

METAMORA COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1
BOARD OF EDUCATION - ED POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA
Metamora Grade School - Cafeteria
Thursday, September 11, 2025, 5:00 PM

1 **MAP Data Discussions**

A. Overall Achievement Comparisons

2

MAP Percentile Achievement and Growth

Math Achievement									Math Growth					
Fall			Winter			Spring			Winter			Spring		
23-24	24-25	25-26	23-24	24-25	25-26	23-24	24-25	25-26	23-24	24-25	25-26	23-24	24-25	25-26
K 86th	61st	64th	86th	85th		86th	77th		K 42nd	74th		42nd	76th	
1 58th	61st	60th	68th	73rd		68th	77th		1 66th	74th		72nd	76th	
2 65th	58th	75th	73rd	74th		76th	74th		2 74th	70th		73rd	75th	
3 54th	43rd	55th	58th	64th		76th	74th		3 69th	83rd		92nd	97th	
4 62nd	54th	65th	65th	63rd		70th	73rd		4 55th	75th		63rd	85th	
Overall 63rd	54th	63rd	65th	68th		72nd	74th		Overall 61st	76th		72nd	86th	

SLO Goal Achieved

Reading Achievement									Reading Growth					
Fall			Winter			Spring			Winter			Spring		
23-24	24-25	25-26	23-24	24-25	25-26	23-24	24-25	25-26	23-24	24-25	25-26	23-24	24-25	25-26
K 85th	68th	50th	77th	85th		78th	77th		K 35th	55th		38th	64th	
1 50th	68th	51st	55th	62nd		63rd	77th		1 58th	55th		62nd	64th	
2 51st	57th	66th	64th	57th		59th	74th		2 62nd	60th		61st	59th	
3 50th	54th	55th	58th	57th		59th	74th		3 69th	60th		72nd	68th	
4 66th	56th	57th	73rd	61st		73rd	73rd		4 69th	75th		61st	70th	
Overall 63rd	58th	57th	64th	60th		65th	74th		Overall 57th	63rd		60th	65th	

- B. Student Progress Reports Sent Home
- C. Achievement Data & Growth (Quadrant Chart) Analysis
- D. "Summer Slide" and How to Combat
- 2 Junior High-Math Continuum & WIN
- 3 **Artificial Intelligence Plan**
 - A. District Policy 6:235-Access to Electronic Networks

INSTRUCTION

6:235 Access to Electronic Networks

Electronic networks are a part of the District's instructional program and serve to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The term *electronic networks* includes all of the District's technology resources, including, but not limited to:

1. The District's local-area and wide-area networks, including wireless networks (Wi-Fi), District-issued Wi-Fi hotspots, and any District servers or other networking infrastructure;
2. Access to the Internet or other online resources via the District's networks or to any District-issued online account from any computer or device, regardless of location;
3. District-owned or District-issued computers, laptops, tablets, phones, or similar devices.

The Superintendent shall develop an implementation plan for this policy and appoint system administrator(s).

The School District is not responsible for any information that may be lost or damaged, or become unavailable when using the network, or for any information that is retrieved or transmitted via the Internet. Furthermore, the District will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

Curriculum and Appropriate Online Behavior

The use of the District's electronic networks shall: (1) be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the District as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students, and (2) comply with the selection criteria for instructional materials and library resource center materials. As required by federal law and Board policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*, students will be educated about appropriate online behavior, including but not limited to: (1) interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and (2) cyberbullying awareness and response. Staff members may, consistent with the Superintendent's implementation plan, use the Internet throughout the curriculum.

The District's electronic network is part of the curriculum and is not a public forum for general use.

Acceptable Use

All use of the District's electronic networks must be: (1) in support of education and/or research, and be in furtherance of the goals stated herein, or (2) for a legitimate school business purpose. Use is a privilege, not a right. Users of the District's electronic networks have no expectation of privacy in any material that is stored on, transmitted, or received via the District's electronic networks. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using electronic networks. The District's administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks*, contains the appropriate uses, ethics, and protocol. Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account but not erased, may be monitored or read by school officials.

Internet Safety

Technology protection measures shall be used on each District computer with Internet access. They shall include a filtering device that protects against Internet access by both adults and minors to visual depictions that are: (1) obscene, (2) pornographic, or (3) harmful or inappropriate for students, as

defined by federal law and as determined by the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall enforce the use of such filtering devices. An administrator, supervisor, or other authorized person may disable the filtering device for bona fide research or other lawful purpose, provided the person receives prior permission from the Superintendent or system administrator. The Superintendent or designee shall include measures in this policy's implementation plan to address the following:

1. Ensure staff supervision of student access to online electronic networks,
2. Restrict student access to inappropriate matter as well as restricting access to harmful materials,
3. Ensure student and staff privacy, safety, and security when using electronic communications,
4. Restrict unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities, and
5. Restrict unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information, such as, names and addresses.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-Enabled Tools

The Board recognizes that AI-enabled tools are important to enhance student learning, educator effectiveness, and school operations. The use of AI-enabled tools in the District shall be implemented in a safe, ethical, and equitable manner and in accordance with Board policies 1:30, *School District Philosophy*, and 7:345, *Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security*.

To implement the use of AI-enabled tools in the District, the Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Develop a District-wide AI Plan that addresses the District's approach to the integration of AI;
2. Based on the District-wide AI Plan, establish AI Responsible Use Guidelines to address the responsible use of AI in the District by students and staff;
3. Ensure that AI-enabled tools comply with State and federal law;
4. Ensure that staff receive training and students receive instruction on the use of AI, as appropriate; and
5. Review the District's AI Plan and AI Responsible Use Guidelines on an annual basis and update them as needed.

