working in family child care also on average served the most time in their recent position for those enrolled in community colleges (2.5 years) and four-year institutions (2.6 years).

SUCCESS AND PROGRESS OF ECACE

The Consortium has made great strides in removing barriers for the incumbent early childhood workforce members to access, persist, and complete their higher education journeys. Institutions have focused on adjusting their programming to increase access; removing financial barriers to enroll, persist, and complete; collaborating within and across institutions; providing academic and wrap-around supports to students; and engaging in outreach with employers and the incumbent workforce.

Program Changes to Increase Access

To fulfill legislative requirements, Consortium members adjusted their early childhood programs and curriculum to make them more accessible and to address the needs of the incumbent workforce. Many of these changes have been at the individual institution level and a few notable changes have been Consortium-wide. These innovations have included offering new course modalities, creating new courses and programs, developing additional pathways for student advancement in EC, awarding credit for prior learning, allowing students to access courses outside their home institution (course sharing), and adapting student teaching and practicums.

Course Modalities

Many institutions have adjusted the way they offer courses to better fit the schedules and preferences of working adults. This has included the creation of new online course, full online degrees, and more evening and weekend course options.

Because of the early childhood workforce shortage in the state, some EC providers reported not being able to afford their staff taking time away from work to attend courses, even virtually, so evening and both synchronous and asynchronous online courses have been good options for both the incumbent workforce and their employers. Olivet Nazarene and Blackburn College worked with faculty outside the early childhood department to ensure students were able to access general education courses online. Illinois State University hired instructional designers to develop online interactive modules that ensure consistent learner experience and high student engagement. Some institutions (St. Augustine, Waubesa Community College, Harper College and others) have adopted Hy-flex technology, which allows students to choose whether to attend a class in person or virtually at a scheduled time. Harper College has reported high student satisfaction with the Hy-flex option. In 2024, ICCB and IBHE plan to provide additional supports to institutions on offering Hy-flex options, as outlined later in the [Looking Ahead](#) section.

While some students prefer and benefit from online, asynchronous courses, many prefer and also benefit from in-person time with peers and teachers to get feedback and ask questions. To address both needs, institutions got creative, offering classes onsite at a provider location to a cohort of their staff, online synchronous courses, in person office hours (online, at the institution, or even in the community), online discussion sessions, and hybrid in-person and online courses. For example, the College of Lake County offered a “Bring the Learning to You” cohort at a local Goddard Center, offering classes during lunch and naptimes onsite for their staff. Joliet Junior College launched a “Grow Your Own” (GYO) program in 2023 with a cohort of high-school graduates, combining part time work in the field with part time on-campus classes, facilitating strong cohort bonding and a successful transition to college and the workforce. National Louis University offered café-style meetings for students to support their completion of competency-based coursework and retention in the program. These creative strategies allowed students to network, build a supportive community, and often provide peer mentoring to one another.

As of September 2023, institutions offered courses across the following formats: daytime in-person, evenings or weekends in person, online (both synchronously and asynchronously, and hybrid (see Table 14).

Table 14. Percentage of Institutions Offering Various Course Modalities to the Incumbent Workforce, by Sector, Fall 2022–Fall 2023

Sector	In Person	In Person Evening or Weekend	Online Asynchronous	Online Synchronous	Hybrid
Community Colleges	85%	71%	88%	59%	N/A ²²
Public Universities	92%	54%	92%	77%	46%
Private Institutions	80%	60%	80%	50%	70%
All Institutions	86%	66%	88%	61%	N/A

To help students secure their degrees faster and/or provide an opportunity for a more intensive focus on fewer courses, some institutions offered accelerated courses (previously 16 weeks), and several began offering more courses over the summer. For example, at Highland Community College, an EC online course was added to the summer schedule after seven plus students enrolled in the spring and a capstone course is now offered in the summer so students can graduate in the fall. The University of Illinois Urbana Champaign now offers a two-and-a-half-year online program for students to earn their bachelor's degree in early childhood, with coursework online and in eight- and 16-week formats to meet the demands of working professionals. Some institutions found that their students struggled with all eight-week courses and found the accelerated pace too fast. To address this, some institutions are offering both 16- and eight-week courses and some are shifting back to 16-week courses, when that seems to better fit their students' needs.

New Courses and Programs

Several institutions started offering new courses or programs to fill gaps and meet student and provider needs. Institutions such as College of DuPage, College of Lake County, Harper College, Oakton College, National Louis University, and Western Illinois University translated courses into Spanish, reflecting both a need in the student population and a need for Spanish speaking educators in the state. Additionally, a few institutions began offering apprenticeships for students. For example, Heartland Community College, City Colleges of Chicago, and Black Hawk College participated in the Illinois Early Childhood Apprenticeship Pilot, using ECACE funding to support the development of Level 3 and 4 performance-based assessments using GoPros and iPads to enable live observation and virtual evaluation. Roosevelt University and Northeastern Illinois University implemented residency models that aligned course work with students' professional experience and allowed them to complete field work on the job and student teaching in a paid placement with a selected mentor teacher.

Quite a few institutions supported students to have more hands-on experience with instruction and materials at the institution during and prior to practicum experiences. For example, several institutions, including Roosevelt University, South Suburban Community College, and Illinois Valley Community College, developed demonstration classrooms, allowing students to engage with developmentally appropriate materials.

Pathways for Student Advancement

Through ECACE, there are now additional pathways for students to advance in their education, most notably through the seamless transfer of the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree into four-year institutions. Additional pathways include credit for prior learning, course sharing, and adapted field experiences.

²² At least three community college institutions qualitatively reported offering hybrid courses. This choice was not an option in two-year institutional reporting forms.

ECACE provides a pathway for individuals with an applied associate degree (AAS) degree to seamlessly advance to a baccalaureate degree program. Historically, the AAS was designed to be a terminal degree leading directly to employment. More recently, research has highlighted the benefit that teachers with higher degrees have on young children's development and education, sparking a national push for early childhood teachers to pursue their bachelor's degrees.²³ Section 130-10 of the ECACE Act requires Consortium four-year institutions transfer the AAS degree in its entirety, ensuring that all general education and professional coursework in the AAS Early Childhood major be applied to the bachelor's degree. Students transferring the AAS degree are admitted as juniors and cannot be required to take more credits for graduation than a student who began their studies at the institution as a freshman (Illinois General Assembly, 2021). This legislation is an innovative approach to guaranteeing credit mobility for AAS transfer students.

In the first year of the Consortium, all Consortium four-year institutions developed at least one pathway to support students transferring with an AAS degree. These pathways typically applied the AAS early childhood coursework to the bachelor's program, either as meeting specific course requirements or as electives. Many universities restructured general education requirements to instead accept elective early childhood courses from the AAS degree. Some four-year institutions modified their early childhood programs to create a better alignment with the AAS. Chicago State University, for example, dropped a required human development course to stay within the credit hour cap. Roosevelt University created separate primary and pre-primary methods courses to facilitate better transfer of community college courses.²⁴ University of Illinois Urbana Champaign and National Louis University redesigned their programs to build upon the Gateways to Opportunity (Gateways) Level 4 competencies (equivalent to the associate degree) and focus solely on providing coursework needed to move from the Gateways Level 4 to Gateways Level 5 (bachelor's degree) and professional educator license (PEL). This ensured students were not duplicating content for competencies already earned.

From July 1, 2022, to December 31, 2023, four-year Consortium institutions reported transferring in 650 students with an AAS degree, representing 31.7 percent of early childhood transfer students. National Louis University, a private, urban institution, enrolled 42.2 percent of the AAS transfers, and Illinois State University accounted for 14.1 percent. Incumbent worker students enrolling in Consortium four-year institutions also transferred AA and AS degrees (28.7 percent and 3.7 percent, respectively). A significant percentage, 23.7 percent of the transfer students, had at least 60 credits but no degree.

Table 15. Four Year Institutions' EC Transfer Students, by Degree

Degree	Number of Transfer Students	Percentage of Transfer Students
AAS	650	31.7%
AA	589	28.7%
AS	75	3.7%
60+ credits	486	23.7%
Other	253	12.3%
Total	2,053	100%

Even as the ECACE Act guaranteed smooth transfer of the AAS, the varieties of educational background and experience students brought to Consortium programs required greater flexibility in designing learning

²³ Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2015. *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/19401>.

²⁴ Most early childhood community college courses in Illinois focus on children birth to five; whereas four-year programs provide preparation for teaching birth through 2nd grade, to meeting teacher licensure requirements.

pathways for students than anticipated. As innovative and student focused as the programmatic changes made for the AAS transfers were, there were still instances where students' prior learning through previous coursework and work experience was not fully recognized. Students transferring other degrees, or course work but no degree, require more personalized advising and program plans.

Credit for Prior Learning

An important part of the ECACE legislation is for both two- and four-year institutions to recognize the previous skills and abilities that students bring to their post-secondary education. A 2020 study from Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) notes that students who were awarded credit for prior learning were 22 percent more likely to complete a post-secondary credential (Klein-Collins, et al., 2020).

To address this legislative intent, some institutions have explored using competency-based or competency-aligned approaches. Competency-based programs are agnostic to where the concepts and skills have been attained, as long as they are demonstrated. As such, focusing on competency-aligned programming may allow students to demonstrate what they have already learned – either in their workplace or through prior education – and take fewer courses to earn their degree.

All institutions in the Consortium have aligned their programs to the Gateways to Opportunity competencies, which can facilitate transfer among institutions and the ability to provide credit for prior learning. Most Consortium institutions have participated in competency-based curriculum and assessment development projects sponsored by the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA). Quite a few, including Rend Lake College, Kishwaukee College, Western Illinois University, and College of Lake County, and others, implemented programs to pilot competency-based approaches through prior learning assessments.

Several community colleges, including Lewis and Clark Community College, Heartland Community College, and others, have adopted competency-based approaches. Heartland moved towards a more competency-based system using applied assessments to create individualized and tailored learning pathways for students to complete their degrees. Several four-year institutions, such as National Louis University and University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, used the Gateways competency levels as determiners of where transfer students are placed in their program.

Many of the Consortium's community colleges, including John A. Logan College, implemented prior learning assessment policies. In addition, community college early childhood and CDA programs in the Consortium aligned course outcomes with Gateways Competencies and NAEYC accreditation standards (examples include Rock Valley College, Truman College, and Spoon River College). Many of the four-year institutions have policies in place for accepting credit for prior learning; but others, like Greenville University, created a policy at least initially to serve early childhood students. As of October 2023, 17 of the 21 four-year institutions offered or planned to offer credit for prior learning, and 16 institutions modularized courses or planned to modularize courses, often as a means of providing credit for prior learning. Modularizing courses entails breaking the course down into smaller chunks, with each chunk aligned with one or two of the competencies or learning objectives addressed in the course. Governors State University, for example, is modularizing their early childhood courses this way, creating one-credit hour courses focused on specific competencies under the umbrella of a three-credit hour course. Modularized programs provide greater flexibility in tailoring learning pathways to students' prior learning, both through coursework transferred and job experience.

Curriculum Redesign | Community of Practice

To support the development of individualized pathways for students, IBHE hosted a Community of Practice (CoP) for four-year institutions to explore related redesign strategies. The CoP kicked off in May 2023 and IBHE held a retreat in Bloomington, IL in June. Through the summer and fall of 2023, the CoP focused on four strategies: credit for prior learning in courses and on the job; redesign of courses into smaller units (modules); variable credit hours assigned to modularized courses; and competency-based education. The CoP hosted small group sessions on each of these approaches, as well as large group discussion to share best practices and learn from guest speakers.

Child Development Associate

One of the most notable ways the Consortium awarded credit for prior learning was through the Child Development Associate (CDA) policy, adopted in 2022 (Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity, 2022). The CDA is a national credential that recognizes foundational competencies acquired through work experience and training as demonstrated through an assessment, observation, and portfolio. With the early childhood workforce shortage in Illinois, stakeholders have reported an increase in students choosing the CDA pathway as a timely and affordable alternative to becoming “teacher qualified.”²⁵ Most CDA credits have been offered through the community colleges, as these institutions are where many incumbent workforce members (re)start their educational journeys, ensuring they have the foundational competencies in place before seeking advanced degrees and certifications.

The adopted policy awards six semester hours of meaningful early childhood credit to active CDA holders without contingencies. In other words, students are not required to be reassessed to receive the credit. Institutions were required to implement credit for the Preschool CDA as of January 31, 2023, and the Infant Toddler CDA as of January 31, 2024. As of December 31, 2023, and as illustrated in Table 16, a total of 349 students had received credit for the CDA.

Table 16. Number of Students Receiving Credit for CDA, by Sector

Sector	# of students receiving credit for CDA
Community Colleges	321
Public Universities	6
Private, Non-Profit Institutions	22
Total	349

Course Sharing

The ECACE Act states that the Consortium shall cooperate in “providing course offerings across institutions, within regions, for students who do not have a course available at their home institution.”²⁶ While course sharing will continue to be a focus of future work, as outlined in the [Looking Ahead](#) section below, there are some efforts underway currently. Through Illinois Community Colleges Online, many two-year institutions have been sharing online courses for their entire student populations, including EC students, for several years.

²⁵ Someone with a CDA meets the qualifications for being the teacher in a licensed child care center.

²⁶ “Not available” may mean the course is not offered during a term, at a time, or in a format that works best for the student.”

Illinois Community Colleges Online

Illinois Community Colleges Online (ILCCO) is a membership organization available to all Illinois community college districts. The statewide system, called the Online Course Exchange (OCE), allows community college students access to online courses at other schools when the course is unavailable online at the student's home institution. The purpose of ILCCO is to promote quality online learning and provide supplemental learning opportunities to students through online course sharing. The work of ILCCO supports the goals of the ECACE Act in that it provides more equitable access to courses through online learning and course sharing.

As of March 2024, 1,683 ILCCO courses, primarily from the General Education Core Curriculum (GECC), were being offered at 28 colleges (up from about 1,600 ILCCO courses at 20 colleges in March of 2023).²⁷ In addition, as encouraged by their participation in the Consortium, 133 ECACE course sections (up from 79 in March of 2023), were made accessible through ILCCO this year by 22 Consortium schools (up from 14 institutions in March of 2023). Waubensee Community College is notable for having its entire early childhood program available through ILCCO. Additionally, John A. Logan College added many of their courses to ILCCO to help get their students caught up on courses and on track to complete their degrees.

Supervised Field Experiences

All Consortium institutions include supervised field experience as part of their degree programs, allowing students to gain hands-on experience to supplement their academic coursework. Guided by the goals of ECACE, institutions made improvements to their field experience requirements to better meet the needs of the incumbent workforce.

Several four-year institutions reported working closely with students to determine the best location for their student teaching. Often, it was easiest for incumbent workforce students to complete these at their current places of employment (provided their employers met ISBE standards²⁸), which provided a practical way for working students to balance education and employment. Several institutions, including University of Illinois Chicago, Governors State University, and Chicago State University provided credit for prior employment towards the required clinical field experience hours. As of December 2023, all 21 four-year institutions allowed students to complete at least some of their clinical experiences at their workplace; for some, this was a new change since the start of ECACE. For example, Illinois State University modified their student teaching protocols to provide greater flexibility to students. Students currently employed in a preschool setting had the option of doing eight weeks of on-the-job student teaching and eight weeks of student teaching in a kindergarten through second grade setting or doing three days a week of student teaching at their workplace and two days a week in a K-2 setting. Governors State University, which started allowing students to complete student teaching at their current places of employment, noted how valuable this change was in helping students persist and complete but acknowledged the difficulty faculty had in traveling to different workplaces to observe student teaching. To offset this challenge, the institution hired onsite staff who were trained to complete student teacher observations.

Similarly, several two-year institutions revamped their practicum experiences, including offering the opportunity for students to complete the requirements at their current employer. Harper College noted that this shift improved their students' completion rate, prevented income loss, and enhanced their partnerships

²⁷ It is only possible to pull a point-in-time report of ILCCO courses, so this data is from March 2024 which is outside of the reporting period (July 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023).

²⁸ Section 25.620 of the Illinois Administrative Code says that student teaching must be done under the active supervision of a cooperating teacher who is licensed and qualified to teach in the area, has three years of teaching experience, has received a proficient or above performance rating in the most recent evaluation, and is directly engaged in teaching subject matter and conducting learning activities in the area of student teaching. For early childhood students completing student teaching in a community-based early childhood setting, charter school, or non-public school, the cooperating teacher may hold a Gateways Level 5 credential while meeting other requirements (Illinois Administrative Code, 2022).

with childcare facilities through instructor site visits. The College of DuPage offered a wage supplement for students who were currently working and would lose pay due to their practicum requirements. Lake Land College created a child care lab where students can complete their practicums on site at the institution. A couple of institutions reduced the required number of practicum hours for students in an acknowledgement of the skills gained through prior work experience. Through these adjustments to supervised field experiences, Consortium institutions have worked to expose students to different, valuable work experiences (e.g., various types of environments, age groups, etc.) that will benefit them in their future careers while also acknowledging their current experience and removing barriers to degree completion.

Collaboration Within and Across Institutions

The Consortium has strengthened relationships across higher education institutions in Illinois. In a 2023 survey, 94 percent of institutional respondents believed the Consortium had increased collaboration across Illinois' higher education landscape. Institutions have developed new articulation agreements between two- and four-year partners. For example, DePaul University has been conducting outreach with local community college partners to develop articulation agreements for students with the AAS and laying out a specific pathway for them at DePaul. They have a new agreement with Oakton Community College and, as of December 2023, were in the process of developing at least three others. Southern Illinois University Edwardsville offers courses on the Lewis and Clark campus. Northern Illinois University has developed transfer agreements with feeder community colleges. Its agreement with McHenry Community College is notable in that the learning pathway leading to the professional educator license (PEL), offers credit for prior learning, and includes coursework for both the English as a Second Language and Early Childhood Special Education approvals. Additionally, some four-year institutions engaged in partnership with two-year institutions, such as Olivet Nazarene and Kankakee Community College, to recruit students for transfer, and a few institutions co-hosted recruitment and career fair events together.

One of the most valuable parts of the ECACE experience has been the chance to connect with other institutions and faculty and learn what is working elsewhere.

*- Anonymous
Institution #1*

(ECACE) brought colleges and universities together at all levels within them – faculty and administrators – to focus on our workforce's professional education needs. (It also) brought state agencies and other stakeholders together with the abovementioned, for the abovementioned purposes. In my 35 years in IL, this has NEVER happened – what an accomplishment!

- Anonymous Institution #2

ECACE also strengthened relationships *within* institutions. By participating in the Consortium, institutional representatives were charged with convening an institutional team at their campus. Institutional teams often include a mentor, department head, early childhood faculty, financial aid officer, and more. In a 2023 survey, one institution shared: “Our institution has come together for early childhood. Each area involved in our institutional team is aware of guidelines and able to direct students effectively. We are all moving in the same direction!” and “We have become more connected across programs and nimbler to address consortium requirements and student needs.” The survey also found a positive correlation between the frequency of institutional team meetings and perceived progress towards removing barriers to accessibility, persistence, and completion for the incumbent early childhood workforce.