Authorization for Electronic Network Access

Each student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign the *Authorization for Electronic Network Access* before being granted unsupervised use.

Confidentiality

All users of the District's computers to access the Internet shall maintain the confidentiality of student records. Reasonable measures to protect against unreasonable access shall be taken before confidential student information is loaded onto the network.

Violations

The failure of any user to follow the terms of the District's administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks*, or this policy, will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

LEGAL REF.:

[20 U.S.C. §7131](#), Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

[47 U.S.C. §254](#)(h) and (l), Children's Internet Protection Act.

[47 C.F.R. Part 54](#), Subpart F, Universal Service Support for Schools and Libraries.

[115 ILCS 5/14](#)(c-5), Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act.

[720 ILCS 5/26.5](#).

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:170 (Copyright), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:210 (Instructional Materials), 6:230 (Library Media Program), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

Adopted: August 7, 2025

Metamora CCSD 1

Use of Artificial Intelligence

“Artificial intelligence” or “AI” is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. "Intelligence" encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism.

In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator. Students may use AI as authorized in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software.

Cross Reference: None



Use of Artificial Intelligence

The El Paso-Gridley School District recognizes the potential benefits and challenges associated with the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and technologies. Generative AI is a broad label used to describe any AI system that generates, with varying levels of autonomy, content such as complex text, images, audio, or video. When used appropriately, AI presents innovative learning opportunities for students and teaching opportunities for educators. The use of AI by students and staff must be appropriate to the educational environment and subject to all applicable laws, regulations, and policies. This policy establishes a framework for the ethical and responsible use of AI within our schools.

Purposes

- To promote the ethical and responsible use of AI by staff and students
- To maintain academic integrity and intellectual honesty
- To protect student privacy and data security
- To adapt instruction to meet the individual needs of students, including differentiating of instruction for gifted students and the use of enhanced assistive technology for students with disabilities
- To automate certain administrative tasks, such as scheduling, data analysis, and communication
- To facilitate communication with students and families who speak languages other than English
- To assist in the creation of educational and instructional resources while ensuring accuracy and appropriateness
- To prepare students for an AI-driven future

Guidelines

1. **Academic Integrity:** All students and staff must adhere to the district's academic integrity policy and/or building handbook policy. The use of AI to circumvent academic integrity expectations is strictly prohibited. AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. Proper citation is required when presenting AI-generated content. Staff may use AI detectors and plagiarism recognition software to help ensure academic integrity.
2. **Student Privacy and Data Security:** The district prioritizes the protection of student privacy and data security. Personal information, including name, email address, address, phone number, etc., should generally not be shared using AI tools. Consistent with the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the district will notify parents/guardians when certain private/personal information is shared with third parties and will seek the consent of parents/guardians when required. [15 U.S.C. 6501–6505](#).
3. **Ethical Use:** AI must be used ethically and responsibly. Misrepresentation of AI-generated content as original work is unacceptable. Students may not use AI, including generative AI that produces text, images, audio, or video, in a manner that violates school rules or school district policy.
4. **Professional Development:** The district will provide professional development opportunities for staff members regarding the appropriate use of AI in the school setting.
5. **Building-Level Implementation:** Teachers have the autonomy to use AI consistent with this policy and with the guidance and input of building administration.

Legal

- 6:60 – Curriculum Content
- 7:130 – Student Rights and Responsibilities
- 7:190 – Student Behavior
- 7:345 – Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security
- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), 15 U.S.C. 6501–6505
- Illinois School Student Records Act (ISSRA), 105 ILCS 10/1, *et seq.*

Cross References: PRESS

- 6:120 – Education of Children with Disabilities
- 6:130 – Program for the Gifted
- 6:135 – Accelerated Placement Policy ^①



4 D. October 6-IASB Region Meeting Program on Generative AI
Mandated Units of Study

Illinois Instructional Mandates

2024-25 School Year

Last Updated: October 2024

See also: [State Graduation Requirements](#)

Changes for 2024-25

Changes instituted in 2023-24 now in effect

1. Instruction on Native American History. See [slide 32](#).
2. Instruction on the dangers of allergies. See No. 19 on Health Education 2/2 on [slide 23](#).
3. Instruction on the dangers of fentanyl use. This item was previously a separate slide. Due to a legislative change, it has now been incorporated into 105 ILCS 110/3. See No. 20 on Health Education 2/2 on [slide 23](#).

Changes to be implemented in 2026-27

1. Instruction on climate change. See Conservation of Natural Resources on [slide 16](#).

Other Changes

See [Public Act 103-0810](#) for a list of minor changes to Health Education 2/2 on slide 23.

Overview

This document contains all areas of study that are mandated by the Illinois School Code and the Illinois Administrative Code. ISBE recommends that schools review the information on the following pages annually and prior to any ROE Compliance Review Visit. **Please note this document is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of all required content for each instructional mandate. Statutory references should be consulted in all cases.**

Any topic marked with an * indicates an Illinois graduation requirement. Schools and districts should also reference the [Illinois Graduation Requirements Document](#), which provides guidance on state-required courses and compulsory units of study in which students must earn credit for conferral of a high school diploma.

How to Use This Document

1. Fill in the identifying information below.
2. Review the “Grade Levels” for each requirement. Unless otherwise specified, the term “elementary school” includes Grades kindergarten through 8.
3. Review the “Summary of Requirements” for a brief overview.
4. Review the legal citations to ensure you are familiar with any information not included in the Summary of Requirements.
5. *Optional* Using the “Reference Key” below, indicate in the top right of each page how the mandate is taught.

Reference Key: 1 = Assemblies; 2 = Cassettes/CD; 3 = Daily Routine; 4 = Discussions; 5 = Field Trips; 6 = Video; 7 = Magazines; 8 = Newspapers; 9 = Projects; 10 = Simulations; 11 = Speakers; 12 = Supplementary Books/Pamphlets; 13 = Textbooks; 14 = Other

School District: _____

Building Name: _____

Grade Levels Served: _____



Mandate Checklist

Topic	Compliant
Abduction Education 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
American Patriotism & Government 6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anabolic Steroid Abuse Prevention 7	<input type="checkbox"/>
Art 8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian American History 9	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black History 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Career and Technical Education 11	<input type="checkbox"/>
Character Education 12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civics Education 13	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commemorative Dates 14	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Literacy 15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conservation of Natural Resource 16	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consumer Education 17	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cursive Writing 18	<input type="checkbox"/>

Topic	Compliant
Disabilities: History, People & Rights Movement 19	<input type="checkbox"/>
Driver Education 20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug & Substance Abuse Education 21	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health Education 22 – 23	<input type="checkbox"/>
High School Elective Course . 24	<input type="checkbox"/>
Holocaust Genocide 25	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet Safety 26	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language Arts, Reading & Other Comm. Skills 27	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library Media Programs 28	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mathematics 29	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Literacy 30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music 31	<input type="checkbox"/>
Native American History 32	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical Education 33	<input type="checkbox"/>

Topic	Compliant
Safety Education 34	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science 35	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Abuse Education 36	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Studies (including U.S. History) 37	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teen Dating Violence 38	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic Injury Prevention 39	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transitional Mathematics 40	<input type="checkbox"/>
U.S. History 41	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence Prevention & Conflict Resolution 42	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women in History 43	<input type="checkbox"/>
World (Foreign) Language 44	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Superintendent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Abduction Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
K-8 – each grade level High school – not specified	All public schools must provide some instruction, study, and discussion on this topic. The required instruction can be included in the courses of study regularly taught, provided, however, that such instruction must be given every year to all pupils in Grades kindergarten through 8. 105 ILCS 5/27-13.2

Helpful Resources

1. [KidSmartz](#) - A child safety program that educates families about preventing abduction and empowers youngsters in Grades K-5 to practice safer behaviors.
2. [Missing Children Analysis](#) – Reports and data including a 10-year analysis of attempted abductions.
3. [Publications](#) – Posters, family help guides, checklists, and more, available in English and Spanish.
4. [Missing and Exploited Children](#) – Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s webpage dedicated to resources on missing and exploited children. Some resources overlap with those on the [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children website](#).
5. [Child ID App](#) – A smartphone application developed by the FBI to help quickly report a child as missing.

American Patriotism & Government*



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
<p>K-6 (Not specified)</p> <p>7-12 (all grade levels)</p>	<p>The following topics shall be taught in all public schools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. American patriotism and the principles of representative government, as enunciated in the American Declaration of Independence; 2. The Constitution of the United States of America and the Constitution of the state of Illinois; 3. The proper use and display of the American flag; and 4. The method of voting at elections by means of the Australian Ballot system and the method of the counting of votes for candidates. <p>105 ILCS 5/27-3; 105 ILCS 5/27-21; 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(r)(1)</p> <p>In Grades 7 and 8 or their equivalent, not less than one hour of each school week must be devoted to the study of Section 27-3. 105 ILCS 5/27-4; 23 Ill Admin. Code 1.430(b)</p> <p>In all high school grades, not less than one hour of each school week must be devoted to the advanced study of Section 27-3. This is a required participation course for all students during the secondary school experience. 105 ILCS 5/27-4; 23 Ill Admin. Code 1.440(b)(4)</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [C-SPAN Classroom](#) – Videos, lesson plans, and other resources.
2. [National Archives](#) – Videos, pictures, and primary resources.
3. [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) – Full lesson plans with pictures and prompts for different grade levels.
4. [United States Courts](#) – Various resources on the constitution and landmark court cases.
5. [American Bar Association](#) – Legal FAQs, monthly Supreme Court case lesson plans, and other publications.
6. [Civics Renewal Network](#) – Civics resources categorized by topic.

Anabolic Steroid Abuse Prevention



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
7-12 & interscholastic athletes	School districts must provide instruction on this topic in Grades 7 through 12 and to interscholastic athletes. Such instruction shall be included in science, health, drug abuse, physical education, or other appropriate courses of study. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.3

Helpful Resources

1. [Substance Use Prevention and Recovery Instruction Resource Guide](#) – Database of resources that can be filtered by grade level and implementation type.
2. [Tips for Teens](#) – Two-page fact sheet. Available in [Spanish](#).
3. [FAQ](#) – Summary of information on steroids in Q&A format.
4. [Steroid Use in Adolescence: Information for School Personnel](#)
5. [Teens and Steroids: A Dangerous Combo](#) – A short FAQ on the dangers of steroids.
6. [Athletes Training and Learning to Avoid Steroids \(ATLAS\)](#) - This is a multicomponent school-based drug and alcohol prevention program for male high school athletes.
7. [Athletes Targeting Healthy Exercise & Nutrition Alternatives \(ATHENA\)](#) -This is a team-centered, health promotion program for female high school athletes.
8. [Federal Efforts to Prevent and Reduce Anabolic Steroid Abuse among Teenagers](#) – A summary of federal efforts to reduce steroid abuse.
9. [Performance Enhancing Anabolic Steroid Abuse in Women](#) - A summary of information regarding the effects of steroid abuse in women.