Financial Supports

A key component of ECACE is recognizing and addressing the expense of higher education and the financial burdens it places on students in this field. From AY 2022-24, IDHS allocated over \$200 million in federal child care funding to support ECACE. A significant portion of these funds were used to relieve students' financial burdens through the funding of scholarships for the incumbent workforce and the paying down of debts previously owed to higher education institutions.

ECACE Scholarship Program

In November of 2021, ISAC partnered with IBHE and ICCB to launch one of the Consortium's first initiatives, the ECACE Scholarship Program. Individuals working in early childhood often face low wages and have financial needs that exceed their earnings. The ECACE Scholarship was intended to mitigate the often-prohibitive costs of higher education that extend beyond tuition and fees to include expenses such as books and supplies, housing, transportation, and more. Despite Consortium programs being designed to deliver courses at convenient times and locations, workforce members may need to reduce their working hours to participate in classes and field experiences, study, and manage other education-related matters.

Because of the ECE Scholarship I have earned, I am one semester away from my 2nd degree, I earned a substantial raise at work, and got promoted to the center Director. NONE of this would have been possible if this grant was not available. It is because of this grant that I also have enrolled in ISU for the fall to pursue my B.A in ECE. This grant has changed the trajectory of my life and has impacted my family's life tremendously. Because of this grant I can continue to grow and advance in a field that I absolutely enjoy. My current and future students at my center deserve to have the best educators in their classroom. This grant is making that possible.

– Student Testimony, Joliet Junior College

During AY 2022-23, the ECACE Scholarship covered up to the full cost of attendance (COA) for members of the incumbent early childhood workforce pursuing an undergraduate degree or certificate in the field at Consortium member institutions, after accounting for other federal scholarships and grants.²⁹ In AY 2023-24, the scholarship was expanded to also include graduate students. Scholarship recipients had to be currently working or have previously worked with children birth to five in early childhood congregate care settings, such as child care, preschool, family child care, Head Start, and other similar programs. Recipients were expected to continue working in the field or return to it after they completed their program of study, taking on roles such as teachers, directors, or similar positions within Illinois. The ECACE Scholarship was administered on a rolling basis, allowing students to apply and enroll throughout the year.

I am entering my Senior year as an Early Childhood Education Major at Lewis University and attending full-time classes in the accelerated program while working full-time. I have been working in early childhood as a Paraprofessional for 13 years with hopes, dreams, and aspirations of returning to school. Life as a working single parent brought financial challenges and a lack of time to return to the in-person college environment for me. The offering of the ECACE Scholarship and acceptance into Lewis Universities' Online Accelerated Education Program allowed me to strive toward my dreams. I am enthusiastic about sharing the education I have obtained at Lewis University by impacting the lives of families and children for many years to come.

– Student Testimony, Lewis University

²⁹ Students attending participating private, not-for-profit institutions were eligible to receive a scholarship amount that did not exceed the cost of the most expensive early childhood program at an Illinois public university.

Scholarship Outcomes

Whereas most sections of the report focus on work through December 2023, this section on the ECACE Scholarship covers the full 2023-24 academic year, since data was readily available.

For AY 2023-24, about \$76.4 million in ECACE Scholarship funds were distributed to nearly 4,700 members of the incumbent workforce, 89 percent of whom were women. During this time period, 41 percent of scholarship recipients attended community colleges, 35 percent attended private, nonprofit institutions, and 24 percent attended public universities. This is a large increase from AY 2022-23, in which \$29.6 million in scholarship funds were distributed to about 2,100 members of the incumbent workforce and from AY 2021-22 (the first year of the scholarship) where only \$5.7 million in scholarship funds were distributed to about 400 members of the incumbent workforce.

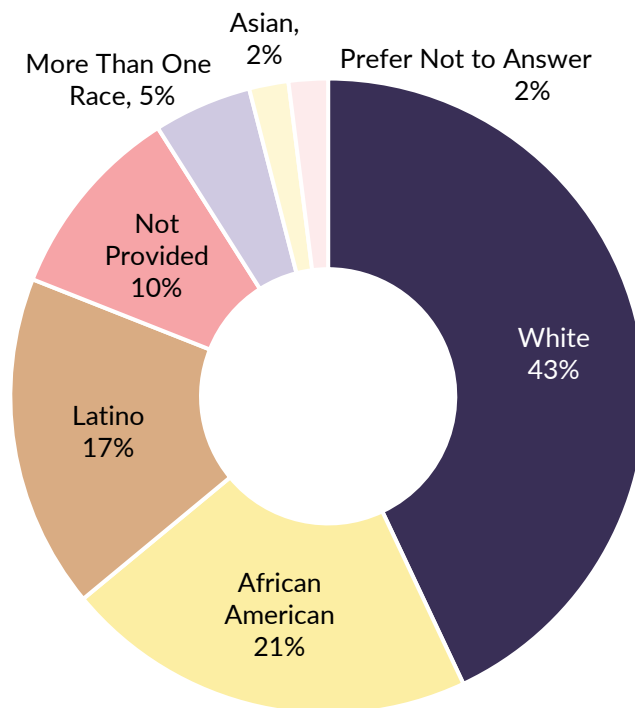
Table 17. Scholarship Data by Sector, AY23-24

Sector	Applications	Recipients	Total Awards	Average Award per Student	Institutions with Scholarship Students
Community Colleges	3,105	1,930	\$18,991,428	\$6,116	41 of 41 Institutions
Public Universities	1,450	1,142	\$26,021,054	\$17,946	11 of 11 Institutions
Private, Non-Profit Institutions	2,079	1,622	\$31,399,956	\$19,359	10 of 10 Institutions
Total	6,634	4,694	\$76,412,438	\$16,279	62 of 62 Institutions

Recipient Demographics

For AY 2023-24, 45 percent of scholarship recipients were persons of color. Of these recipients, 43 percent identified as White, 21 percent Black or African American, 17 percent Hispanic or Latino, 2 percent Asian, 5 percent more than one race or ethnicity, and 12 percent either preferred not to answer or did not provide a response. The racial makeup of scholarship recipients was relatively similar to that of Illinois early childhood workforce members in licensed child care centers overall, as reported in 2021. One notable difference: 43 percent of scholarship recipients identify as White; whereas 54 percent of early childhood classroom staff and directors in licensed child care centers identify as White (Whitehead, 2021).

Figure 14: Scholarship Recipients, by Race/Ethnicity, AY23-24



The ECACE scholarship effectively supported students with high financial need. Seventy-six percent of scholarship students had a federal expected family contribution (EFC) of under \$10,000, and forty-three percent of recipients had an EFC of \$0.³⁰ Among the remaining scholarship recipients, 12 percent had an EFC between \$10,000-\$19,999, 5 percent had an EFC ranging from \$20,000-\$29,999, and 7 percent had an EFC of \$30,000 or more.

ECACE scholarship recipients were older than traditional college students, with 50 percent over the age of 30, compared to national data from 2021, where only 23 percent of undergraduate students were over 30 years old (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). However, compared to the licensed early childhood workforce in Illinois, ECACE Scholarship recipients tend to be somewhat younger. Thirty-two percent of ECACE recipients are under 25 years old, whereas, as of 2020, only 22 percent of directors, teachers, and assistants were under 25 years of age.³¹ This is in line with the data from a 2020 Workforce Report that indicates that older members of the EC workforce are more likely to hold a degree than their younger counterparts (and therefore may be less likely to be seeking an additional degree.)

Geographical and Institutional Breakdown

Scholarships were awarded at every Consortium institution in AY2022-23; 36 percent of recipients were from the collar county area, 21 percent were from Chicago, and 43 percent were from all other areas of the state. About 30 percent of all recipients, and a little more than 30 percent of all funds disbursed, were at three four-year institutions: National Louis University, Illinois State University, and St. Augustine College.

³⁰ The EFC is determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and represents the amount that a student and their family would be expected to contribute toward the student's education. This calculation is based on factors such as the student's or family's income, assets, and benefits. A lower EFC signifies a greater financial need.

³¹ This data is for teachers, assistant teachers, and directors in licensed child care settings. Unfortunately, the age categories available for the licensed workforce do not exactly align to the scholarship data (Whitehead, 2021).

Tuition and Net Price Data to Demonstrate Cost of Attendance

Section 30 of the Act requires reporting on “tuition rates charged, and net prices paid, reported as including and excluding student loans, by enrolled members of the incumbent workforce” (Illinois General Assembly, 2021). These reporting requirements are intended to better understand the out-of-pocket costs, including but not limited to tuition and fees, that incumbent EC workforce members face and the degree to which they may be accumulating debt to support their education. In AY 2021-22, the Consortium attained this data primarily through a survey of Consortium institutions about their scholarship recipients, using recipients as a proxy for the incumbent workforce. For AY 2022-23, the Consortium was unable to collect this data due to challenges related to the FAFSA application at Consortium institutions. Below is what the Consortium is able to report.

Because the scholarship provided funding up to the full cost of attendance for incumbent members attending community colleges and public four-year institutions, and because of the size and availability of the scholarship funding, it may be assumed that many, if not most, incumbent workforce members at public institutions did not take loans and had a net price of \$0.³²

At private institutions, the scholarship was capped at the cost of attendance for full-time students at the most expensive *public* four-year institution – \$33,558 in AY 2022-23. Students at some private Consortium institutions may have had a gap between their scholarship funding and the cost of attendance, particularly if they were enrolled full-time. Six of the 10 private, non-profit institutions had tuition rates lower than the scholarship cap, and two of ten had a cost of attendance lower than the cap (National Center for Education Statistics, 2024).

The average amount of ECACE Scholarship dollars awarded to private, nonprofit institutions was \$18,360. Given that many scholarship students (46 percent) attended only part-time, and some institutions reported supplementing scholarship funding with institutional grants, tuition discounts, and alternative scholarships, the out-of-pocket costs for ECACE Scholarship recipients in private institutions were likely significantly reduced and may have been minimal. And, at minimum, most if not all private students’ tuition and fees were covered.

Information gathered from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) demonstrates costs students might have incurred **without the scholarship**, using best available data. Table 18 shows, on average and by sector, tuition and fees, the cost of attendance (COA), net price, and student loans incurred by full-time students at Consortium colleges and universities.

Without the ECACE Scholarship, full-time incumbent students would have had an average net price, or out of pocket cost, between approximately \$6,200 and \$22,000.

³² Average net price is generated by subtracting the average amount of federal, state/local government, or institutional grant and scholarship aid from the total cost of attendance. Total cost of attendance is the sum of published tuition and required fees (lower of in-district or in-state for public institutions), books and supplies, and the weighted average for room and board and other expenses (National Center for Education Statistics, 2024).

Table 18. Estimated Average Cost for Full-Time Students without Scholarship, by Sector

Sector	Average Tuition & Fees for Full-Time Students, AY22-23	Average Cost of Attendance for Full-Time Students, AY22-23 *	Average Net Price for Students Awarded Grant or Scholarship Aid, AY22-23	Average Loan for Full-time First-time Students, AY22-23
Community Colleges	\$4,413.02	\$17,967.68	\$6,194.02	\$4,864.15
Public Universities	\$13,446.45	\$29,794.73	\$13,968.73	\$6,522.45
Private, Nonprofit Institutions	\$29,820.90	\$45,321.50	\$21,676.30	\$7,040.20
Consortium Institutions	\$10,113.77	\$24,477.94	\$10,070.55	\$5,530.85

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2022, 2023

*Data in the table represents cost of attendance for full-time students living off campus, without family, in-district/in-state.

Debt Relief

Students' unpaid balances owed to an institution may prevent them from completing their degree or credential and advancing their careers. To address this, institutions were encouraged to use ECACE grant funds to eliminate outstanding account balances and financial holds for returning or transferring students. From July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023, 1,205 total students were awarded debt relief; 965 of those students attended community colleges, 197 attended private four-year institutions, and 43 attended public universities.

Some institutions experienced challenges in eliminating students' financial holds, particularly if those holds were at another institution. Due to issues related to privacy, it was difficult for institutions to get invoices from other institutions. Often students were unsure how much they owed and with whom to work at their former institution. It was not uncommon for mentors or faculty to spend hours determining a way for institutions to work together to address the debt. Several institutions reported that some students' debt had already been sent to a collection agency. In other cases, students were uncomfortable accepting the debt relief due to the taxes they would have to pay on what would be considered income. Others reported spending significant time researching rules related to financial aid and whether debt relief funding would be applied to the maximum allowable institutional aid.

Many institutions reported difficulty identifying students who needed debt relief, as students may have been embarrassed to step forward or did not realize that the relief was available. To mitigate against this, institutions conducted active outreach to market debt relief options and identify students who needed this support. In some cases, direct outreach had low response rates; those who used the debt relief to encourage students to return to school often found that students' contact information had changed or that workforce members were worried that the offer to relieve their debt was a fraudulent scheme.

Institutions had to coordinate across multiple departments to develop new processes to identify students and award debt relief, noting how important it was to assemble the right team to do so effectively. Over time and with support from ICCB and IBHE, including a community of practice held for four-year institutions (detailed below), some of these challenges were resolved. This can be seen as the number of students receiving debt relief grew significantly from 54 total students in Q1 of AY 2021-22 to 331 total students in Q2 of AY 2022-23.

Debt Relief Community of Practice

In January 2024, four-year institutions were offered the opportunity to eliminate student debt for former students to reduce financial burden, address account balances and holds that might now or in the future prevent enrollment and eliminate institutional debt that might prevent students from entering or remaining in the early childhood field. If capacity permitted, institutions were asked to implement a viable in-house process to utilize ECACE funds to alleviate this debt.

Institutions contacted students individually to assess eligibility and acquire consent to participate. IBHE consulted with institutions that had implemented similar debt relief programs for other federal grants, such as the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Funds, to glean lessons from similar programs.

To support the sharing of effective practices, IBHE organized a second Community of Practice for institutions. They received guidance and shared their practices for collecting information on outstanding debt, contacting students and assessing student eligibility, and creating implementation plans and administrative processes.

Betty owned her own in-home daycare and has 4 foster children. Betty and her daughter will graduate from Lake Land College next spring only because of debt relief and tuition reimbursements provided through the grant. Both Betty and Cheyenne came to my office to personally thank me and both cried tears of joy. Betty had considered giving up due to financial hardships but decided it was worth it to persist. They have plans to open daycare center in Effingham after graduation. Betty is working on the courses to be 'director qualified'. NONE of this would have happened without the debt relief provided.

– Student Testimony, Lake Land College

Providing Academic and Wrap-Around Supports

Consortium institutions provided academic and holistic support to ensure that workforce members can acquire needed skills to be successful in academic and workplace settings and to persist and complete credentials and degrees. As mentioned, some members of the early childhood workforce face challenges returning to school, particularly as the workforce comprises primarily women who are often balancing full-time employment, family needs, and other responsibilities. These working adults may have been out of school for long periods and needed to refresh skills such as academic writing, math, and time management. In addition, institutions reported that early childhood students working and attending school frequently reported extraordinary stress and burnout.

Institutions supported incumbent worker students to persist and complete in many ways, including providing targeted academic advising and access to full campus resources, such as health care and tutoring. However, the main way institutions provided additional support for early childhood students was through their grant-funded mentor positions.

As a result of the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, several institutions (like many employers nationwide) had initial challenges hiring a mentor. This caused some delays in recruiting and developing partnerships with communities and navigators. Both two- and four-year institutions had to have other staff, including faculty and grant administrators, serve in the mentor role until they could find someone. Hiring increased over time, and most mentors were in place by summer 2023.

Role of the Mentor

In many institutions, mentors were the first point of contact for the early childhood students and provided individualized holistic and academic supports to ensure they succeeded. Mentors helped students navigate to services on campus such as financial aid, tutoring, health and mental health services, disability services, and academic advising. A major role of the mentor was to coordinate across campus departments and with outside partners to advocate for their ECACE students. This often included being in contact with the financial aid office and/or ISAC to ensure students received their scholarship or other funding necessary to continue; being in touch with faculty to identify students who are struggling in class; and being in regular contact with navigators to support recruitment and help students transition onto campus.

Student Support: Individual And Group Meetings

Mentors were encouraged to take a proactive role in serving students, including meeting with them regularly throughout the year. From July 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023, mentors met with Consortium students more than 50,000 times to provide technical assistance, support, and coaching. Mentors met with each student at least twice per quarter, though the average across all institutions was about five meetings per student per quarter. One institution reported that mentors provided deeper and more frequent support than an academic advisor, as their caseload was smaller. Though caseload size seemed to vary based on size of program, the average was 83 students per full time staff with a range from one to 316 in Fall of 2023.

Mentors engaged with students in a variety of ways – text messaging, phone calls, and emails; in-person and virtual meetings; office hours; and group workshops – to engage students in ways that met their preferences and schedules. Roosevelt University and Southern Illinois University Carbondale offered opportunities for mentors to meet with and coach students onsite at their places of work to support ease of access.

In one-on-one meetings, mentors provided a wide range of support including assisting students with scholarship applications, providing academic guidance, offering time management and organization support, making connections to needed resources, and offering study strategies. In smaller programs, mentors were also the academic advisors, identifying course requirements, the degree that should be pursued (i.e., AAS, AA, BA with PEL or a non-licensure option), selecting courses, providing transfer advice, job search and career options, and more.

Mentors worked closely with faculty to monitor student progress and intervene if there were concerns. Many institutions reported being strategic in how they targeted students for additional support. At one institution faculty reached out to the mentor when the student was struggling to ask them to provide extra support; another institution developed a tiered system of identifying students who had been historically underserved and marginalized for targeted interventions. Several institutions' mentors regularly tracked data on student progress and provided extra support when they were close to graduation, experienced academic setbacks, or required additional academic supports at key points during their educational journeys. Waubesa Community College's mentor used the college's academic alert system to provide students with praise for their academic successes and assistance with faculty feedback on academic assignments. Rockford University also used academic alerts to identify students who needed support, and the mentor created individualized success plans detailing the work to be completed and the timeline for completion for those students.

Mentors at both two and four-year institutions offered optional or mandatory group sessions that provided students with opportunities for peer networking, mentoring, and support. These sessions often had an academic focus. Mentors at the College of DuPage, College of Lake County, and Harper College organized study groups. University of Illinois Urbana Champaign offered a biweekly study hall that incorporated intensive academic skill building. Olivet Nazarene's mentor hosted optional "Collaboration and Support" sessions in the

My mentor, if I hadn't had her last year, I wouldn't have made it through.

*- Student Testimony,
Governors State University*

evening that included tutoring and Saturday sessions to help students apply for credit for prior learning. Lincoln Land Community College's mentor hosted "Café Nights" where students could ask questions, be encouraged, receive tutoring, and get information about completing credential paperwork. National Louis University created virtual "coffee houses" to promote a sense of community among online students while connecting them with faculty mentors for academic support, a strategy which was adopted by many of the other four-year institutions. Preparation for the early childhood content test, a requirement for teacher licensure, was also a common group option at the four-year institutions.