Art



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary school – grade level not specified	A district must provide a coordinated and supervised course of study in art in its elementary schools. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(6)
Required at every high school – grade level not specified	Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes art in its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(7)

Helpful Resources

1. [National Gallery of Art](#) – Learning activities, videos, games, and more.
2. [Scratch](#) – Combine coding and art to make interactive experiences.
3. [The Art Institute of Chicago](#) – Lesson plans on various works of art.
4. [Kennedy Center](#) – Resources and lesson plans by grade level.

Asian American History



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary and high school – grade level not specified	Every public elementary school and high school shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of Asian American history, including the history of Asian Americans in Illinois and the Midwest, as well as the contributions of Asian Americans toward advancing civil rights from the 19th century onward. 105 ILCS 5/27-20.8

Helpful Resources

1. [ISBE's TEEACH Act Resource Guide](#) – Gives an overview of the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History (TEAACH) Act and resources for teachers.
2. [ISBE's TEEACH Act Resources](#) – Provides additional resources for teachers.

Black History



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary and high school – grade level not specified	Every public elementary and high school must provide a unit of instruction studying the events of Black history. 105 ILCS 5/27-20.4 Each school system shall provide history and social sciences courses that include the study of the events of Black history. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(r)(5)

Helpful Resources

1. [Howard University](#) – K-12 resources for educators.
2. [Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture](#) – Various resources including a [Learning Lab](#).
3. [Library of Congress](#) – Numerous primary sources and other documents.
4. [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) – Videos, lesson plans, and other resources.
5. [National Park Service](#) - Teaching with Historic Places uses historic places in National Parks and in the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places to enliven history, social studies, geography, civics, and other subjects.

Career and Technical Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
All grade levels	<p>The educational system shall provide students with opportunities to prepare themselves for entry into the world of work. Every district shall initiate a Career Awareness and Exploration Program that should enable students to make more meaningful and informed career decisions. This program should be available at all grade levels. 23 Ill Admin. Code 1.420(i)</p> <p>A district must provide a coordinated and supervised course of study in Career Education – Awareness & Exploration in its elementary schools. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(9)</p> <p>Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes Career and Technical Education – Orientation and Preparation in its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(8)</p> <p>If the school board of a school district that maintains Grades 9-12 establishes a list of courses from which high school students must elect at least one course, to be completed along with other high school graduation requirements, at least one course in vocational education must be included on such list. 105 ILCS 5/27-22.2</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [ISBE's Career Technical Education Webpage](#) – Lesson plans, career guides, reports and much more.
2. [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) – Resources for teachers as well as students including videos, lesson plans, and games.

Character Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Not specified	Every public school teacher shall teach character education, which includes the teaching of respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship, in order to raise pupils' honesty, kindness, justice, discipline, respect for others, and moral courage for the purpose of lessening crime and raising the standard of good character. 105 ILCS 5/27-12

Helpful Resources

1. [Making Caring Common](#) – A collection of research, resources, and programs aimed at promoting character education.
2. [Character Education](#) – Research and evaluation of programs that promote character education.
3. [Sesame Workshop](#) – Sesame Workshop is an independent nonprofit organization with a mission to help youngsters everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder.

Civics Education*



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
6, 7, <i>or</i> 8	Every public elementary school must provide in its 6th, 7th, or 8th grade curriculum at least one semester of civics education. This course of study must be provided <i>in addition to</i> the instruction required to be provided under Section 27-3 of the School Code. 105 ILCS 5/27- 3.10
High School	Each secondary school student shall be required to complete one semester in civics, which shall focus on government institutions, the discussion of current and controversial issues, service learning, and simulations of the democratic process. 105 ILCS 5/27-22(e)(5) ; 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(b)(5)

Helpful Resources

1. [C-SPAN Classroom](#) – Videos, lesson plans, and other resources.
2. [National Archives](#) – Videos, pictures, and primary resources.
3. [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) – Full lesson plans with pictures and prompts for different grade levels.
4. [United States Courts](#) – Various resources on the constitution and landmark court cases.
5. [American Bar Association](#) – Legal FAQs, monthly Supreme Court case lesson plans, and other publications.
6. [Civics Renewal Network](#) – Civics resources categorized by topic.

Commemorative Dates



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Not specified	<p>School boards shall include instruction relative to commemorated persons, activities, or events on the commemorative holiday or at any other time during the school year and at any point in the curriculum when such instruction may be deemed appropriate. The State Board of Education shall prepare and make available to school boards instructional materials relative to commemorated persons, activities, or events which may be used by school boards in conjunction with any instruction provided pursuant to this paragraph.</p> <p>Commemorative holidays are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. January 17 (the birthday of Muhammad Ali), 2. January 28 (to be known as Christa McAuliffe Day and observed as a commemoration of space exploration), 3. February 15 (the birthday of Susan B. Anthony), 4. March 29 (Vietnam War Veterans Day), 5. September 11 (September 11th Day of Remembrance), 6. The school day immediately preceding Veterans Day (Korean War Veterans Day), 7. October 1 (Recycling Day), 8. October 7 (Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Remembrance Day), 9. December 7 (Pearl Harbor Veterans' Day), and 10. Any day so appointed by the president or governor. <p>School boards may establish commemorative holidays whenever in their judgment such action is advisable. 105 ILCS 5/24-2</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [Illinois Inclusive History Calendar \(August 2024 – July 2025\)](#) – A calendar showing the dates of important events and links to resources to help educators teach them.