Holistic Support

Working adult students must balance their commitment to completing their education with the demands of their jobs and often, the needs of their families. For many of these students, these competing commitments can result in a level of stress that can impede their successful progress towards earning their degree. Many institutions noted the important role mentors played in providing emotional support and encouragement for their students.

Mentors also used group sessions to address holistic issues such as time management, wellness strategies, resume/interview etiquette, and panels with industry professionals. Moraine Valley Community College's mentors hosted workshops focused on resume-building and interview preparation. Eastern Illinois University's mentors, focusing on developing peer relationships, encouraged students to join the local early childhood organization. Illinois State University's mentor coordinated and hosted the "ECE Elevate" series of optional workshops that promoted student development in areas such as life balance, wellness, financial planning and community. The workshops were offered monthly on Saturday mornings. St. Augustine offered workshops for students that promoted wellness and mental health and addressed burnout. Chicago State University and DePaul University hired mentors who had expertise in social-emotional needs to help address specific challenges related to student stress and burnout.

Several institutions created support materials, generally online, to provide additional support for students. Monthly newsletters with information about the program and pertinent dates and deadlines were common. Western Illinois University's mentors created videos to help students navigate university systems. Governors State University's mentor and faculty created a repository of videos and other digital materials on their LMS that could be accessed by students and faculty. These materials covered a wide range of topics, including financial aid resources, tools for navigating student support offices, time management skills, lesson planning, content test preparation, plus recordings of guest speakers on a number of early childhood course-related topics.

Many institutions offered students resources to support their success in the program including laptops, books, and gas cards. Some of the four-year institutions (for example, Northeastern Illinois University) established funding pools that students could access to cover unanticipated costs like emergency childcare. One institution's mentor provided referrals to community resources for housing, food assistance, and other basic needs.

...the second thing I want to address is the importance of the ECE mentors. I cannot tell you how many times my mentor has sent me reminders to get something in and where to apply for the ECE scholarship, helped me get a loaner laptop, checked in for other ways that she can help me be successful. They are a need for the Early Childhood department to be successful. I would not have started classes to begin with without my mentor reaching out to me and letting me know this program was available. She has brought in new students that would've never went to college if she would not have made that effort.

– Student Testimony (Highland Community College)

Other Duties

In most institutions, the mentor was also a recruiter, working with navigators, attending transfer fairs, visiting schools and childcare centers to recruit students, and developing outreach relationships. Mentors also hosted virtual, on campus, and on worksite information sessions for prospective students. In addition to supporting students, many mentors played a big role in data collection and reporting, as required by legislation, as well as outreach and recruitment. Though the primary focus for mentors was incumbent students, many institutions' mentors served other early childhood students as well.

Mentorship Community of Practice

Mentors from both two- and four-year institutions self-organized into a community of practice to share learnings. Additionally, IBHE offered a formal Mentorship Community of Practice in response to a survey of mentors/coaches who indicated their desire to share practices and learn from each other. In addition to an orientation in August 2022, three virtual meetings were held in AY23 and AY24. The meetings addressed the issues and concerns of the mentors and gave participants the opportunity to share ideas and best practices. Topics included: ECACE scholarship and financial aid; connecting with Navigators; student recruitment; and strategies for supporting student retention and persistence. In addition to these virtual sessions, mentors had scheduled times to discuss concerns and share strategies.

Outreach and Engagement

Outreach and engagement with the incumbent workforce were conducted by both ECACE higher education navigators and institutions. Both groups worked to make connections with early childhood employers and to be responsive to their needs.

Navigators

ECACE Higher Education Navigators occupy an important community-facing role designed to recruit and connect incumbent early childhood workforce members to Consortium institutions. During the time of the report, more than 30 navigators were employed within regionally based Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) across the state. Navigators' responsibilities included engaging in outreach to workforce members and employers and providing personalized technical assistance for workforce members to access higher education.

Between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023, navigators conducted outreach and provided extensive customer service to the incumbent workforce and early childhood providers. Specifically, navigators held 1,580 general information sessions and an additional 975 outreach meetings. Other outreach methods included mailing information materials (2,231 times), calling providers and workforce members (7,279 times), and sending emails (29,028 times). To support broad outreach, the State developed an electronic interest form for workforce members to request engagement with a navigator. Hosted by INCCRRA and posted on various websites, including those of INCCRRA, ISAC, and ECACE, navigators received 4,914 interest form requests from members of the incumbent workforce.

Navigators also provided technical assistance to providers and workforce members to help them navigate ECACE and the higher education system. Over the 18-month reporting period, navigators sent 39,950 emails to provide technical assistance, held 2,877 in person meetings and another 1,874 virtual meetings, sent 617 texts and made 1,063 phone calls. This resulted in providing over 5,253 workforce members with technical

assistance.³³ A total of 821 students were known to have been directly connected to institutions by a navigator. We know that more students benefited from connections, as navigators only began officially collecting and reporting this information as of the fall of 2023.

Table 19. Outreach Activities, Technical Assistance Provided, and Workforce Members Served by Navigators, July 2022 – December 2023

Category	Activity	Number
Outreach Activities	General Information Sessions	1,580
	Outreach Meetings	975
	Mailing Information Materials	2,231
	Phone Calls to Providers and Incumbent Workforce	7,279
	Sending Emails	29,028
	Interest Form Requests	4,914
Technical Assistance Provided	Emails	39,950
	In-Person Meetings	2,877
	Virtual Meetings	1,874
	Texts	617
	Phone Calls	1,063
Workforce Members Served	# Workforce Members Receiving TA	5,253
	# Students Connected to Institution by Navigator	821

As navigators built relationships with institutions and employers, both types of partners came to rely on them for support. As noted in the first annual ECACE report, some employers worried that upskilling staff might lead to higher turnover; as navigators continued to build trust in their communities, some of those same employers began to see the value of supporting professional development among their staff through ECACE. Employers introduced navigators to their staff and encouraged staff to work with them to pursue higher education.

Navigators also worked in partnership with many institutions to connect traditionally hard-to-reach populations with higher education. For example, College of Lake County and Harper College worked with navigators to increase enrollment among Spanish-speaking early childhood workforce members, and Elgin Community College partnered with navigators to increase enrollment among family child care providers.

Institutional Outreach

Institutions additionally conducted outreach to employers and the incumbent workforce. Between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023, institutions held 2,137 outreach events to engage employers and the workforce and reported 40,253 individuals participating in these events.³⁴ Additionally, institutions reported connections with 11,382 employers and/or schools over that same period.³⁵ Institutions have increased their outreach efforts over time, as last year, between July and December 2022, they held just under 500 events, engaged 7,800 participants, and connected with over 1,000 employers.

³³ This information only started being collected in April 2023, so the true number of workforce members assisted is likely much higher.

³⁴ The number of individuals is **not** an unduplicated count.

³⁵ The number of employers and schools is **not** an unduplicated count.

Table 20. Outreach Events, Participants, and Connections with Employers, by Sector, July 2022 – December 2023

Sector	# Outreach Events	# Participants	# Connections with employers or schools
Community Colleges	1,233	28,756	10,191
Public Universities	383	8,223	575
Private, Non-Profit Institutions	521	3,274	616
Total	2,137	40,253	11,382

Nearly all institutions reported engaging in outreach to local child care providers through emails, phone calls, texts, zoom meetings, and site visits. Physical visits to child care providers were reported as one of the most effective ways to target the incumbent workforce for enrollment in ECACE, in addition to word of mouth.

Institutional staff attended relevant local events such as job fairs and networking events to promote ECACE and their early childhood program. Many also attended institution-wide open houses and promoted their EC programs specifically. In some cases, institutions hosted early childhood specific open houses or events. For example, Prairie State College hosted an EC Symposium with 167 registered participants that resulted in several enrollments. Western Illinois University, Black Hawk College, and the local navigator partnered to offer an ECACE recruiting event. Some institutions engaged in broader outreach to the public through visits to churches and libraries. For example, Eastern Illinois University offered a series of literacy workshops at their local library for early childhood professionals, students, and parents, and Kaskaskia created theme bins for students to take back to their centers to use to teach lessons.

To support recruitment efforts, many institutions created ECACE promotional materials such as flyers, email marketing campaigns, videos, and ads (radio, billboard, newspaper). Many of these materials included personal student stories, highlighted strengths of the ECACE program, and detailed how ECACE helps remove barriers to higher education for working adults – namely through the scholarship, mentor supports, and accessible courses. Many institutions shared information about ECACE and their institution’s early childhood program in relevant Facebook groups and other online platforms, including their institution’s website and social media pages.

Institutions also focused their strategic engagement on specific populations – namely reaching out to family and in-home providers. Institutions offering programming in Spanish specifically targeted bilingual or Spanish-speaking educators. Several institutions conducted outreach to high school students which, while not the target population of ECACE (e.g., the incumbent workforce), does add qualified early educators to the field overall. Institutions had varying capacity to carry out these recruitment activities. City Colleges of Chicago hired recruiters to engage in outreach activities and coach prospective students through the application process. Smaller institutions with less staff relied heavily on navigators to carry out recruitment efforts.

Institutions reported varying relationships with navigators. Some institutions built strong relationships with navigators from the start – such as Danville Area Community College, Southwestern Illinois College, and Western Illinois University – connecting with them regularly to share marketing materials, align on recruitment plans and share updates about program changes. Other institutions reported confusion about the delineation of responsibility for recruitment between navigators and institutions. IBHE and ICCB provided technical assistance to clarify roles between navigators and institutions and shared best practices about how institutions and navigators can work together. For example, institutions coordinating with navigators frequently seemed to be an effective way of avoiding duplication of efforts and ensuring prospective students received sufficient support and consistent messaging. This partnership also helped navigators better understand institutions’ program features and reported being better able to promote the program.

Engagement With and Responsiveness to Employers

ECACE was created to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators across the state. It follows that to address that shortage, higher education institutions need to be in communication with and responsive to early childhood providers and their hiring, upskilling, and professional development needs.

Nearly all institutions engaged with local early childhood providers for recruitment into their programs. Cognizant of employer demands, many institutions scheduled their outreach during times most convenient for them, including staff meetings and nap and break times

Many institutions collected feedback from employers on industry trends, training, and hiring needs. Prairie State College conducted surveys and feedback sessions on industry trends to adjust their curriculum and programming. One institution received feedback from their employer partners that their staff needed more classroom management skills, which led to new programming being developed to address that topic. Some institutional staff sat on local advisory boards or attended committee meetings related to early childhood topics to stay attuned to industry demands. Sauk Valley Community College received feedback from local employers at their early childhood advisory council and attended local early childhood focused chamber of commerce meetings. Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) created the Collaborative Academy - a partnership among SIUC, community colleges, their regional Star Net Illinois office, and local agencies to provide professional development and upskill the incumbent workforce. Some institutions' faculty were truly integrated into the early childhood community, making regular contact with local employer partners in a mutually beneficial relationship. For example, some faculty from DePaul University supported local centers and schools through pro-bono workshops and curriculum counseling. University of Illinois Chicago established a program advisory board to solicit feedback on their curriculum and implemented a feasibility study for launching a bachelor's degree program in EC with licensure, interviewing multiple employers to determine if demand existed. Parkland, Rend Lake, and Spoon River Colleges additionally developed close employer-institutional faculty relationships.

The programs that you have provided via the ECACE program have been instrumental in helping our staff grow and prosper as individuals and better themselves not only personally, but into amazing teachers. These are opportunities that would not be possible for some, as it is hard enough to find the time for them to attend class, but to find enough money to pay for the classes. Some of our staff who are now attending the classes at JJC are so grateful for all of the opportunities they have because of the classes they have been able to take. I have one staff member who is now finishing her associates and on her way to learning more. She loves children and this is where her heart is and it is possible for her to learn and grow with you and the mentors that are provided.

- Early Childhood Employer Testimony, Joliet Junior College

Some institutions reported their responsiveness to the incumbent workforce as benefiting the employers as well. By offering courses in hybrid, online, and evening/weekend formats, students were able to pursue their education while continuing to work. Richland Community College offered hybrid courses at a local employer's site immediately after the workday to accommodate the student's schedule. College of Lake County provided courses directly at a child care center that had a cohort of staff with the desire to enroll. A few institutions made connections with local employers to serve as internship sites, providing the employers with staff and the students with invaluable work experience. Additionally, several institutions hosted job fairs with local employers to try to connect their students with those job openings.

FUNDING AND BUDGET FOR ECACE

The ECACE Act requires an annual report of the Consortium budget including the use of federal funds and member contributions, including financial, physical, or in-kind contributions, provided to the Consortium. Additionally, included are details about the grant funding provided by ICCB and IBHE to fulfill Consortium activities over the reporting period.

Consortium Budget

When the ECACE Act was signed, Governor JB Pritzker announced funding to establish the Consortium, aimed at supporting higher education in creating continuous pathways for working adults and upskilling the early childhood incumbent workforce over three years (AY 2021-22 to AY 2023-24). The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) allocated over \$200 million in federal childcare funding to support this initiative. The majority of this funding, over \$197 million, was distributed to IBHE, ICCB, and ISAC to administer ECACE.

The purpose of funds going to IBHE and ICCB was to convene and support the Consortium and Advisory Committee, “backbone” the initiative, and provide grants and support to higher education institutions and navigators. ICCB and IBHE provided grant funding, which includes both a base amount and per-student funding, to all Consortium institutions to fulfill the intentions and requirements of the ECACE Act. Additionally, IBHE offered Early Childhood Faculty Preparation grants to four universities to prepare diverse graduate students to become faculty for early childhood higher education programs. The purpose of the funds going to ISAC was to administer and distribute the ECACE scholarship, and the purpose of funds spent by IDHS was to hire and support regional navigators.

Table 21. Consortium Budget, by Agency, as of December 31, 2023

Agency	Original 3-Year Budget	AY2122 Expenses	AY22-23 Expenses	AY23-24 Projected Spending ³⁶	TOTAL Projected 3-Year Expenses
IBHE	\$39,599,971	\$319,372	\$7,681,089	\$19,845,315	\$27,845,776
ICCB	\$37,998,524	\$576,365	\$10,442,589	\$21,653,480	\$32,672,434
ISAC	\$120,000,000	\$6,162,053	\$33,001,012	\$53,196,893	\$92,359,958
IDHS	\$6,000,000	\$583,000	\$2,600,000	\$2,800,000	\$5,983,000
Total	\$203,598,495.00	\$7,640,790.43	\$53,724,689.76	\$97,495,688.20	\$158,861,168

Consortium Member Contributions

The ECACE Consortium, a body of 62 institutions, requires significant resources to support its administration. As such, institutions are required to report on “member contributions, including financial, physical, or in-kind contributions, provided to the Consortium.” Large contributions were not anticipated given the substantial grants received by institutions, the reduced timeframe institutions had to spend the grant money (e.g. two years versus three years), and initial challenges with the reporting structure.

Seventeen different institutions reported contributing funds between AY 2021-22 and AY 2023-24. In AY 2022-23, eight community colleges reported contributing a total of \$382,117, and seven four-year institutions (four private and three public) reported contributing a total of \$108,641.³⁷ A large majority of total contributions, 83 percent, went towards personnel. Institutions’ total contributions ranged from \$292

³⁶ Estimated spending as of December 31, 2023. Actual spending will vary and will be reported in the third annual report.

³⁷ Several institutions were only able to report over the full academic year rather than quarter, so data is from AY 2022-23 and AY 2023-24.

to \$275,470. Morton College contributed \$275,470, representing about 72 percent of two-year institution contributions.

Grants to Community Colleges and Universities

ICCB and IBHE provided grant funding to all Consortium institutions to address the intention and requirements of the ECACE Act. In addition, IBHE provided Early Childhood Faculty Preparation grants to four-year universities to prepare diverse students at the graduate level to become faculty for early childhood higher education programs.

Institutional Grants

Community colleges and universities were provided with grants comprised of both base funding and supplementary per-student funding based on institutional goals. The purpose of the institutional grants was to provide three years of funding (AY 2021-22, AY 2022-23, AY 2023-24³⁸) for institutions to:

- Support the development of a long-term, sustainable infrastructure tailored to meet the needs of working adults;
- Provide mentors and other academic and holistic supports to ensure persistence and completion;
- Develop pathways and programs to increase access, persistence, and completion of credentials and degrees; and
- Participate in the Consortium as active and collaborative members.

The most common use of funding by institutions was for personnel – creating new positions and subsidizing time for current positions to work on ECACE-related activities, including program development, mentoring, and community outreach. Institutions also used grant funds towards debt relief, upgrades to classrooms (i.e., technology, lab spaces, furniture), tutoring, content test preparation, supporting students' professional development through conferences, and instructional supplies.

Appendices A and B include the original amount granted to both two- and four-year institutions. These amounts have fluctuated significantly since the original grant award with some institutions requesting additional funding and others de-obligating funds. Next year's annual report will include the final spending amounts.

Early Childhood Faculty Preparation Grants

Four Illinois higher education institutions established programs to specifically address the need for post baccalaureate-level early childhood prepared instructors/adjunct professors in Illinois utilizing the Early Childhood Faculty Preparation Grant (ECFP). The goal of the ECFP Grant was to increase the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the ECE faculty pipeline. The programs were expected to be rich in diversity and use coordinators or mentors to provide a single point of contact and resources to candidates.

Illinois State University, University of Illinois Chicago, Lewis University, and National Louis University were selected via a competitive bid process for their uniquely designed programs to support those currently teaching and/or working with children ages birth to kindergarten to shift their teaching pedagogy to meet the needs of adult learners. The 88 candidates (66 percent who self-identify as diverse)³⁹ enrolled in these specially designed programs to earn a master's degree and/or an early childhood teaching endorsement that prepares them to teach in a community college, four-year institution, or high school and, in turn, prepare future early childhood educators.

³⁸ Institutions were not awarded their funding until late AY 2021-22.

³⁹ Institutions each determined how they defined diverse, through their grant proposals and their student selection process.

The courses offered at the University of Illinois Chicago, Illinois State University, and National Louis University were designed to meet the specific needs of early childhood professionals teaching in diverse communities and schools. Core courses included curriculum, learning theories, assessment, research methods, and diversity/multicultural education. Additional courses provided instruction in teacher preparation, teaching multilingual learners, and community engagement.

Each program included a unique focus on pedagogy – including preparing teachers for collegiate instruction:

- Candidates at the University Illinois Chicago earned a certificate in “The Foundations of College Instruction.”
- Illinois State University offered quarterly opportunities for the cohort to meet in person for a learning experience in either Bloomington or Chicago.
- National Louis University had their cohort attend the Early Childhood Leadership Connections Conference in Wheeling, which provided opportunities to collectively reflect on professional learning.

Lewis University took a different approach to preparing faculty; they provided a program to support high school teachers from high-need and/or diverse schools to teach community college/high school dual credit coursework in early childhood. Upon completion of the program, the high school teachers are qualified to provide high school coursework as dual credit coursework, enabling high school students to receive community college credit hours.

Each of these unique programs, through intentional coursework and the support of mentors, supported a diverse pipeline of early childhood faculty in Illinois.



LOOKING AHEAD

While the Consortium and its institutions have accomplished much since the inception of ECACE, and especially over this reporting period, there is still more to do to remove barriers and increase opportunities to access degrees and credentials of the incumbent workforce, as laid out in legislation and identified by institutions and state agencies. The institutional grants and scholarships provided to students have had a huge impact on enrollment, persistence, and completion and institutions' ability to support students and remove barriers. Institutional grants expired in June 2024, and scholarship funds were significantly reduced, even with the state investment of \$5 million appropriated in the FY 2024-25 budget. Institutions and state agencies have been planning for how to best sustain the most important elements of the work, continue to accomplish the goals and activities set out in legislation, and continue to support and upskill the incumbent workforce.

Specifically, the Consortium is standing up communities of practice and working groups in AY 2024-25 and strategically thinking about a longer-term sustainability plan for how the Consortium will work together and accomplish the goals laid out in the Act. Similarly, institutions have developed individual sustainability plans to continue to support the incumbent workforce and remove barriers to their enrollment, persistence, and completion.

Communities of Practice and Working Groups

There are several Communities of Practice and Working Groups planned for AY 2024-25, tackling some of the most pressing issues for Consortium institutions.

Course Sharing/Hy-Flex Community of Practice

With an eye toward equity and in accordance with the ECACE Act, which encourages the streamlining of pathways to increase student access to upskilling, credentialing, and licensing, the Consortium will continue to support online learning professional development training and best practices. Specifically, the Consortium will leverage the experience of ILCCO leaders across the state to encourage Consortium institutions to develop course share agreements amongst each other. Through virtual webinars and lunch and learns, ECACE will provide Consortium members with the opportunity to learn more about using Hy-Flex models and the ILCCO system. The Consortium will facilitate introductions between early childhood faculty and their institutional online education director and course design team to help connect faculty to best practices in Hy-flex learning and multi course modalities.

Creative Course Delivery Working Group

Additionally, a Creative Course Delivery Working Group was convened to address the requirements in the ECACE Act that the members of the Consortium cooperate in providing streamlined paths for students to attain degrees, certificates, Gateways Credentials and licensure endorsements in early childhood and provide course offerings in formats that are available to any student enrolled in a member institution when a particular course is not available at the student's home institution.

Working group members represent community colleges and private and public four-year colleges and universities. Specifically, the group discussed approaches to identify student and programmatic needs where creative collaborations could provide streamlined and student-centered experiences to strengthen and enhance programs. Guest speakers were invited to describe course sharing models, taking into account the impact on students and the participating institutions.

Reporting Working Group

A Reporting Working Group, made up of diverse representation from Consortium institutions, including community colleges, public universities, and four-year provide non-profit institutions, advised on a plan to address continued, required reporting requirements in a way that both elevates the great work of institutions and seeks to minimize time and effort. With the expiration of federal grant funding in summer 2024, most institutions have reduced staff capacity. Considering how to streamline reporting requirements while continuing to raise up the successes and lessons of ECACE is paramount.

ECACE Recruitment and Marketing

As shown in the FY 2023-24 Mid-Year Report, the State engaged in multiple outreach strategies to provide employers and potential students with information about the opportunities and resources provided through ECACE. This outreach included the distribution of a new ECACE Scholarship flyer, appearances in INCCRRA newsletters, and an interagency social media campaign. In the fall of 2023, ISAC also created an updated informational video on the ECACE Scholarship to reflect the expanded eligibility criteria for AY 2023-24.

Beginning in October 2023, state agencies worked with a communications firm on a broader ECACE marketing campaign. In partnership with the firm, an interagency committee developed advertisements to appear across radio, social media, audio and television streaming services, and other websites. The campaign was created with two goals: 1) Inform the early childhood workforce of the benefits of continuing their education and how ECACE can streamline the process; and 2) Educate stakeholders about the positive impact the Consortium has made, and how continued support will benefit early childhood. The campaign was launched in April 2024 and will be described in detail in the next report.

Consortium Sustainability

IBHE and ICCB will work with a consulting partner, Afton Partners, to conduct an assessment of institutions and state agency leaders and develop recommendations for the sustainability of the Consortium body. They queried institutions' interest, capacity, priorities, and supports needed, as well as state leaders' priorities and vision to develop recommendations. Recommendations will be detailed in the next report and will focus on the following:

- The vision of ECACE and the Consortium;
- Governance of the Consortium and potential shared leadership between state agencies and institutions;
- Advisory Committee focus;
- Types of institutional engagement in Consortium work;
- Future topics of focus for the next one-three years; and
- Meeting cadence.

To develop these recommendations, IBHE, ICCB, and Afton Partners considered both the reduced future capacity of institutions and the continued need to support the incumbent workforce in attaining credentials and degrees.

Institution Sustainability

In 2024, institutions developed in-depth plans for how they intend to sustain components of ECACE in AY 2024-25. These included plans for financial aid, student supports, recruiting and enrolling students, program structure and access, AAS and other transfer pathways, outreach and partnerships, data sharing and reporting, and participation in the Consortium.

At Consortium meetings, institutions have discussed what they can do to maintain what's been built through ECACE. Some themes include:

- Institutions' ability to maintain their course delivery methods (i.e. flexible schedules, Spanish courses, variety of modalities to accommodate student needs)
- Holistic supports (i.e. mentors, advising, "high touch" with students)
- Pathways (i.e. CDA, prior learning assessments, helping students to transfer)
- Funding (i.e. seeking external resources and grants), and more.

Institutions have also repeatedly expressed concern for their capacity to support students without institutional funding. In particular, institutions are concerned about the loss of mentors, reduction of scholarship funds, and reduced staff time to redesign programs or courses, support students, attend meetings, and report on ECACE work.



CONCLUSION

The Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) was established by legislation to “serve the needs of the incumbent early childhood workforce and the employers of early childhood educators and to advance racial equity while meeting the needs of employers by streamlining, coordinating, and improving the accessibility of degree completion pathways for upskilling and the sustained expansion of educational pipelines at Illinois institutions of higher education” (Illinois General Assembly, 2021).

In this reporting period, the Consortium and its institutional members increased enrollment, persistence and completion of the early childhood workforce; adjusted program and course design to be more accessible to working adults; provided scholarships and debt relief to students to remove financial barriers to higher education; conducted outreach and engaged with early childhood employers to best meet their needs; and provided students supports to assist early childhood workforce members to persist and complete.

While AY 2024-25 will prove challenging with the end of institutional grants, the Consortium is making plans to continue supporting the incumbent early childhood workforce by maintaining student supports and program changes where possible, adjusting strategies such as recruitment messaging, collecting data to measure the progress and value of ECACE, and innovating additional strategies to make higher education more accessible for the early childhood workforce. Additionally, as the Consortium looks toward “Phase 2”, it envisions additional collaborative, cross-consortium work to continue to network, learn, share, and create seamless pathways for working adults.



REFERENCES

- Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. (2023, October 30). *Appendix G Early Childhood Teacher Credentialing Program*. Retrieved from Title 89: Social Services, Chapter III: of Children and Family Services, Subchapter e: Requirements for Licensure, Part 407: Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers: <https://dcfs.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/dcfs/documents/about-us/policy-rules-and-forms/documents/rules/rules-407.pdf>
- Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity. (2022, June 14). *Credit for the CDA*. Retrieved from ECACE Past Events: https://www.ecace.org/assets/board-meetings/2022/June/14/APPROVED_Final__6.14.22.pdf
- Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity. (n.d.). *Past Events*. Retrieved from ECACE: https://www.ecace.org/Events_Past.html
- IDHS Division of Early Childhood. (2024, June 4). *Smart Start Overview - ELC Workforce Committee*. Retrieved from Illinois Department of Early Childhood: <https://idec.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idec/events/documents/quality-workforce/2024/Smart%20Start%20Overview%20-%20ELC%20Workforce%20Committee%206.4.24.pdf>
- Illinois Administrative Code. (2022, July 13). *Section 25.620 Student Teaching*. Retrieved from Illinois Administrative Code, Title 23: Education and Cultural Resources, Part 25: Educator Licensure, Subpart H: Clinical Experiences: <https://casetext.com/regulation/illinois-administrative-code/title-23-education-and-cultural-resources/part-25-educator-licensure/subpart-h-clinical-experiences/section-25620-student-teaching#:~:text=Section%2025.620%20%2D%20Student%20Teaching%20a,Adm.>
- Illinois General Assembly. (2021, 07 28). *Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Act, Public Act 102-0174*. Retrieved from Illinois General Assembly: <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=102-0174>
- Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and University of Illinois at Chicago College of Education. (2018, October). *Transforming the Early Childhood Workforce: A Call to Action for the State of Illinois*. Retrieved from Illinois Department of Early Childhood: <https://idec.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idec/documents/transforming-the-early-childhood-workforce-il-report.pdf>
- INCCRRA. (2022, December 19). *Gateways to Opportunity® Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Credential Framework*. Retrieved from Gateways to Opportunity® Illinois Professional Development System: <https://www.ilgateways.com/docman-docs/professional-development/higher-education-programs/entitlement/1280-ece-competency-framework/file>
- Klein-Collins, R., Taylor, J., Bishop, C., Bransberger, P., Lane, P., & Leibrandt, S. (2020). *The PLA Boost*. Council for the Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). *Custom Data Files*. Retrieved from Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/CDS.aspx?sid=0180e61b-5d66-4d75-99a2-8733f636d6de&rtid=5>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2023, August). *Condition of Education, Characteristics of Postsecondary Students*. Retrieved from U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/csb/postsecondary-students>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2024, May). *Condition of Education, Price of Attending an Undergraduate Institution*. Retrieved from U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cua#suggested-citation>
- Whitehead, J. (2021). *Illinois' Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Report*. Bloomington, IL: INCCRRA.

APPENDIX A. CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

ECACE Institutions and their Consortium Representatives as of Academic Year 2022-23:

Amy Maxeiner
Black Hawk College

Michelle Weghorst
Illinois Central College

Kalith Smith
Lincoln Land Community College

Cindy Rice
Blackburn College

Robert Conn
Illinois Eastern Community College

Elizabeth Gmitter
Malcolm X College

Lavada Taylor
Chicago State University

Linda Ruhe Marsh
Illinois State University

Dawn Katz
McHenry County College

Jean Zaar
College of DuPage

Tammy Landgraf
Illinois Valley Community College

Ryen Nagle
Moraine Valley Community College

Diane Schael
College of Lake County

Stephanie Hartford
John A. Logan College

Michael Rose
Morton College

Penny McConnell
Danville Area Community College

April Darringer
John Wood Community College

Lisa Downey
National Louis University

Marie Donovan
DePaul University

Melissa Szymczak
Joliet Junior College

Tom Phillion
Northeastern Illinois University

Laretta Henderson
Eastern Illinois University

Joy Towner
Judson University

Laurie Elish-Piper
Northern Illinois University

Peggy Heinrich
Elgin Community College

Paul Carlson
Kankakee Community College

Marc Battista
Oakton Community College

Shannon Dermer
Governors State University

Traci Masau
Kaskaskia College

Brandon Nichols
Olive Harvey College

Laura Schaub
Greenville University

Shandria Holmes
Kennedy King College

Lance Kilpatrick
Olivet Nazarene University

Theresa Carlton
Harold Washington College

Judson Curry
Kishwaukee College

Nancy Sutton
Parkland College

Kathleen Nikolai
Harper College

Tanille Ulm
Lake Land College

Elighie Wilson
Prairie State College

Johnna Darragh-Ernst
Heartland College

Randy Gallaher
Lewis & Clark Community College

Kim Wilkerson
Rend Lake College

Melissa Johnson
Highland Community College

Rebecca Pruitt
Lewis University

Patricia Aumann
Richard Daley College

Megan Broderick
Richland Community College

Amanda Smith
Rock Valley College

Kimberlee Wagner
Rockford University

Jin-ah Kim
Roosevelt University

Jon Mandrell
Sauk Valley Community College

Anna Helwig
South Suburban College

Stacy Thompson
*Southern Illinois University
Carbondale*

Natasha Flowers
*Southern Illinois University
Edwardsville*

Carolyn Beal
Southwestern Illinois College

Robert Kensinger
*Spoon River College
(joined fall 2023)*

Shekeita Webb
St. Augustine College

Suan Campos
Triton College

Kate Connor
Truman College

Kathryn Bouchard Chval
University of Illinois Chicago

Anne Pradzinski
*University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign*

Sharon Garcia
Waubensee Community College

Eric Sheffield
Western Illinois University



APPENDIX B. ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AS OF 12/31/23

Co-Chairs

Brian Durham
*Illinois Community
College Board*

Jason Helfer
*Illinois State Board
of Education*

VACANT
*Governor's Office of Early Childhood
Development*

Ginger Ostro
*Illinois Board
of Higher Education*

Trish Rooney
*Illinois Department
of Human Services*

Members

VACANT
*Senate Higher Education
Committee*

Alicia Geddis
Danville School District 118

Meredith Palmer
Richland College

Dale Fowler
*Senate Higher Education
Committee*

Francis Godwyll
Illinois State University

Joi Patterson
Governors State University

Maurice A West, II
*House Higher Education
Committee*

Rochelle Golliday
Cuddle Care, Inc.

Avis Proctor
Harper College

Michael Marron
*House Higher Education
Committee*

Ashley Harms
Amity Child Care Center

Jim Reed
*Illinois Community College
Trustee Association*

Jill Andrews
Kiddie Kollege

Michael Kim
Illinois Action for Children

Kimberly Mann
*Illinois Department of Children
and Family Services*

Martina Rocha
Together for Children Network

Carolyn Beal
Southwestern Illinois College

Leslie Mckinily
*Chicago Public Schools,
District 299*

Stephanie Schmitz-Bechteler
*Illinois Student
Assistance Commission*

Jennifer Buchter
Eastern Illinois University

Lauri Morrison-Frichtl
IL Head Start Association

Joni Scritchlow
INCCRRA

Kate Connor
Truman College

Stephanie Neuman
Kountry Kids Learning Center

Mike Shackelford
Brownstone CUSD 201

Lisa Downey
National Louis University

Laurie Elish-Piper
Northern Illinois University

Susan Orozco
*East Aurora School,
District 131*

Tom Phillion
Northeastern Illinois University

Emnet Geberhiiwet Ward
*Eyes on the Future Child
Development Center*

Evelyn Osorio
*Service Employees
International Union*

Ken Trzaska
*Community College Presidents
Council and Lewis & Clark
Community College*

Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro
Latino Policy Forum

APPENDIX C. IBHE ORIGINAL INSTITUTIONAL GRANT AWARDS

Funding amounts listed below are budgeted amounts for institutions for ECACE and ECFP grants. This does not represent final spending amounts. This will be published next year.

Table C-1. ECACE Funding for Four-Year Institutions, FY21-22 through FY23-24

Institution	Total
Blackburn College	\$311,602.00
Chicago State University	\$1,031,409.69
DePaul University	\$874,582.00
Eastern Illinois University	\$874,582.00
Governors State University	\$1,135,961.93
Greenville University	\$311,601.01
Illinois State University	\$1,758,964.91
Lewis University	\$899,720.42
National Louis University	\$1,758,965.00
Northeastern Illinois University	\$721,938.00
Northern Illinois University	\$1,706,688.60
Olivet Nazarene University	\$874,581.00
Rockford University	\$311,604.00
Roosevelt University	\$1,135,961.00
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	\$937,313.00
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	\$890,941.85
St. Augustine College	\$1,015,727.00
St. Xavier University ⁴⁰	\$3,604.62
University of Illinois Chicago	\$1,162,066.58
University of Illinois Urbana Champaign	\$947,768.06
Western Illinois University	\$952,995.00
Total	\$19,618,577.67

Table C-2. Early Childhood Faculty Preparation Grants

Institution	Total
Illinois State University	\$800,753.00
Lewis University	\$358,390.00
National Louis University	\$1,191,511.00
University of Illinois Chicago	\$1,027,989.00
Total	\$3,378,643.00

⁴⁰ St. Xavier left the Consortium in November 2022. This was the amount actually spent during their time in the Consortium.

APPENDIX D. ICCB ORIGINAL INSTITUTIONAL GRANT AWARDS

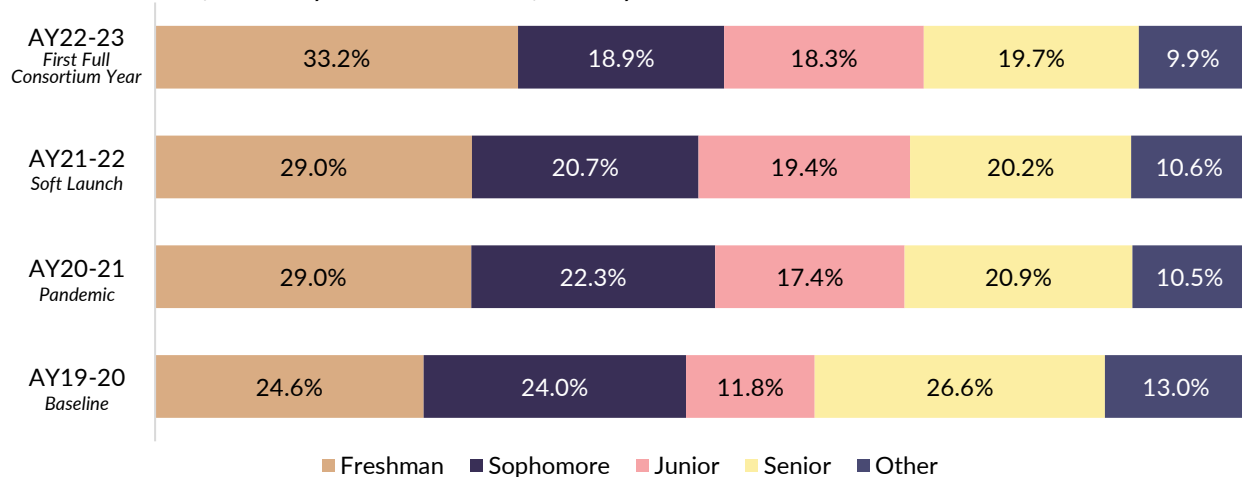
Table D-1. ECACE Funding for Illinois Community Colleges, FY21-22 through FY23-24

Community College	Total Program Allocation (FY 22-24)	Community College	Total Program Allocation (FY 22-24)
Black Hawk	\$767,955.68	John A. Logan	\$608,131.68
Carl Sandburg (ILCCO Only)	\$60,416.68	John Wood	\$616,693.68
CCC Harold Washington	\$685,189.68	Joliet Junior	\$930,633.68
CCC Harry S Truman	\$930,633.68	Kankakee	\$662,357.68
CCC Kennedy-King	\$676,627.68	Kaskaskia	\$693,751.68
CCC Malcolm X	\$830,743.68	Kishwaukee	\$582,445.68
CCC Olive-Harvey	\$702,313.68	Lake Land	\$696,605.68
CCC Richard J. Daley	\$716,583.68	Lewis and Clark	\$779,371.68
CCC Wilbur Wright (ILCCO Only)	\$60,416.68	Lincoln Land	\$648,087.68
College of DuPage	\$2,004,163.68	McHenry County	\$864,991.68
College of Lake County	\$950,611.68	Moraine Valley	\$876,407.68
Danville Area	\$636,671.68	Morton	\$1,347,530.68
Elgin	\$1,279,034.68	Oakton	\$1,955,645.68
Harper	\$1,318,990.68	Parkland	\$630,963.68
Heartland	\$705,167.68	Prairie State	\$716,583.68
Highland	\$622,401.68	Rend Lake	\$593,861.68
IECC Frontier (ILCCO Only)	\$60,416.68	Richland	\$616,693.68
IECC Lincoln Trail (ILCCO Only)	\$60,416.68	Rock Valley	\$773,663.68
IECC Olney Central (ILCCO Only)	\$60,416.68	Sauk Valley	\$596,715.68
IECC Wabash Valley	\$588,153.68	Shawnee (ILCCO Only)	\$60,416.68
Illinois Central	\$733,707.68	South Suburban	\$847,867.68
Illinois Valley	\$659,503.68	Southeastern Illinois (ILCCO Only)	\$60,416.68
		Southwestern Illinois	\$1,307,574.68
		Spoon River	\$605,277.68
		Triton	\$799,349.68
		Waubonsee	\$864,991.68

APPENDIX E. CLASS LEVEL DISTRIBUTION AND DEGREE SEEKING INFORMATION

Class levels, as shown in Figure E-1, consist of Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors at all of the institutions. The Other classification included students with a bachelor's or associate degree enrolled in a community college or enrolled in a bridge adult education credit-bearing program. From AY 2019-20 to AY 2022-23, the percentage of seniors decreased from 26.6 percent to 19.7 percent. However, the percentage of upper classmen remained relatively stable, with 38.4 percent in AY 2019-20 and 38 percent in AY 2022-23. The percentage of freshmen increased from 24.6 percent to 33.2 percent, reflecting an influx of new students recruited through ECACE.