Computer Literacy*



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at each grade level K-12 (computer literacy skills)	<p>All school districts shall ensure that students receive developmentally appropriate opportunities to gain computer literacy skills embedded in the district's curriculum at each grade level. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.79; 10-20.74</p> <p>The Computer Literacy Knowledge and Skill Continuum guidance document provides a scope and sequence to support district implementation (non-regulatory).</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [Code.org](#) – Resources for students and educators focusing on computer science.
2. [Computer Science Field Guide](#) – Open source materials for high school age students.
3. [21Things4Students](#) – Computer science materials for Grades 5 – 9.
4. [Computer Science Unplugged](#) – Printable lesson plans for very young ages that can be used without computers.

Conservation of Natural Resources



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
<p>Required at every elementary and high school – grade level not specified</p>	<p>In every public school there shall be instruction, study, and discussion of current problems and needs in the conservation of natural resources, including, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Air pollution, 2. Water pollution, 3. Waste reduction and recycling, 4. The effects of excessive use of pesticides, 5. Preservation of wilderness areas, 6. Forest management, 7. Protection of wildlife, and 8. Humane care of domestic animals. <p>Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, every public school shall provide instruction on climate change, which shall include, but not be limited to, identifying the environmental and ecological impacts of climate change on individuals and communities and evaluating solutions for addressing and mitigating the impact of climate change and shall be in alignment with State learning standards, as appropriate. 105 ILCS 5/27-13.1</p> <p>A district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes Conservation of Natural Resources in its elementary schools. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(11)</p> <p>Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes Conservation of Natural Resources in its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(12)</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [Illinois Environmental Protection Agency](#) – A one-stop-shop for resources for multiple grade levels on various topics.

Consumer Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every high school – grade level not specified	<p>Pupils in the public schools in Grades 9-12 shall be taught and shall be required to study courses that include instruction in the area of consumer education. 105 ILCS 5/27-12.1</p> <p>Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes consumer education in its high school course offerings. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(11). Each high school student shall be required to take consumer education for 50 minutes per day for a period of nine weeks in any of the Grades 9-12. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(k)(3); 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(b)(3)</p> <p>The superintendent of each unit or high school district shall maintain evidence showing that each student has received adequate instruction in consumer education prior to the completion of Grade 12. Consumer education may be included in course content of other courses, or it may be taught as a separate required course. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(k)(2)</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation \(FDIC\)](#) – A one-stop-shop of resources for teachers and students that also has links to consumer education resources created by other government agencies.

Cursive Writing



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary school – grade level not specified; must be completed by Grade 5	Elementary schools must offer at least one unit of instruction in cursive writing. School districts shall, by policy, determine at what grade level or levels students are to be offered cursive writing, provided that such instruction must be offered before students complete Grade 5. 105 ILCS 5/27-20.7

Helpful Resources

1. [Teaching Elementary School Students to Be Effective Writers](#) – Short section on handwriting strategies.
2. [Victoria State Government Department of Education](#) – A summary of research for teachers and resources to use.
3. [Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario](#) – A summary of research for teachers and resources to use.

Disabilities: History, People, & Rights Movement



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Not specified	A school district must provide instruction on disability history, people with disabilities, and the disability rights movement. Instruction may be included in those courses that the school district chooses, and the school board shall determine the minimum amount of instructional time required under this Section. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.8(a) & (c)

Helpful Resources

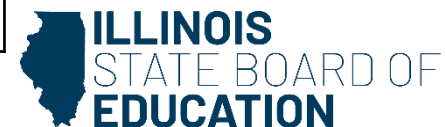
1. [National Parks Service](#) – A multipart lesson on the disability rights movement.
2. [Emerging America](#) – Lesson plans for all grade ranges on the history of the disability rights movement.

Driver Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
1-8 – each grade level	<p>Instruction shall be given in safety education in each of the Grades 1-8, equivalent to one class period each week. 105 ILCS 5/27-24.2</p>
High school – grade level not specified	<p>Any school district which maintains Grades 9 through 12 shall offer a driver education course in any such school which it operates. 105 ILCS 5/27-24.2; 23 Ill. Admin Code 1.440(a)(13)</p> <p>Its curriculum shall include content dealing with Chapters 11, 12, 13, 15, and 16 of the Illinois Vehicle Code, the rules adopted pursuant to those chapters insofar as they pertain to the operation of motor vehicles, and the portions of the Litter Control Act relating to the operation of motor vehicles. 105 ILCS 5/27-24.2</p> <p>The course of instruction given in Grades 10 through 12 shall include an emphasis on the development of knowledge, attitudes, habits, and skills necessary for the safe operation of motor vehicles, including motorcycles insofar as they can be taught in the classroom, and instruction on distracted driving as a major traffic safety issue. Other course content considerations apply. 105 ILCS 5/27-24.2</p> <p>A driver education course shall consist of a minimum of 30 clock hours of classroom instruction and a minimum of six clock hours of individual behind-the-wheel instruction in a dual control car on public roadways taught by a driver education instructor endorsed by the State Board of Education. 105 ILCS 5/27-24.2</p> <p>Additional requirements for course content, instructor qualifications, and driver education vehicle safety and features found at 625 ILCS 5/ (1-103; 3-617; 6-419; 13-101) and 23 Ill. Admin Code 252.</p>

Helpful Resources
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> ISBE’s Driver Education Standards – A full overview of the standards required for driver’s education. Illinois Secretary of State – Has links to several helpful driving and safety forms including the Illinois Rules of the Road.