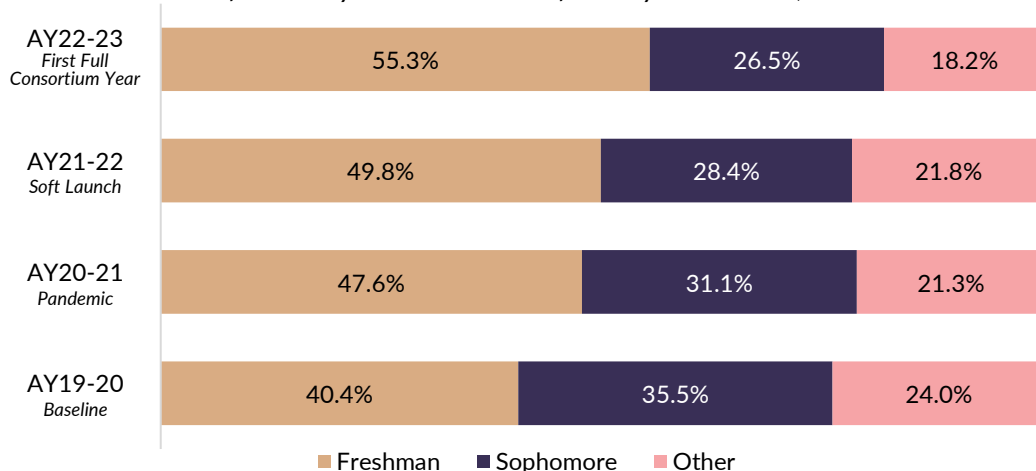
Figure E-1. Distribution of Enrollment of Incumbent Members of the Early Childhood Workforce, by Class Level, AY19-20 to AY22-23



Community Colleges

The proportion of Freshmen shifted fairly substantially – by 11.9 percentage points from AY 2019-20 (43.4 percent) to AY 2022-23 (55.3 percent) for incumbent early childhood workers enrolling in Illinois community colleges. This likely reflects an increase in newly enrolled students recruited through the ECACE initiative and scholarship. Conversely, enrollment of Sophomores decreased from 34.7 percent to 26.5 percent in the same time period.

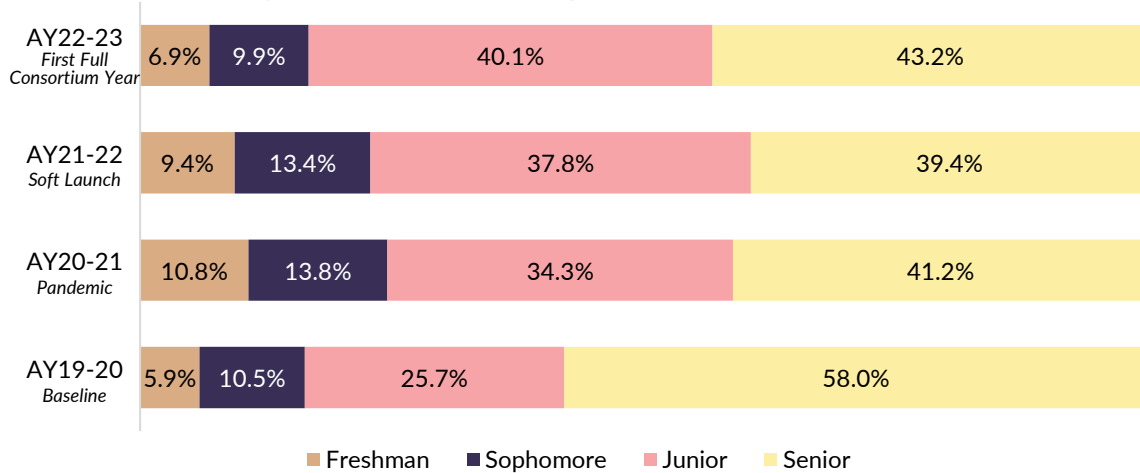
Figure E-2. Distribution of Community College Enrollment of Incumbent Members of the Early Childhood Workforce by Class Level, AY19-20 to AY22-23



Four-year Institutions

While enrollment increased for all class levels at four-year institutions, the proportion of those at various levels shifted from AY 2019-20 to AY 2022-23. The percentage of Seniors decreased from 58.0 percent to 43.2 percent, while the percentage of Juniors increased from 25.7 percent to 40.1 percent. However, the overall percent of upperclassmen remained relatively stable, with 83.7 percent in AY 2019-20 and 83.3 percent in AY 2022-23.

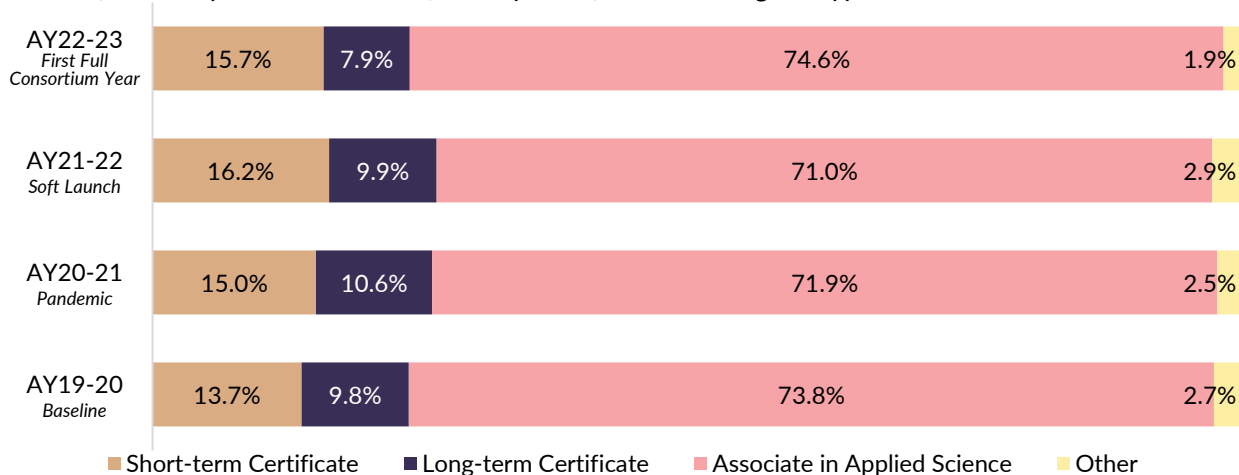
Figure E-3. Distribution of Four-Year Institution Enrollment of Incumbent Members of the Early Childhood Workforce by Class Level, AY19-20 to AY22-23



Degree vs. Certificate Seeking at Community Colleges

As shown in Figure E-4, the number of incumbent members of the early childhood workforce in Illinois community colleges for AY 2022-23 were primarily enrolled Associate in Applied Science (AAS) programs (74.6 percent; N = 1,879) followed by Short-Term Certificate programs (15.7 percent; N = 395), Long-Term Certificate programs (7.9 percent; N = 199), and Other programs (1.9 percent; N = 89). Examining distribution of students in certificate and degree types, it remained fairly constant with Short-Term Certificates having slight growth proportionally compared to Associate in Applied Science programs and Long-Term Certificate programs.

Figure E-4. Distribution of Illinois Community College Enrollment of Incumbent Members of the Early Childhood Workforce by Certificate and Degree Type, AY19-20 to AY22-23



APPENDIX F. EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION FOR ENROLLED STUDENTS

Appendix F includes employment information for those incumbent workforce members enrolled at community colleges and four-year institutions, disaggregated by sector.

Teachers and assistant teachers comprise most incumbent members at both community colleges (39.3 percent and 37.2 percent respectively) and four-year institutions (39.6 percent and 29.6 percent respectively). Interestingly, the next largest group at four-year institutions were teacher aides (8.2 percent); whereas at community colleges, it was directors (8.3 percent).

Table F-1. Distribution of Overall Enrolled EC Workforce Population by Sector and Gateways Position Type, AY22-23 (N=4,158)

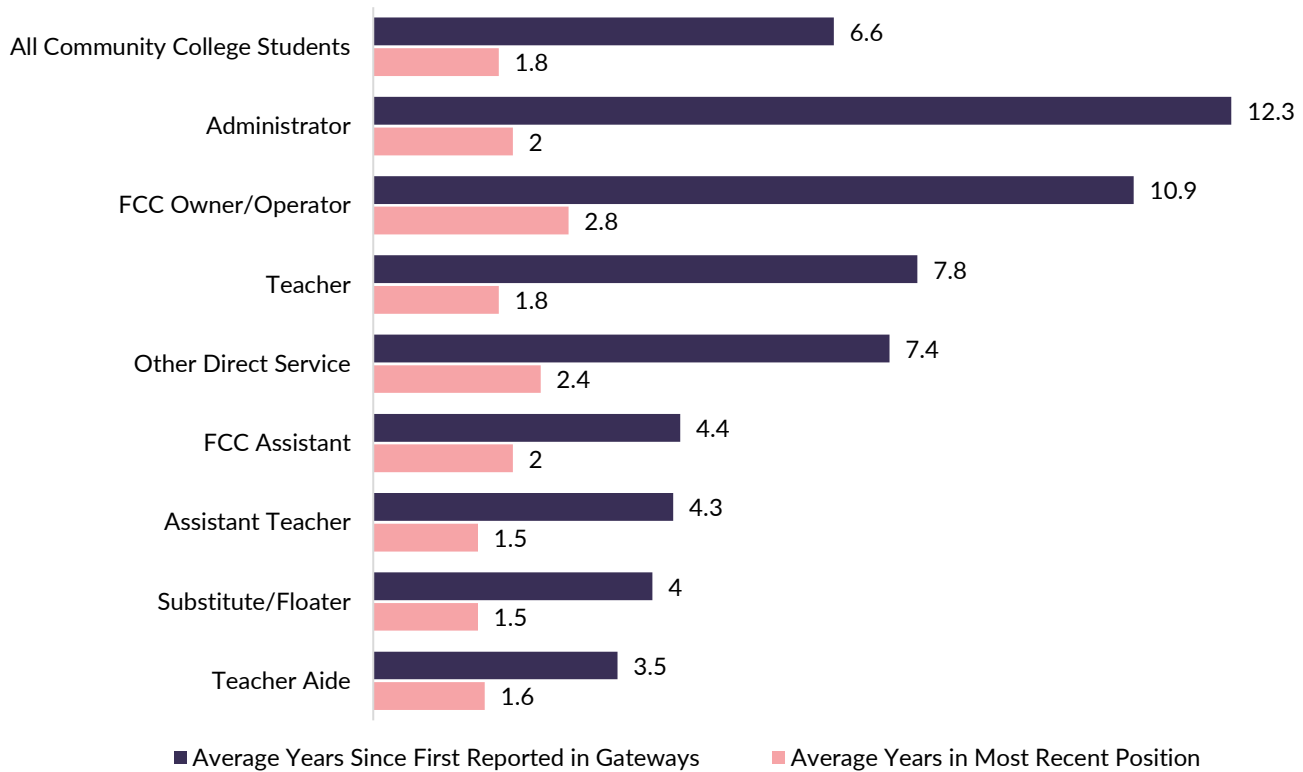
	Community Colleges		Four-Year Institutions	
	#	%	#	%
Teacher	899	39.3%	739	39.6%
Assistant Teacher	851	37.2%	553	29.6%
Administrator	189	8.3%	122	6.5%
Teacher Aide	106	4.6%	154	8.2%
Other Direct Service	89	3.9%	127	6.8%
Substitute/Floater	72	3.1%	109	5.8%
FCC Owner/Operator	43	1.9%	41	2.2%
FCC Assistant	41	1.8%	23	1.2%
Total	2,290		1,868	

Note: The total sample size was 4,221 (2,328 and 1,893 from community colleges and four-year institutions respectively), however, 63 people enrolled (38 from community colleges and 25 from four-year institutions) fell into positions of unknown, other indirect, other, youth development practitioner, and school-age site coordinator, but due to such small numbers, they were excluded from the table.

Figure F-1 and Figure F-2 include information about enrolled workforce members' length of time in their most recent position and length of time in the field (as calculated using the years since the first position was reported in the Gateways Registry).

The average number of years in the most recent position for all enrolled incumbent workforce members at community colleges was 1.8 years, and the average number of years since the first reported position was 6.6 years. However, the average tenure in the field varied greatly across roles. As illustrated in Figure F-1, administrators had the longest average tenure in the field of 12.3 years, with 2 years in their most recent position. Family child care owners, totaling 43 individuals, had an average of 2.8 years in their most recent position and an average of 10.9 years since their first reported position within the Gateways registry. Teachers had an average tenure of 1.8 years in their most recent position and 7.8 years overall, while assistant teachers had an average of 1.5 years and 4.3 years overall.

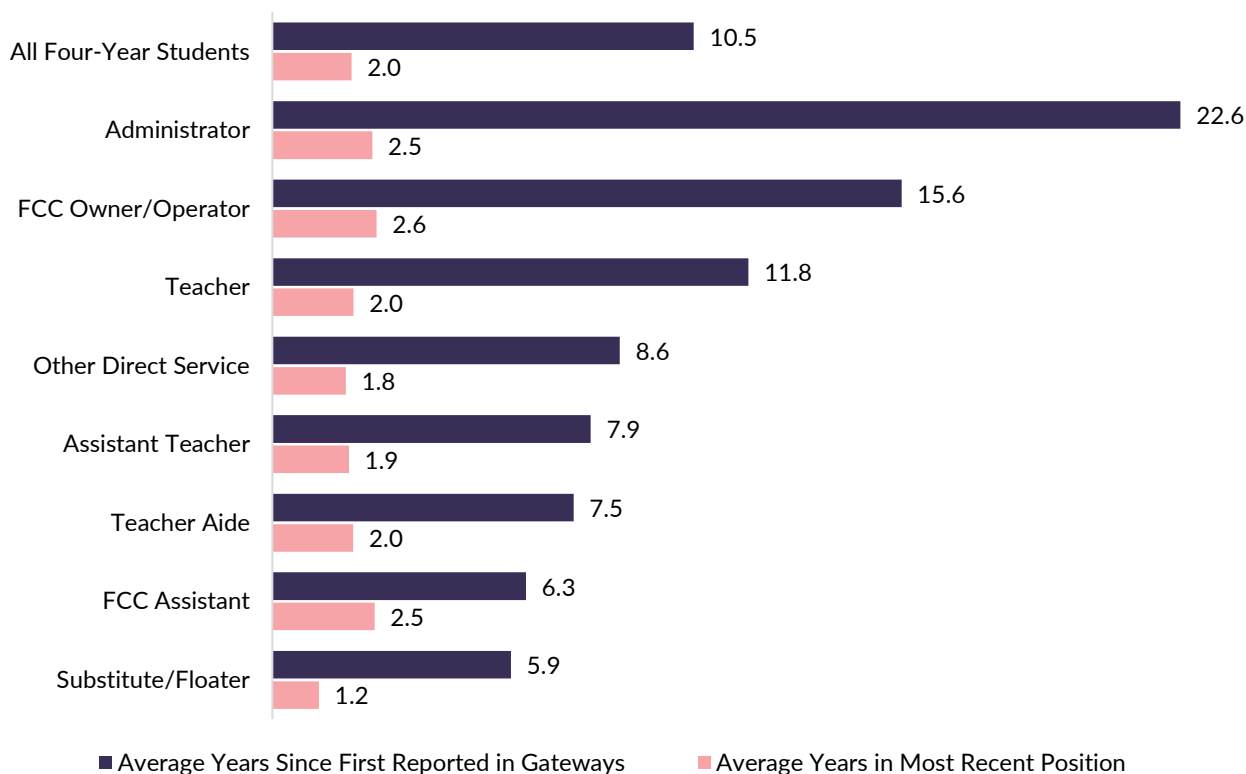
Figure F-1. Job Tenure for ECACE Cohort Members from Illinois Community Colleges, by Position (N=2,290)



Note: 38 people enrolled fell into the positions of unknown, other indirect, other, youth development practitioner, and school-age site coordinator, but due to such small numbers, they were excluded from the figure.

Enrolled workforce members at four-year institutions had an average of 2 years in their most recent position and 10.5 years in the field. Job tenure at four-year institutions varied notably by position. Administrators had the longest total early childhood tenure at 22.6 years with an average of 2.5 years of time in their most recent position. Family child care owners followed with 15.6 years and an average of 2.6 years in service. Teachers, which comprised the largest group at 739, had an average tenure of 2.0 years in their most recent position and an average of 11.8 years in the field. Assistant teachers stood at 7.9 years in tenure with 1.9 years average time in their most recent position.

Figure F-2. Job Tenure for ECACE Cohort Members from Four-Year Institutions, by Position (N=1,868)

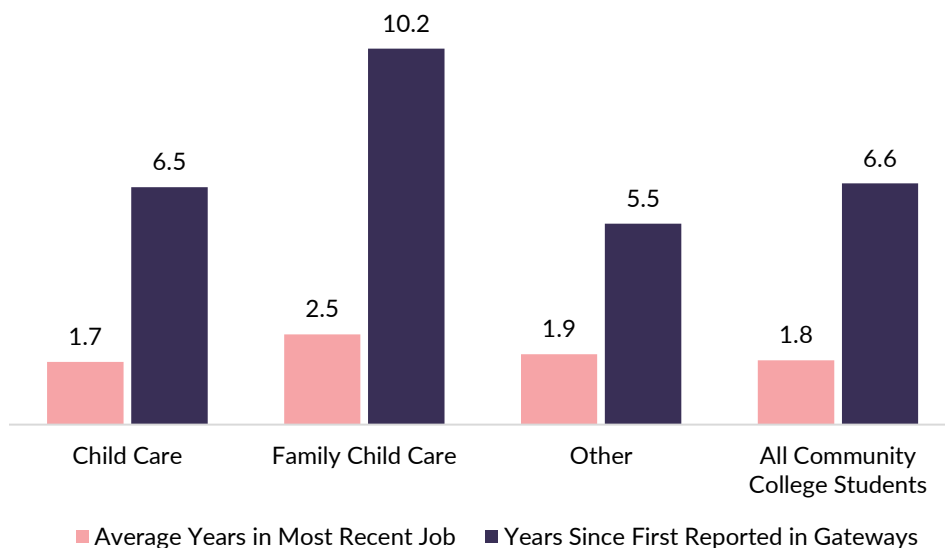


Note: 25 people enrolled fell into the positions of unknown, other indirect, other, youth development practitioner, and school-age site coordinator, but due to such small numbers, they were excluded from the figure.

Figure F-3 and Figure F-4 include information about enrolled workforce members' length of time in their most recent position and length of time in the field (as calculated using the years since the first position was reported in the Gateways Registry) by their employer type.

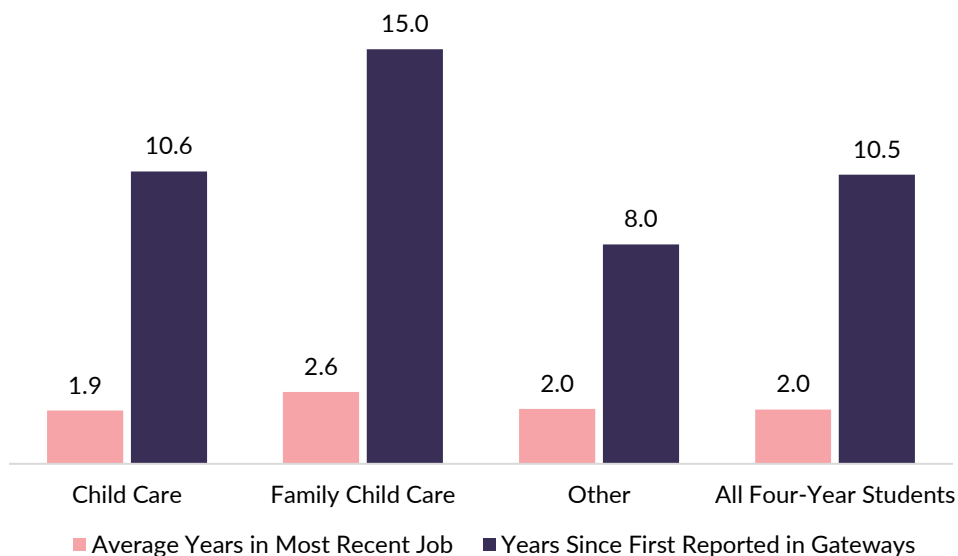
Average tenure in the field was greatest for those working in family child care enrolled in community colleges (10.2 years). Those working in family child care also on average served the most time in their recent position for those enrolled in community colleges (2.5 years).

Figure F-3. Job Tenure by Employer Type for EC Workforce Members at Community Colleges (N=2,328)



Average tenure in the field was greatest for those working in family child care enrolled in four-year institutions (15 years). Those working in family child care also on average served the most time in their recent position (2.6 years).

Figure F-4. Job Tenure by Employer Type for EC Workforce Members at Four-Year Institutions (N=1,893)





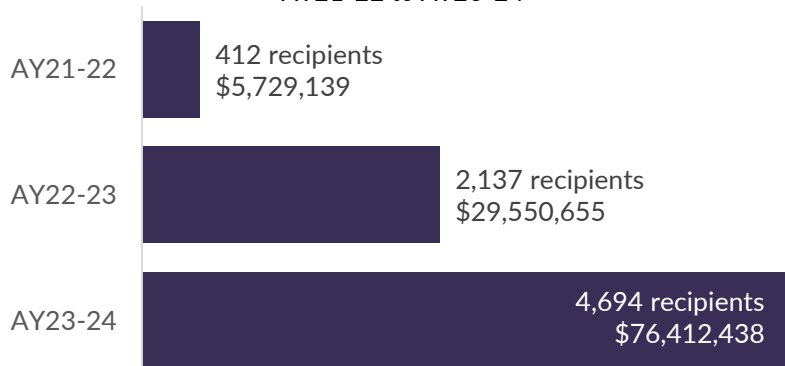
EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCESS CONSORTIUM FOR EQUITY SCHOLARSHIP, AY 2023-24

From AY 2021 to AY 2024, the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship was funded using federal Covid-19 relief funds in a targeted effort to support the incumbent early childhood workforce to access higher education credentials and degrees in Illinois. The ECACE Scholarship covered up to the full cost of attendance (COA) after other scholarships and grants were applied to address the often-prohibitive cost of attending higher education, which spans beyond tuition and fees and includes expenses such as books and supplies, housing, transportation, and more. Eligible students were incumbent workforce members seeking an early childhood undergraduate or graduate degree or certificate at Consortium institutions.¹ The program was expanded in AY23-24 due to substantial available funds to include those seeking a graduate degree.

Scholarship Outcomes in AY 2023-24

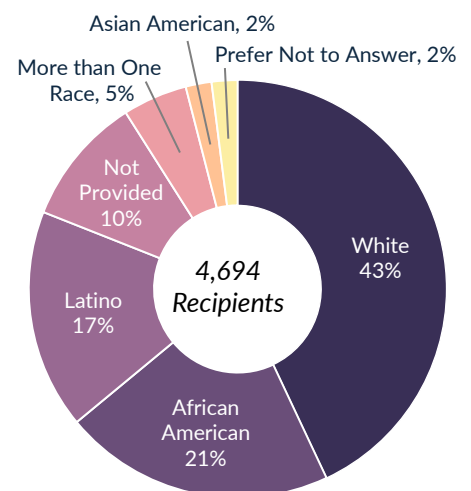
As shown in Figure 1, in AY 2023-24, \$76.4 million in ECACE Scholarship funds were distributed to nearly 4,700 members of the incumbent workforce. This is a large increase from AY 2023 (\$29.6 million in scholarships for about 2,100 incumbent workforce members) and AY 2022 (\$5.7 million in scholarships for about 400 incumbent workforce).

Figure 1. Expenditures and Recipients of ECACE Scholarship, AY21-22 to AY23-24



Source: ISAC, 2024

Figure 2. Distribution of ECACE Scholarship Recipients by Race/Ethnicity, AY23-24



Source: ISAC, 2024

Recipient Demographics

As shown in Figure 2, in AY 2023-24, 45% of scholarship recipients were non-white. Of all recipients, 43% identified as White, 21% Black or African American, 17% Hispanic or Latino, 2% Asian, 5% more than one race or ethnicity, and 12% either preferred not to answer or did not provide a response. The racial makeup of scholarship recipients was similar to that of Illinois early childhood workforce members in licensed child care centers overall, as reported in 2020.²

¹ Students at participating private, not-for-profit institutions could receive a scholarship amount no more than the cost of the most expensive early childhood education program at an Illinois public university. In AY 2023-24, students were eligible for awards of up to about \$18,300 at community colleges and up to about \$33,600 at four-year institutions, not exceeding total cost of attendance.

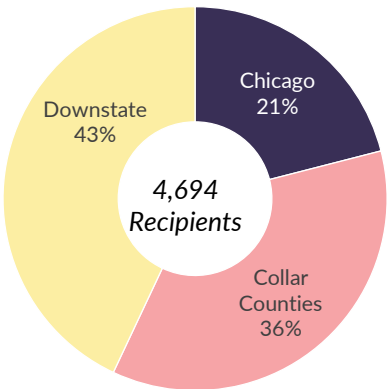
² Whitehead, J. (2021). *Illinois' Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Report*. Bloomington, IL: INCCRRA.

ECACE scholarship recipients were older than traditional college students, with 50% over the age of 30, compared to national data from 2021, where only 23% of undergraduate students were over 30 years old.³ However, compared to the licensed early childhood workforce in Illinois, ECACE scholarship recipients tend to be somewhat younger.⁴ Eighty nine percent of the scholarship recipients were women, <1% men, and 9% did not respond.

Geographic and Institutional Distribution

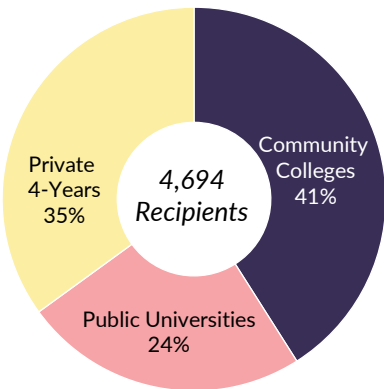
In AY2023-24, scholarships were awarded in every legislative district and at every Consortium institution. Overall, 36% of recipients were from the collar county area, 21% from Chicago, and 43% from all other areas of the state. Approximately 41% of scholarship recipients attended community colleges, 35% attended private, nonprofit institutions, and 24% attended public universities (see Figure 3 and Figure 4).

Figure 3. Distribution of ECACE Scholarship by Region, AY23-24



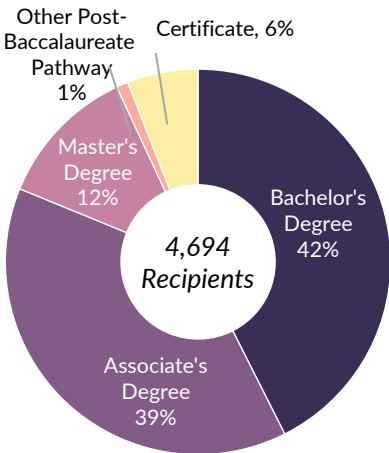
Source: ISAC, 2024

Figure 4. Distribution of ECACE Scholarship by Types of Institutions, AY23-24



Source: ISAC, 2024

Figure 5. Distribution of ECACE Scholarship by the Program Enrollment, AY23-24



Source: ISAC, 2024

Recipient Enrollment Patterns

Not surprisingly, most incumbent workforce members (64%) enrolled less than full time. ECACE Scholarship recipients were disbursed across undergraduate class level, with 24% being freshmen, 24% sophomores, 13% juniors, and 22% seniors. An additional 18% of recipients were enrolled in graduate programs. The breakdown of students across degree pathways is demonstrated in Figure 4. Notably, most students were enrolled in bachelor's degree programs (43%) and associate degree programs (39%).

Because of the ECE Scholarship I have earned, I am one semester away from my 2nd degree, I earned a substantial raise at work and got promoted to the center Director. NONE of this would have been possible if this grant was not available. It is because of this grant that I also have enrolled in ISU for the fall to pursue my B.A in ECE. This grant has changed the trajectory of my life and has impacted my family's life tremendously. Because of this grant I can continue to grow and advance in a field that I absolutely enjoy. My current and future students at my center deserve to have the best educators in their classroom. This grant is making that possible.

- Student Testimony, Joliet Junior College

³ National Center for Education Statistics. (2023, August). Condition of Education, Characteristics of Postsecondary Students. Retrieved from U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/csb/postsecondary-students>.

⁴ Whitehead, J. (2021). *Illinois' Early Childhood Workforce 2020 Report*. Bloomington, IL: INCCRRA.

Illinois Community College Board

**BASIC CERTIFICATE PROGRAM APPROVAL APPROVED ON BEHALF
OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Following is a list of Basic Certificates (less than 29 credit hours) that have been approved on behalf of the Illinois Community College Board by the Executive Director since the last Board meeting:

PERMANENT PROGRAM APPROVAL

Elgin Community College

- Bilingual Endorsement Certificate (18 credit hours)
- ESL Endorsement Certificate (18 credit hours)

Joliet Junior College

- Agricultural Sciences Certificate (16 credit hours)
- Precision Ag Certificate (16 credit hours)

Kennedy-King College

- Community Leadership Certificate (16 credit hours)

Lake Land College

- Automation Specialist I Certificate (26.5 credit hours)
- Automation Specialist II Certificate (18 credit hours)
- Automation Specialist I Certificate CBE (26.5 credit hours)
- Automation Specialist II Certificate CBE (18 credit hours)

Southwestern Illinois College

- Plumbing Technology Certificate (18 credit hours)



SPRING 2025 ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPENING ENROLLMENT REPORT



March 2025

SPRING 2025 ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPENING ENROLLMENT REPORT

**SYSTEMWIDE HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENTS INCREASE 8.9 PERCENT FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR
MARKING THE LARGEST RATE OF GROWTH FROM SPRING-TO-SPRING EVER RECORDED**

Overall, compared to the Spring term one year ago, Illinois Community College System Spring 2025 opening headcount enrollments (+8.9 percent) and full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments (+7.1 percent) had substantial growth. The opening enrollments reflect the end of the regular spring registration period, which is usually the 10th day of class. The preliminary counts derive from the web-based ICCB Spring 2025 Enrollment Survey.

The Spring 2024 to Spring 2025 enrollment increase of 8.9 percent represents the third consecutive year of substantial growth. The pandemic had a profound effect on enrollment and Illinois community colleges continue to aggressively recruit and retain students as enrollment rebounds. Illinois community college enrollment in Spring 2025 now exceeds enrollment pre-pandemic (Spring 2019; N = 283,146). The most recent [national data on enrollment](#) available through the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) Research Center shows a 5.8 percent enrollment increase nationally in the community college sector. Illinois is outpacing growth nationally.

Significant findings from the Spring 2025 Illinois Community College Opening Enrollment Report include:

- Spring 2025 headcount enrollments (+8.9 percent) and full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments (+7.1 percent) both increased from the previous year.
- Forty community colleges experienced an increase in headcount enrollment from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025, while five community colleges had a decrease.
- Five of six instructional areas exhibited increases in headcount enrollment from the previous year. Instructional areas primarily dependent on in-person instruction, including Career and Technical Education (+7.6 percent) and Vocational Skill Training (-15.3 percent) had mixed results compared to the previous year.
- Transfer programs, which is the largest instructional area in the Illinois Community College System, increased 8.9 percent from the previous year, while General Associates programs increased by 23.4 percent during the same timeframe.
- Adult Education, which encompasses a substantial at-risk population, increased headcount by 5.0 percent from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025.
- For Dual Credit, which allows academically prepared high school students to simultaneously earn credits that count toward a high school diploma and a college degree, headcount enrollments increased 19.8 percent in Spring 2025 compared to Spring 2024 and increased 61.9 percent from Spring 2021.

- While the number of distance education course enrollment (seat count in courses) decreased in Spring 2025 as compared to the previous year, it remains a prevalent and flexible form of course delivery with 190,546 online course enrollments in the current Spring.
- In Spring 2025, 75,551 students enrolled full-time, representing 26.4 percent of all enrollments.

Table 1 provides systemwide comparative spring census enrollment counts for the last five years. The Spring 2025 semester headcount was 285,975 compared to 262,638 last year (a headcount increase of 23,337 or 8.9 percent). The latest FTE count was 149,750 compared with 139,764 a year ago (an FTE increase of 9,986 or 7.1 percent). FTE figures reflect the total number of credit hours being taken by students divided by 15—the number of semester hours traditionally considered a full-time class load.

Table 1
SUMMARY OF OPENING SPRING ENROLLMENTS IN
ILLINOIS PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES FROM 2021 TO 2025

	Spring 2021	Spring 2022	Spring 2023	Spring 2024	Spring 2025
Headcount	239,819*	233,041	249,836	262,638	285,975
Percent Change	-14.3%	-2.8%	7.2%	5.1%	8.9%
FTE	131,192*	124,013	132,425	139,764	149,750
Percent Change	-13.9%	-5.5%	6.8%	5.5%	7.1%

* Colleges Provided Revised Figures

Of note, effective in fiscal year 2025, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges (IECC) was centralized for reporting as a single college district, encompassing four campuses: Frontier, Lincoln Trail, Olney Central, and Wabash Valley. Beginning with the fiscal year 2025 Spring Enrollment Survey, student counts reflect an unduplicated total across all four campuses, rather than separate counts for each campus attended. The reported decrease in enrollment for IECC from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025 can be primarily explained because of this reporting adjustment rather than an actual decline in student enrollment.

Table 2 provides a comparison of fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2025 spring headcount enrollments for each community college. Among the 45 community colleges since last year, headcount increases were reported at 39 colleges (1.0 percent or higher). Five colleges saw decreases (1.0 percent or more) compared to last year. One college reported little or no change (less than 1.0 percent) versus last year. Longer term, statewide headcount enrollments were up 19.2 percent compared to Spring 2021.

Table 3 contains a comparison of full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments for the same five-year period. Compared to last year, Spring 2025 FTE increases were reported by 35 of the colleges, decreases were reported by four colleges, and six colleges indicated little or no change. Longer term, statewide FTE enrollments were up 14.1 percent compared to Spring 2021.

Table 4 provides fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2025 spring opening course enrollments (duplicated) in internet-based courses at each community college. Adjustments in educational offerings due to COVID mitigation efforts reflect the massive spike in online courses in 2021 as colleges adapted to meet student needs and follow recommended safety protocols. This spring's enrollment in internet-based courses reflects a decrease of six percent compared to last year but is still significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels. At the beginning of the Spring 2025 semester, there were 190,546 course enrollments (duplicated) in internet courses compared to 203,204 in Spring 2024 (a decrease of 6.2 percent) and 357,751 in Spring 2021 (a decrease of 46.7 percent). Compared to last year, Spring 2025 duplicated internet enrollments increased at 26 colleges, decreased at 17 colleges, and had little or no change at two colleges. Figure 1 provides a trend line of online course offerings by Spring term for the last five years.