Drug & Substance Abuse Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
K-8 – each grade level	<p>All public schools maintaining any of the Grades kindergarten through 8 must provide instruction, study, and discussion on effective methods for the prevention and avoidance of drugs and the dangers of opioid and substance abuse. 105 ILCS 5/27-13.2; 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(12)</p> <p>The required instruction can be included in the courses of study regularly taught; provided, however, that such instruction must be given every year to all pupils in Grades kindergarten through 8. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 105 ILCS 5/27-13.2</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [Substance Use Prevention and Recovery Instruction Resource Guide](#) – Database of resources that can be filtered by grade level and implementation type.

Health Education 1/2



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements & Citations
<p>K-6 – all grade levels</p> <p>MS/JH and HS – not specified</p>	<p>A Comprehensive Health Education Program must include certain required major educational areas as enumerated in the Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act and shall be offered in all elementary schools and secondary schools in Illinois. 105 ILCS 110/3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No specific time requirement for Grades K-6; however, health education must be part of the formal regular instructional program at each grade level. 2. The minimal time allocation must be not less than one semester or equivalent (i.e., at least 18 weeks) during the middle or junior high experience. 3. The minimal time allocation must be not less than one semester or equivalent (i.e., at least 18 weeks) during the secondary school experience. This is a required participation course for all students during the secondary school experience. 4. If health education is offered with another course on a “block of time” basis in a middle, junior high, or high school, instruction may be offered in any combination of the grade levels in the school, provided that the total time devoted to health education is the equivalent of one full semester’s work. <p>23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(n); 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(7); 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(b)(1)</p>

Helpful Resources
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CDC Healthy Schools – A community wide approach to creating healthier schools. Also see the Body and Mind classroom portal for grades 4-8. 2. MyPlate – One stop shop of resources from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. 3. Illinois Association for Health, PE, Recreation & Dance – Resources, grant opportunities, PD, conferences, and more.

Health Education 2/2



Summary of Requirements & Citations

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Human ecology and health2. Human growth and development3. Family life, including sexual abstinence until marriage (opt out allowed)4. Prevention and control of disease, including instruction in Grades 6 through 12 on the prevention, transmission, and spread of AIDS (opt out allowed)5. Age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness prevention education in Grades pre-K through 12 (opt out allowed K-8)6. Public and environmental health7. Consumer health8. Safety education and disaster preparedness.9. Mental health and illness, which must include how and where to find mental health resources and specialized treatment in the state (P.A. 102-1034)10. Personal health habits11. Alcohol and drug use and abuse, including the use and abuse of fentanyl, and the medical and legal ramifications of alcohol, drug, and tobacco use, and abuse during pregnancy; curricula for alcohol and drug use and abuse shall include classroom instruction in Grades 5 through 12 and be age and developmentally appropriate. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">12. Evidence-based and medically accurate information regarding sexual abstinence13. Tobacco and e-cigarettes and other vapor devices14. Nutrition15. Dental health16. Course material and instruction to advise pupils of the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act17. Information about cancer18. Training on how to properly administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation and how to use an automated external defibrillator shall be included as a basis for curricula in all secondary schools in this state (opt out allowed)19. In Grades 9-12, allergy instruction that must include, at a minimum, recognizing the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis; the steps to take to prevent exposure to allergens; and safe emergency epinephrine administration (P.A. 103-0212)20. Instruction, study, and discussion on the dangers of fentanyl in Grades 6-8 and 9-12 per the requirements set forth in (P.A. 103-0810) |
|---|--|

Helpful Resources

1. [SchoolSafety.gov](#) – A collection of resources that can be sorted and filtered by topic, education level, resource type, and more.
2. [Environmental Protection Agency](#) – A collection of resources or various topics for different grade levels.
3. [Substance Use Prevention and Recovery Instruction Resource Guide](#) – Database of resources that can be filtered by grade level and implementation type.
4. [Sexual Health](#) – ISBE's webpage on sexual health including a link to the [Illinois learning standards](#).

High School Elective Course*



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Option for 1-year elective credit requirement in HS	<p>As a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, each pupil entering the 9th grade must, in addition to other course requirements, successfully complete one year chosen from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Music,B. Art,C. Foreign language, which shall be deemed to include American Sign Language,D. Vocational education, orE. Forensic speech (speech and debate). A forensic speech course used to satisfy the graduation requirement for four years of language arts may not be used to satisfy this graduation requirement. <p>105 ILCS 5/27-22(e)(6)</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [Music](#) – See related slide in this document.
2. [Art](#) – See related slide in this document.
3. [World Language](#) – See related slide in this document.
4. [Vocational Education](#) – See related slide in this document.
5. [National Speech & Debate Association](#) – Resources on how to start a speech/debate program, competition recordings, and more.

Holocaust/Genocide Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
<p>Required at every elementary and HS – grade level not specified</p>	<p>Every public elementary and high school must provide a unit of instruction studying the events of the Nazi atrocities of 1933-45, a period in world history known as the Holocaust. To reinforce that lesson, such curriculum shall include an additional unit of instruction studying other acts of genocide across the globe, which shall include but not be limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Native American genocide in North America (Public Act 103-0422); 2. The Armenian Genocide; 3. The Famine-Genocide in Ukraine; and 4. More recent atrocities in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan. <p>105 ILCS 5/27-20.3</p> <p>Each school system shall provide history and social sciences courses that include the study of that period in world history known as the Holocaust. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(r)(4)</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [Illinois Holocaust Museum | Chicagoland Museum](#) – The museum offers online programs and teaching trunks that can be checked out. It also provides grants and scholarships for educators and their students to visit the museum. Programming available for Grades K-12.
2. [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) – A collection of various resources including specifically for educators.