Figure 1. Opening Spring Online Course Enrollment Trends in Illinois Public Community Colleges from 2021 to 2025

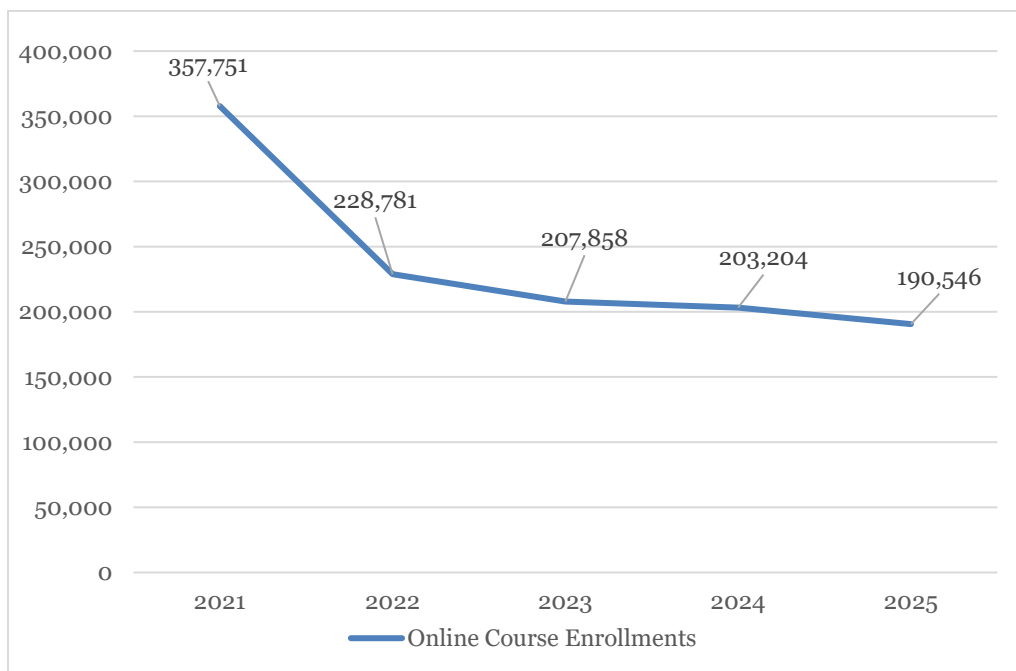


Table 5 provides fiscal year 2025 spring opening enrollments by instructional program area. Transfer was the largest instructional program, accounting for 58.1 percent of enrollments in Spring 2025. Career and Technical Education was the second largest instructional program, accounting for 25.3 percent. Students in Adult Education (ABE, ASE, and ESL) comprised 9.8 percent of enrollments, while 5.5 percent of enrollments were in General Associates programs. Enrollments in Vocational Skills (0.8 percent) and

General Studies (0.4 percent) programs represented only about one percent of enrollments in Spring 2025. Figure 2 provides spring opening enrollment headcount by instructional program area for Spring 2021 through Spring 2025. Compared to last year, decreases were seen only in Vocational Skills (-15.3 percent), while increases were noted in General Studies (162.1 percent), General Associates (23.4 percent), Transfer (8.9 percent), Career and Technical Education (7.6 percent), English as a Second Language (5.6 percent), Adult Basic Education (4.1 percent), and Adult Secondary Education (1.1 percent).

Figure 2. Opening Spring Headcount Enrollment by Instructional Program Area in Illinois Public Community Colleges from 2021 to 2025

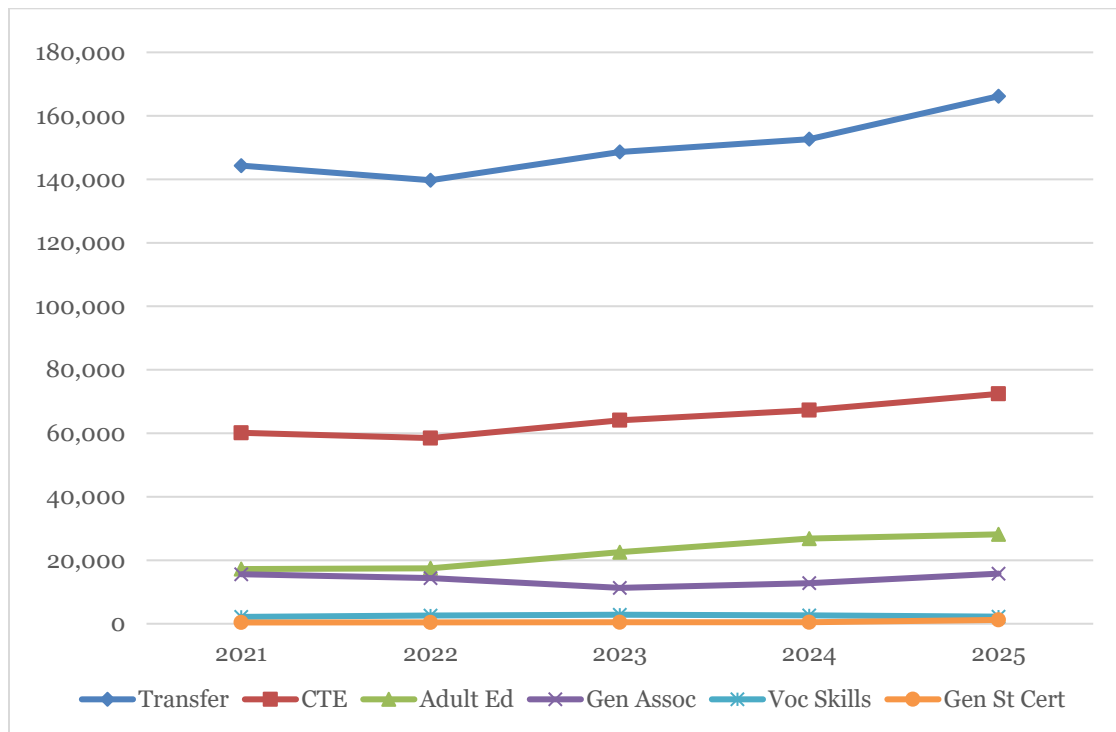


Table 6 provides opening headcount enrollments of dual credit students in Spring 2025. At the beginning of the Spring 2025 semester there were 78,463 enrollments for dual credit students, which represents just over one in four enrollments (27.4 percent). Enrollments in dual credit increased 19.8 percent compared with a year ago and 61.9 percent from Spring 2021.

Table 7 provides opening headcount enrollments of full-time students in Spring 2025. This is a new table within the report starting in Spring 2025. Just over one-fourth of Illinois community college students enrolls full-time. In Spring 2025, 75,551 students enrolled full-time, representing 26.4 percent of all enrollments.

Additional Background: The Spring 2025 preliminary summary student counts in this report (Spring 2025 Community College Opening Enrollment Report) derive from the web-based ICCB Spring 2025 Enrollment Survey. Spring opening enrollment information

for students is recorded by the colleges at the end of the regular spring registration period, which is typically the 10th day of class. Beyond the survey, which allows ICCB and the Illinois Community College System to timely and broadly address stakeholder inquiries about spring enrollment, ICCB also annually collects student-level data from community colleges for the spring term via its annual academic year student-level collection.

It should be noted these counts also only provide a "snapshot" of opening spring term enrollment for year-to-year and institution-to-institution comparisons. The diversity of the community college system and its students is not fully captured in these opening enrollment snapshot data. Community college flexible scheduling (e.g., modules, other intensive late start classes, etc.) is necessary to accommodate student schedules and compete successfully in the marketplace. Hence, enrollment trends are more fully captured through use of annual data. More complete data are available via [ICCB's Data Book](#). The joint ICCB-IBHE [Illinois Postsecondary Profiles](#) platform also provides pertinent trend information on Enrollment, Affordability, Progress, Advancement, and Completion for all 2- and 4-year higher education institutions in Illinois.



Illinois Community College Board
Table 2
SUMMARY COMPARISON OF SPRING HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENTS
BY COLLEGE, FISCAL YEARS 2021-2025

Dist. No.	College Name	Spring FY 2021 Headcount	Spring FY 2022 Headcount	Spring FY 2023 Headcount	Spring FY 2024 Headcount	Spring FY 2025 Headcount	Spring % Change 2021-2025	Spring % Change 2024-2025
503	Black Hawk	3,445	3,205	3,271	3,383	3,722	8.0 %	10.0 %
518	Carl Sandburg	1,611	1,583	1,586	1,637	1,551	-3.7	-5.3
508	City Colleges of Chicago	(34,120)	(30,904)	(36,113)	(39,432)	(43,401)	(27.2)	(10.1)
02	Harold Washington	5,978	5,247	5,544	5,497	6,015	0.6	9.4
04	Harry S Truman	5,023	4,814	6,084	6,545	7,207	43.5	10.1
01	Kennedy-King	1,774	1,761	2,137	2,861	3,342	88.4	16.8
03	Malcolm X	6,887	6,081	7,430	8,027	9,425	36.9	17.4
05	Olive-Harvey	1,765	1,679	2,185	2,638	2,928	65.9	11.0
06	Richard J. Daley	4,874	4,175	4,893	5,942	6,256	28.4	5.3
07	Wilbur Wright	7,819	7,147	7,840	7,922	8,228	5.2	3.9
502	College of DuPage	22,129	22,448	23,803	26,444	29,751	34.4	12.5
532	College of Lake County	11,956	12,934	13,243	14,499	16,002	33.8	10.4
507	Danville Area	1,745	1,831	1,991	2,036	2,137	22.5	5.0
509	Elgin	7,678	7,665	8,830	9,821	11,256	46.6	14.6
512	Harper	14,749	13,923	14,926	15,727	16,710	13.3	6.3
540	Heartland	4,221	4,743	5,097	5,260	5,302	25.6	0.8
519	Highland	1,719	1,715	1,669	1,828	1,794	4.4	-1.9
514	Illinois Central	7,768	6,848	6,694	7,092	7,606	-2.1	7.2
529	Illinois Eastern***	(5,533)	(5,697)	(6,171)	(5,622)	5,077	-8.2	-9.7
04	Frontier	1,138	2,775	3,302	2,597	DNA	--	--
01	Lincoln Trail	771	674	690	770	DNA	--	--
02	Olney Central	1,119	1,268	1,258	1,245	DNA	--	--
03	Wabash Valley	2,505	980	921	1,010	DNA	--	--
513	Illinois Valley	2,381	2,193	2,327	2,545	2,654	11.5	4.3
530	John A. Logan	3,287	3,073	2,844	2,787	2,831	-13.9	1.6
539	John Wood	1,742	1,565	1,679	1,743	1,859	6.7	6.7
525	Joliet Junior	11,749	11,411	10,653	10,076	12,952	10.2	28.5
520	Kankakee	2,639	2,273	2,559	2,702	3,037	15.1	12.4
501	Kaskaskia	2,835	3,724	3,782	3,831	4,048	42.8	5.7
523	Kishwaukee	2,360	2,069	2,242	2,393	2,742	16.2	14.6
517	Lake Land	3,954 **	3,652	3,680	3,817	3,911	-1.1	2.5
536	Lewis and Clark	4,592	3,656	3,992	4,240	4,547	-1.0	7.2
526	Lincoln Land	5,178	4,958	5,409	5,972	6,234	20.4	4.4
528	McHenry County	7,977	8,768	9,166	9,129	9,799	22.8	7.3
524	Moraine Valley	10,985	10,990	11,711	11,724	12,313	12.1	5.0
527	Morton	3,634	4,015	3,970	3,036	3,512	-3.4	15.7
535	Oakton	8,674	8,278	8,849	9,256	9,415	8.5	1.7
505	Parkland	5,083	4,808	5,062	5,462	5,806	14.2	6.3
515	Prairie State	2,820 *	2,392	2,565	2,944	3,457	22.6	17.4
521	Rend Lake	1,868	1,983	1,867	1,975	1,932	3.4	-2.2
537	Richland	2,228	2,187	2,227	2,296	2,504	12.4	9.1
511	Rock Valley	5,119	4,226	5,951	5,887	6,537	27.7	11.0
506	Sauk Valley	1,315	1,505	1,448	1,528	1,565	19.0	2.4
531	Shawnee	1,167	1,098	1,142	1,140	1,247	6.9	9.4
510	South Suburban	3,624	4,562	5,152	5,062	5,528	52.5	9.2
533	Southeastern Illinois	1,300	1,230	1,346	1,280	1,330	2.3	3.9
522	Southwestern Illinois	7,758	7,473	7,735	8,769	9,626	24.1	9.8
534	Spoon River	1,204	1,093	1,205	1,250	1,191	-1.1	-4.7
504	Triton	9,502	9,197	9,247	10,884	11,670	22.8	7.2
516	Waubonsee	<u>8,170</u>	<u>7,166</u>	<u>8,632</u>	<u>8,129</u>	<u>9,419</u>	<u>15.3 %</u>	<u>15.9 %</u>
Totals		239,819 *	233,041	249,836	262,638	285,975	19.2 %	8.9 %

* Colleges Provided Revised Figure

** Revised 3/1/2021

***Effective in fiscal year 2025, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges (IECC) was centralized for reporting as a single college district with four campuses (Frontier, Lincoln Trail, Olney Central, and Wabash Valley). As a result, any IECC enrollment decline from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025 primarily reflects this reporting change rather than an actual decrease in student numbers.

SOURCE OF DATA: Spring Semester Enrollment Surveys



Illinois Community College Board
Table 3
SUMMARY COMPARISON OF SPRING FTE ENROLLMENTS
BY COLLEGE, FISCAL YEARS 2021-2025

Dist. No. College Name	Spring FY 2021 FTE	Spring FY 2022 FTE	Spring FY 2023 FTE	Spring FY 2024 FTE	Spring FY 2025 FTE	Spring % Change 2021-2025	Spring % Change 2024-2025
503 Black Hawk	1,936	1,798	1,834	1,939	2,096	8.3 %	8.1 %
518 Carl Sandburg	968	911	947	984	941	-2.8	-4.4
508 City Colleges of Chicago	(19,936)	(17,589)	(20,361)	(22,356)	(24,757)	(24.2)	(10.7)
02 Harold Washington	3,503	2,994	3,117	3,082	3,319	-5.3	7.7
04 Harry S Truman	2,677	2,499	3,274	3,541	3,949	47.5	11.5
01 Kennedy-King	1,155	1,203	1,260	1,657	1,959	69.6	18.2
03 Malcolm X	4,210	3,616	4,276	4,640	5,431	29.0	17.0
05 Olive-Harvey	1,049	944	1,252	1,518	1,709	62.9	12.6
06 Richard J. Daley	2,812	2,260	2,765	3,384	3,614	28.5	6.8
07 Wilbur Wright	4,530	4,073	4,417	4,534	4,776	5.4	5.3
502 College of DuPage	11,767	11,666	12,130	13,094	14,440	22.7	10.3
532 College of Lake County	6,672	6,821	7,000	7,585	8,081	21.1	6.5
507 Danville Area	1,018	925	1,077	1,109	1,263	24.1	13.9
509 Elgin	4,402	4,233	4,770	5,271	5,878	33.6	11.5
512 Harper	7,358	6,799	7,251	7,719	8,195	11.4	6.2
540 Heartland	2,453	2,614	2,763	2,840	2,903	18.3	2.2
519 Highland	935	899	861	917	906	-3.1	-1.2
514 Illinois Central	3,842	3,559	3,540	3,779	3,991	3.9	5.6
529 Illinois Eastern**	(2,337)	(2,240)	(2,277)	(2,155)	1,911	-18.2	-11.3
04 Frontier	556	582	605	545	DNA	--	--
01 Lincoln Trail	467	402	411	394	DNA	--	--
02 Olney Central	645	735	729	689	DNA	--	--
03 Wabash Valley	669	521	533	528	DNA	--	--
513 Illinois Valley	1,344	1,255	1,351	1,393	1,564	16.4	12.3
530 John A. Logan	1,956	1,826	1,736	1,766	1,780	-9.0	0.8
539 John Wood	1,139	1,014	1,068	1,076	1,190	4.5	10.6
525 Joliet Junior	6,331	5,989	5,826	5,902	6,596	4.2	11.8
520 Kankakee	1,446	1,307	1,422	1,546	1,667	15.3	7.8
501 Kaskaskia	1,696	1,963	2,066	2,195	2,337	37.8	6.4
523 Kishwaukee	1,359	1,199	1,349	1,451	1,615	18.9	11.3
517 Lake Land	2,563	2,403	2,452	2,455	2,434	-5.0	-0.9
536 Lewis and Clark	2,451	2,088	2,191	2,416	2,420	-1.3	0.2
526 Lincoln Land	3,001	2,862	2,993	3,260	3,328	10.9	2.1
528 McHenry County	3,847	4,054	4,577	4,378	4,797	24.7	9.6
524 Moraine Valley	6,039	5,760	6,181	6,314	6,607	9.4	4.6
527 Morton	1,796	1,736	1,812	1,724	1,726	-3.9	0.1
535 Oakton	4,290	3,862	4,130	4,395	4,317	0.6	-1.8
505 Parkland	3,014	2,811	3,013	3,102	3,285	9.0	5.9
515 Prairie State	1,534 *	1,360	1,536	1,603	1,750	14.1	9.2
521 Rend Lake	1,261	1,332	1,239	1,222	1,218	-3.4	-0.3
537 Richland	1,180	1,060	1,084	1,123	1,155	-2.1	2.8
511 Rock Valley	3,278	2,863	3,485	3,467	3,690	12.6	6.4
506 Sauk Valley	794	866	878	903	933	17.5	3.3
531 Shawnee	854	671	718	721	772	-9.6	7.1
510 South Suburban	1,572	1,794	1,913	1,926	2,344	49.1	21.7
533 Southeastern Illinois	689	657	728	749	781	13.4	4.3
522 Southwestern Illinois	4,507	4,402	4,387	4,835	5,185	15.0	7.2
534 Spoon River	723	670	688	702	700	-3.2	-0.3
504 Triton	4,773	4,573	4,566	5,220	5,558	16.5	6.5
516 Waubensee	<u>4,132</u>	<u>3,583</u>	<u>4,225</u>	<u>4,172</u>	<u>4,639</u>	<u>12.3 %</u>	<u>11.2 %</u>
Totals	131,192 *	124,013	132,425	139,764	149,750	14.1 %	7.1 %

* Colleges Provided Corrected Figure

**Effective in fiscal year 2025, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges (IECC) was centralized for reporting as a single college district with four campuses (Frontier, Lincoln Trail, Olney Central, and Wabash Valley). As a result, any IECC enrollment decline from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025 primarily reflects this reporting change rather than an actual decrease in student numbers.