Internet Safety Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
3-12 – each grade level May be provided for in Grades K-2	A school district must incorporate into the school curriculum a component on internet safety to be taught at least once each school year to students in Grades 3 through 12. The age-appropriate curriculum may begin with students in kindergarten. 105 ILCS 5/27-13.3 The school board shall determine the scope and duration of this unit of instruction. The age-appropriate unit of instruction may be incorporated into the current courses of study regularly taught in the district's schools, as determined by the school board. Id.

Helpful Resources

1. [Internet Safety](#) – ISBE’s webpage dedicated to internet safety. Contains several resources available for use.
2. [FBI-SOS](#) - Teaches students in Grades 3 to 8 how to navigate the web safely. Available in English or Spanish.
3. [NetSmartz](#) - Provides age-appropriate videos and activities to help teach children be safer online with the goal of helping children to become more aware of potential online risks and empowering them to help prevent victimization by making safer choices on- and offline.
4. [Interland](#) - Interland is an adventure-packed online game that makes learning about digital safety and citizenship interactive and fun — just like the internet itself. Here, kids will help their fellow Internauts combat badly behaved hackers, phishers, overshakers, and bullies by practicing the skills they need to be good digital citizens.

Language Arts, Reading, & Other Skills*



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
<p>Required at every elementary school – grade level not specified</p> <p>K-3 grades (mandatory reading opportunities)</p>	<p>A district must provide a coordinated and supervised course of study in language arts, reading, and other communication skills in its elementary schools. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(1)</p> <p>Each school board shall promote 60 minutes of minimum reading opportunities daily for students in kindergarten through 3rd grade whose reading level is one grade level or lower than their current grade level according to current learning standards and the school district. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.53</p>
<p>Required at every high school – grade level not specified</p>	<p>Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes language arts in its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(1)</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [ISBE's Literacy Plan](#) – Additional resources can be found on [ISBE's Comprehensive Literacy Plan](#) webpage.
2. [PBS Language Arts](#) – Resources that can be sorted by grade level and resource type.
3. [AdLit.org](#) – Resources and a digital community for secondary literacy teachers.
4. [Reading Rockets](#) – Provides resources and a digital community for elementary and middle-school literacy teachers.

Library Media Programs



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Not specified	Each school district shall provide a program of library media services for the students in each of its schools that meets the requirements outlined in 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(o) .

Helpful Resources

1. [Library of Congress](#) – Primary resources and information on how to work with primary resources.
2. [Digital Public Library of America](#) – Images, texts, videos, sounds, and more.
3. [Smithsonian Open Access](#) – Growing collection of items from Smithsonian including [3D models](#).

Mathematics*



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary school – grade level not specified	A district must provide a coordinated and supervised course of study in mathematics in its elementary schools. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(3)
Required at every high school – grade level not specified	Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes math its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(3)

Helpful Resources

1. [Khan Academy](#) – One stop shop for all things math instruction.
2. [National Council of Teachers of Mathematics](#) – Videos, question of the week, and other free resources.
3. [ISBE Model Math Curricular Resources](#) – Lesson plans along with scope and sequence aligned to state standards.

Media Literacy



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every high school – grade level not specified	Every high school shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction on “media literacy,” defined as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and communicate using a variety of objective forms, including, but not limited to, print, visual, audio, interactive, and digital texts. The unit of instruction shall meet the requirements outlined in 105 ILCS 5/27-20.08 .

Helpful Resources

1. [National Association for Media Literacy Education](#) – News, information, and a [Media Literacy Handbook](#).
2. [Media Literacy Now](#) – Large collection of resources that can be sorted by grade level and resource type.

Music



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary school – grade level not specified	A district must provide a coordinated and supervised course of study in music in its elementary schools. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(5)
Required at every high school – grade level not specified	Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes music in its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(6)

Helpful Resources

1. [Carnegie Hall](#) – Resources for Grades K-5.
2. [TeachRock](#) – Includes multiple music genres with lesson plans by grade levels.
3. [Save the Music Foundation](#) – Links to apps for making music and resources that can be sorted by grade, subject, and content type.

Native American History



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
<p>Required at every elementary and HS – grade level not specified</p>	<p>Every public elementary school and high school social studies course pertaining to American history or government shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of the Native American experience and Native American history within the Midwest and this state since time immemorial. These events shall include and describe:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contributions of Native Americans in government and the arts, humanities, and sciences, as well as the contributions of Native Americans to the economic, cultural, social, and political development of their own nations and of the United States. 2. Large urban Native American populations in this state, including the history and experiences of contemporary Native Americans living in this state. 3. In Grades 6-12, the study of the genocide of and discrimination against Native Americans, as well as tribal sovereignty, treaties made between tribal nations and the United States, and the circumstances pertaining to forced Native American relocation. <p>Public Act 103-0422</p> <p>This unit of instruction may be integrated as part of the unit of instruction required under Section 27-20.3 (Holocaust/Genocide Study) or 27-21 (U.S. History).</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [National Museum of the American Indian](#) – A collection of resources and professional development opportunities from Smithsonian.
2. [National Indian Education Association](#) – Resources and activities sorted by grade level.