SOURCE OF DATA: Spring Semester Enrollment Surveys



Illinois Community College Board
Table 4
PRELIMINARY OPENING SPRING INTERNET ENROLLMENT, DUPLICATED COUNT
BY COLLEGE, FISCAL YEARS 2021-2025

Dist.						Spring	Spring	
No.	College Name	Spring 2021	Spring 2022	Spring 2023	Spring 2024	Spring 2025	% Change 2021-2025	% Change 2024-2025
503	Black Hawk	6,009	4,089	3,929	3,800	3,910	-34.9 %	2.9 %
518	Carl Sandburg	3,265	2,624	2,201	2,259	2,125	-34.9	-5.9
508	City Colleges of Chicago	(61,264)	(39,902)	(36,392)	(35,425)	(16,166)	(-73.6)	(-54.4)
02	Harold Washington	15,287	9,522	7,537	6,973	3,265	-78.6	-53.2
04	Harry S Truman	6,334	4,499	4,755	4,578	1,676	-73.5	-63.4
01	Kennedy-King	2,771	2,174	2,680	2,711	1,267	-54.3	-53.3
03	Malcolm X	14,466	9,443	8,225	7,707	3,276	-77.4	-57.5
05	Olive-Harvey	3,179	2,015	2,334	2,731	2,062	-35.1	-24.5
06	Richard J. Daley	5,917	3,827	3,827	4,666	1,963	-66.8	-57.9
07	Wilbur Wright	13,310	8,422	7,034	6,059	2,657	-80.0	-56.1
502	College of DuPage	23,515	22,691	19,046	19,301	21,780	-7.4	12.8
532	College of Lake County	10,778	9,646	12,991	11,461	11,122	3.2	-3.0
507	Danville Area	1,381	2,463	2,052	2,122	2,229	61.4	5.0
509	Elgin	9,103	8,853	6,598	5,861	6,883	-24.4	17.4
512	Harper	26,270	13,819	10,921	10,266	10,765	-59.0	4.9
540	Heartland	8,175	4,914	4,352	4,015	4,148	-49.3	3.3
519	Highland	1,679	1,392	1,221	1,213	1,269	-24.4	4.6
514	Illinois Central	13,534	6,738	5,514	5,683	6,225	-54.0	9.5
529	Illinois Eastern***	(1,508)	(1,467)	(1,659)	(1,726)	1,141	-24.3	-33.9
04	Frontier	148	163	229	209	DNA	--	--
01	Lincoln Trail	510	355	399	485	DNA	--	--
02	Olney Central	528	541	586	608	DNA	--	--
03	Wabash Valley	322	408	445	424	DNA	--	--
513	Illinois Valley	4,341	2,025	1,960	1,926	2,188	-49.6	13.6
530	John A. Logan	4,611	2,431	2,398	2,783	2,733	-40.7	-1.8
539	John Wood	2,828	2,489	2,433	2,302	2,383	-15.7	3.5
525	Joliet Junior	23,828	15,285	8,552	8,397	8,126	-65.9	-3.2
520	Kankakee	3,346	1,374	1,487	1,255	1,398	-58.2	11.4
501	Kaskaskia	2,676	2,617	2,546	2,651	2,701	0.9	1.9
523	Kishwaukee	4,738	3,170	2,823	2,847	3,201	-32.4	12.4
517	Lake Land	8,985 *	4,223	3,914	4,055	4,340	-51.7	7.0
536	Lewis and Clark	1,425	1,069	976	2,053	1,175	-17.5	-42.8
526	Lincoln Land	9,022	5,967	4,937	4,974	4,715	-47.7	-5.2
528	McHenry County	8,819	5,937	5,850	5,714	6,081	-31.0	6.4
524	Moraine Valley	21,758	10,376	9,340	9,204	9,890	-54.5	7.5
527	Morton	7,275	2,393	2,351	2,573	2,104	-71.1	-18.2
535	Oakton	15,534	8,587	7,851	7,606	7,080	-54.4	-6.9
505	Parkland	7,269	4,985	8,619	5,530	5,546	-23.7	0.3
515	Prairie State	4,338 **	3,201	2,417	2,248	2,428	-44.0	8.0
521	Rend Lake	3,525	1,520	1,207	1,593	1,488	-57.8	-6.6
537	Richland	2,616	1,867	1,649	1,578	1,592	-39.1	0.9
511	Rock Valley	12,975	5,627	5,714	5,774	6,165	-52.5	6.8
506	Sauk Valley	3,141	1,539	1,613	1,817	1,838	-41.5	1.2
531	Shawnee	1,349	983	979	1,198	1,338	-0.8	11.7
510	South Suburban	1,312	3,111	2,638	2,188	2,899	121.0	32.5
533	Southeastern Illinois	1,305	1,070	1,099	1,152	1,207	-7.5	4.8
522	Southwestern Illinois	7,424	6,327	6,356	6,734	7,464	0.5	10.8
534	Spoon River	1,247	367	978	1,286	1,748	40.2	35.9
504	Triton	14,719	5,507	4,628	4,618	4,746	-67.8	2.8
516	Waubensee	<u>10,864</u>	<u>6,136</u>	<u>5,667</u>	<u>6,016</u>	<u>6,209</u>	<u>-42.8 %</u>	<u>3.2 %</u>
Totals		357,751 **	228,781	207,858	203,204	190,546	-46.7 %	-6.2 %

* Revised 3/1/2021

** College Provided Corrected Figure

***Effective in fiscal year 2025, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges (IECC) was centralized for reporting as a single college district with four campuses (Frontier, Lincoln Trail, Olney Central, and Wabash Valley). As a result, any IECC enrollment decline from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025 primarily reflects this reporting change rather than an actual decrease in student numbers.

SOURCE OF DATA: Spring Semester Enrollment Surveys



Illinois Community College Board
Table 5
SUMMARY COMPARISON OF SPRING HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENTS BY INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM AREA
BY COLLEGE, FISCAL YEAR 2025

Dist. No.	District/College	General Associates	Transfer	Career & Technical Education	General Studies	Vocational Skills	Adult Basic Education	Adult Secondary Education	English as a Second Language	Total
503	Black Hawk	2	2,127	1,256	0	54	37	53	193	3,722
518	Carl Sandburg	251	990	295	0	15	0	0	0	1,551
508	City Colleges of Chicago	(5,139)	(22,639)	(5,268)	(0)	(5)	(1,936)	(545)	(7,869)	(43,401)
	Harold Washington	312	5,184	519	0	0	0	0	0	6,015
	Harry S Truman	326	2,909	733	0	0	394	94	2,751	7,207
	Kennedy-King	190	1,659	935	0	0	344	31	183	3,342
	Malcolm X	3,180	3,267	1,444	0	5	396	74	1,059	9,425
	Olive-Harvey	202	1,583	606	0	0	179	33	325	2,928
	Richard J. Daley	367	3,150	702	0	0	333	179	1,525	6,256
	Wilbur Wright	562	4,887	329	0	0	290	134	2,026	8,228
502	College of DuPage	250	13,757	12,615	0	0	142	97	2,890	29,751
532	College of Lake County	15	9,100	4,908	1	184	65	276	1,453	16,002
507	Danville Area	341	1,213	415	0	30	133	0	5	2,137
509	Elgin	35	6,624	2,505	0	21	133	136	1,802	11,256
512	Harper	91	11,909	2,886	0	103	154	0	1,567	16,710
540	Heartland	0	4,101	763	0	0	110	40	288	5,302
519	Highland	74	1,379	284	15	41	0	0	1	1,794
514	Illinois Central	1,117	4,551	1,583	0	0	153	0	202	7,606
529	Illinois Eastern	225	1,786	2,881	0	66	32	76	11	5,077
513	Illinois Valley	54	1,591	894	36	0	20	33	26	2,654
530	John A. Logan	133	1,842	790	0	40	18	8	0	2,831
539	John Wood	0	1,417	442	0	0	0	0	0	1,859
525	Joliet Junior	3,716	5,355	3,288	30	0	34	92	437	12,952
520	Kankakee	456	1,389	849	0	0	122	42	179	3,037
501	Kaskaskia	219	2,820	1,009	0	0	0	0	0	4,048
523	Kishwaukee	0	1,689	701	3	65	36	65	183	2,742
517	Lake Land	223	2,265	1,180	0	9	100	0	134	3,911
536	Lewis and Clark	154	1,055	3,108	0	20	97	92	21	4,547
526	Lincoln Land	408	3,973	1,848	0	5	0	0	0	6,234
528	McHenry County	0	7,438	1,618	0	0	62	64	617	9,799
524	Moraine Valley	227	9,231	2,167	0	1	105	21	561	12,313
527	Morton	568	1,107	601	724	0	119	56	337	3,512
535	Oakton	7	7,935	1,473	0	0	0	0	0	9,415
505	Parkland	240	3,632	1,928	0	0	2	0	4	5,806
515	Prairie State	189	1,348	1,779	0	65	1	0	75	3,457
521	Rend Lake	0	1,237	582	0	106	0	7	0	1,932
537	Richland	334	1,500	558	1	17	68	0	26	2,504
511	Rock Valley	0	4,957	1,336	0	42	1	6	195	6,537
506	Sauk Valley	2	1,084	478	1	0	0	0	0	1,565
531	Shawnee	114	181	450	360	132	10	0	0	1,247
510	South Suburban	47	4,182	701	0	73	160	154	211	5,528
533	Southeastern Illinois	89	783	219	0	239	0	0	0	1,330
522	Southwestern Illinois	0	5,530	3,691	0	0	82	108	215	9,626
534	Spoon River	15	780	238	0	3	51	77	27	1,191
504	Triton	891	5,364	3,125	0	893	1,372	2	23	11,670
516	Waubonsee	160	6,320	1,702	32	0	229	88	888	9,419
TOTALS		15,786	166,181	72,414	1,203	2,229	5,584	2,138	20,440	285,975

SOURCE OF DATA: Spring Semester Enrollment Surveys



Illinois Community College Board
Table 6
SUMMARY COMPARISON OF SPRING
DUAL CREDIT ENROLLMENTS
BY COLLEGE, FISCAL YEARS 2021-2025

Dist. No.	College Name	Spring FY 2021 Headcount	Spring FY 2022 Headcount	Spring FY 2023 Headcount	Spring FY 2024 Headcount	Spring FY 2025 Headcount	Spring % Change 2021-2025	Spring % Change 2024-2025
503	Black Hawk	893	887	925	1,026	1,130	26.5 %	10.1 %
518	Carl Sandburg	516	523	522	537	548	6.2	2.0
508	City Colleges of Chicago	(3,432)	(3,970)	(4,288)	(5,343)	(6,164)	(79.6)	(15.4)
02	Harold Washington	648	798	834	815	946	46.0	16.1
04	Harry S Truman	377	367	450	661	912	141.9	38.0
01	Kennedy-King	188	218	399	640	617	228.2	-3.6
03	Malcolm X	234	316	420	520	784	235.0	50.8
05	Olive-Harvey	296	333	367	535	582	96.6	8.8
06	Richard J. Daley	695	857	731	1,081	1,278	83.9	18.2
07	Wilbur Wright	994	1,081	1,087	1,091	1,045	5.1	-4.2
502	College of DuPage	4,002	4,359	5,222	6,509	8,329	108.1	28.0
532	College of Lake County	963	1,989	2,543	3,161	4,376	354.4	38.4
507	Danville Area	137	246	326	321	407	197.1	26.8
509	Elgin	631	751	1,152	1,647	2,347	271.9	42.5
512	Harper	4,739	4,581	4,891	5,082	5,539	16.9	9.0
540	Heartland	1,158	1,538	1,634	1,722	1,708	47.5	-0.8
519	Highland	586	689	636	739	677	15.5	-8.4
514	Illinois Central	1,742	1,871	1,821	1,986	2,109	21.1	6.2
529	Illinois Eastern*	(1,225)	(1,086)	(1,162)	(1,304)	1,067	-12.9	-18.2
04	Frontier	534	270	323	299	DNA	--	--
01	Lincoln Trail	211	222	234	259	DNA	--	--
02	Olney Central	229	353	382	379	DNA	--	--
03	Wabash Valley	251	241	223	367	DNA	--	--
513	Illinois Valley	478	450	455	644	531	11.1	-17.5
530	John A. Logan	1,018	962	609	843	847	-16.8	0.5
539	John Wood	209	203	293	321	325	55.5	1.2
525	Joliet Junior	2,452	3,259	2,001	599	3,632	48.1	506.3
520	Kankakee	620	622	626	615	607	-2.1	-1.3
501	Kaskaskia	775	1,922	1,633	2,112	1,999	157.9	-5.4
523	Kishwaukee	437	372	378	507	554	26.8	9.3
517	Lake Land	1,274	1,366	1,275	1,327	1,400	9.9	5.5
536	Lewis and Clark	1,855	1,333	1,563	1,658	1,917	3.3	15.6
526	Lincoln Land	1,105	977	1,466	1,716	1,999	80.9	16.5
528	McHenry County	2,691	3,661	3,952	3,947	4,217	56.7	6.8
524	Moraine Valley	2,386	2,822	3,098	3,215	3,318	39.1	3.2
527	Morton	167	703	655	283	675	304.2	138.5
535	Oakton	2,133	2,446	2,997	3,349	3,557	66.8	6.2
505	Parkland	645	671	803	916	1,008	56.3	10.0
515	Prairie State	280	0	100	338	834	197.9	146.7
521	Rend Lake	665	733	649	725	720	8.3	-0.7
537	Richland	660	772	801	897	1,017	54.1	13.4
511	Rock Valley	389	282	1,179	1,357	1,830	370.4	34.9
506	Sauk Valley	334	389	332	439	432	29.3	-1.6
531	Shawnee	375	249	248	248	234	-37.6	-5.6
510	South Suburban	1,300	2,121	2,782	2,518	2,575	98.1	2.3
533	Southeastern Illinois	120	106	108	121	592	393.3	389.3
522	Southwestern Illinois	1,683	1,662	1,949	2,858	3,411	102.7	19.3
534	Spoon River	295	268	386	316	312	5.8	-1.3
504	Triton	2,080	1,910	2,066	2,619	3,122	50.1	19.2
516	Waubensee	<u>2,021</u>	<u>1,668</u>	<u>2,542</u>	<u>1,651</u>	<u>2,397</u>	<u>18.6 %</u>	<u>45.2 %</u>
Totals		48,471	54,419	60,068	65,516	78,463	61.9 %	19.8 %

*Effective in fiscal year 2025, Illinois Eastern Community Colleges (IECC) was centralized for reporting as a single college district with four campuses (Frontier, Lincoln Trail, Olney Central, and Wabash Valley). As a result, any IECC enrollment decline from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025 primarily reflects this reporting change rather than an actual decrease in student numbers.

SOURCE OF DATA: Spring Semester Enrollment Surveys



Illinois Community College Board
Table 7
SUMMARY COMPARISON OF
SPRING HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENTS
BY TYPE OF ATTENDANCE
BY COLLEGE, FISCAL YEAR 2025

Dist.	<u>No.</u> <u>College Name</u>	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>	<u>Total</u>
	503 Black Hawk	1,243	2,479	3,722
	518 Carl Sandburg	559	992	1,551
	508 City Colleges of Chicago	(12,210)	(31,191)	(43,401)
	02 Harold Washington	1,838	4,177	6,015
	04 Harry S Truman	1,620	5,587	7,207
	01 Kennedy-King	1,059	2,283	3,342
	03 Malcolm X	2,744	6,681	9,425
	05 Olive-Harvey	923	2,005	2,928
	06 Richard J. Daley	1,711	4,545	6,256
	07 Wilbur Wright	2,315	5,913	8,228
	502 College of DuPage	6,479	23,272	29,751
	532 College of Lake County	3,606	12,396	16,002
	507 Danville Area	803	1,334	2,137
	509 Elgin	2,904	8,352	11,256
	512 Harper	3,661	13,049	16,710
	540 Heartland	1,397	3,905	5,302
	519 Highland	568	1,226	1,794
	514 Illinois Central	1,954	5,652	7,606
	529 Illinois Eastern	1,241	3,836	5,077
	513 Illinois Valley	1,002	1,652	2,654
	530 John A. Logan	1,223	1,608	2,831
	539 John Wood	813	1,046	1,859
	525 Joliet Junior	3,367	9,585	12,952
	520 Kankakee	892	2,145	3,037
	501 Kaskaskia	1,380	2,668	4,048
	523 Kishwaukee	948	1,794	2,742
	517 Lake Land	1,670	2,241	3,911
	536 Lewis and Clark	1,317	3,230	4,547
	526 Lincoln Land	1,538	4,696	6,234
	528 McHenry County	2,111	7,688	9,799
	524 Moraine Valley	3,880	8,433	12,313
	527 Morton	960	2,552	3,512
	535 Oakton	1,794	7,621	9,415
	505 Parkland	1,858	3,948	5,806
	515 Prairie State	820	2,637	3,457
	521 Rend Lake	809	1,123	1,932
	537 Richland	411	2,093	2,504
	511 Rock Valley	2,166	4,371	6,537
	506 Sauk Valley	579	986	1,565
	531 Shawnee	476	771	1,247
	510 South Suburban	931	4,597	5,528
	533 Southeastern Illinois	492	838	1,330
	522 Southwestern Illinois	2,672	6,954	9,626
	534 Spoon River	434	757	1,191
	504 Triton	2,242	9,428	11,670
	516 Waubensee	<u>2,141</u>	<u>7,278</u>	<u>9,419</u>
	Totals	75,551	210,424	285,975

SOURCE OF DATA: Spring Semester Enrollment Surveys

Illinois Community College Board

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ONLY to be read if entering into executive session.

Mr. Chair reads:

Under the Open Meetings Act, Section 2a, a public body may hold a meeting closed to the public or close a portion of a meeting to the public, upon a majority vote of a quorum present. A quorum is present and the vote of each member on the question of holding a meeting closed to the public shall be publicly disclosed at the time of the vote. Is there a motion to enter Executive Session?

A Board member will then read the following motion:

(All reasons for entering Executive Session must be clearly stated during the reading of the motion)

I move to enter Executive Session for the purpose of **Employment/Appointments Matters and Review of Executive Session Minutes** which qualify as acceptable exceptions under Section 2(c) of the Open Meetings Act to hold a closed session.

Mr. Chair asks for roll call vote and Executive Secretary conducts a roll call vote.

Illinois Community College Board

APPROVAL OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

The Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2.06 (d)) requires public bodies to review at least semi-annually all minutes of closed meetings (Executive Session) that have not been made available to the public.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Illinois Community College Board hereby determines the Executive Session Minutes held on September 16, 2005; September 21, 2005; September 15, 2006; November 17, 2006; January 22, 2007; February 26, 2007; March 26, 2007; June 8, 2007; May 19, 2008; September 19, 2008; March 26, 2010; June 4, 2010; January 28, 2011; March 18, 2011; June 3, 2011; September 16, 2011; January 27, 2012; November 16, 2012; January 25, 2013; February 6, 2013; March 22, 2013; September 20, 2013; June 6, 2014; September 18, 2015; November 20, 2015; January 22, 2016; June 3, 2016; March 17, 2017; June 2, 2017; June 1, 2018; August 28, 2018; October 2, 2018; November 30, 2018; March 15, 2019; June 7, 2019; June 12, 2020; September 11, 2020; December 4, 2020; June 4, 2021; August 19, 2021; December 3, 2021; March 25, 2022; March 24, 2023; June 2, 2023; February 2, 2024; March 22, 2024; June 7, 2024; and September 27, 2024 are to remain confidential. All other Executive Session Minutes are available for public inspection.