Physical Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
<p>All grades subject to applicable exemptions</p>	<p>School boards shall provide for the physical education and training of pupils of the schools under their respective control and shall include physical education and training in the courses of study regularly taught therein. The physical education and training course offered in Grades 5 through 10 may include the health education course required in the Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act. 105 ILCS 5/27-5</p> <p>A school board may determine the schedule or frequency of physical education courses, provided that all pupils – except for those subject to applicable exemptions – engage in a course of physical education for a minimum of three days per five-day week. 105 ILCS 5/27-6; 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(8); 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(10)</p> <p>A physical education course of study must be part of the regular school curriculum and not extracurricular in nature or organization. 105 ILCS 5/27-7</p> <p>Appropriate activity related to physical education shall be required as provided for by Section 27-6 of the School Code. The time schedule shall compare favorably with other courses in the curriculum. Safety education, as it relates to the physical education program, should be incorporated. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(p); 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(b)(2)</p> <p>See 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.425 for additional requirements that apply to the provision of physical education instruction.</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [OPEN Phys Ed](#) – Curriculum for every grade level along with PD opportunities.
2. [SHAPE America](#) – Information on physical education, health education, coaching, and more. Has both free and paid resources.
3. [Special Olympics](#) – Resources on how to achieve whole school engagement for physical education.
4. [GENYOUth](#) – Small collection of resources including [Root4Her](#) aimed at increasing physical education participation among female students.

Safety Education



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
<p>Required at every elementary school – grade level not specified</p> <p>May be provided for in all other grades</p>	<p>A district must provide a coordinated and supervised course of study in safety education in its elementary schools. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(10)</p> <p>School boards of public schools and all boards in charge of educational institutions supported wholly or partially by the state may provide instruction in safety education in all grades and include such instruction in the courses of study regularly taught therein. Such boards may provide for instruction in safety education for not less than 16 hours during each school year. (105 ILCS 5/27-17) Per Public Act 102-0971, “safety education” as used in this section of School Code includes instruction in safe gun storage.</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) – Safety guides and videos by topic and age. Click the “Road Safety” option and select a topic.
2. [Crash Science in the Classroom](#) – Science based approach to understand car crashes and injuries.
3. [Ready Illinois](#) – A large collection of safety resources on different topics.

Science*



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary school – grade level not specified	A district must provide a coordinated and supervised course of study in science in its elementary schools. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(2)
Required at every high school – grade level not specified	Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes science in its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(2)

Helpful Resources

1. [NASA](#) – Resources for students and educators from covering Grades K – 12.
2. [National Geographic](#) – Videos, articles, infographics, and more for all grade levels.
3. [National Science Digital Library](#) – Large collection of teacher resources. You need to search a topic before the materials will display.

Sexual Abuse Education (Erin's Law)



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements & Citations
Pre-K through 12	Each school board must adopt and implement a policy addressing sexual abuse of children that includes an age-appropriate and evidence-informed curriculum for students in pre-K through 12th grade. 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13 ; 105 ILCS 110/3

Helpful Resources

1. [ISBE's Sexual Abuse Response and Prevention Guide](#) – Contains a list of Accredited Childrens Advocacy Centers and Sexual Assault Centers.
2. [NetSmartz](#) – Provides age-appropriate videos and activities to help teach children be safer online with the goal of helping children to become more aware of potential online risks and empowering them to help prevent victimization by making safer choices on- and offline.
3. [ISBE's Sexual Health Resources](#) – Resources that can be filtered by topic and grade level.
4. [Illinois School and Campus Safety Center](#) – Compilation of resources from several different organizations.

Social Studies* (Including U.S. History)



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary school – grade level not specified	A district must provide a coordinated and supervised course of study in social studies in its elementary schools. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.430(a)(4)
Required at every high school – grade level not specified	Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes U.S. history in its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(4)

Helpful Resources

1. [PBS: Social Studies](#) – Resources of different types that can be filtered by grade level.
2. [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) – Lesson plans, teachers guides, and media resources.
3. [National Council for the Social Studies](#) – Articles and resources that can be filtered by grade level all the way down to pre-K.

Teen Dating Violence



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
7-12	The school board of each public school district in this state shall adopt a policy on teen dating violence that, among other things, incorporates age-appropriate education about teen dating violence into new or existing training programs for students in Grades 7 through 12 and school employees. 105 ILCS 110/3.10

Helpful Resources

1. [Youth.gov](#) – One stop shop for hotlines, resources, and links to several other organizations offering resources.

Traffic Injury Prevention



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
K-8	The school board of a district that maintains any of the Grades K through 8 must adopt a policy on traffic injury prevention education, and such education must be made available to students in Grades K-8. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.11

Helpful Resources

1. [Safe Routes Partnership](#) – Numerous resources on the topic of student safety while traveling to and from school.

Transitional Mathematics



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
12	<p>School districts serving Grades 9 through 12 may elect to implement transitional mathematics instruction preparing students for one or more of the postsecondary institution mathematics pathways.</p> <p>ISBE and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) jointly published an implementation plan in June 2019. The implementation plan outlines benchmarks that lead to full statewide implementation in all school districts.</p> <p>Transitional mathematics instruction must be delivered by high school faculty with community college collaboration as defined through a partnership agreement. Instruction may be delivered through stand-alone mathematics courses, integrated courses, or competency-based learning systems. 110 ILCS 148/ (148/40; 148/50; 148/55; 148/65)</p> <p>Public school districts serving Grades 9 through 12 wishing to opt out of offering transitional mathematics instruction must complete the opt-out process through ISBE. More information can be found on ISBE's Transitional Math webpage.</p>

Helpful Resources

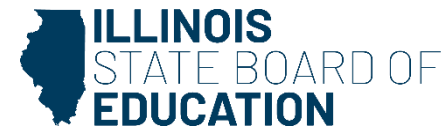
1. [ISBE's & ICCB's Implementation Plan](#) – Full summary of how to implement transitional math along with links to resources.
2. [ISBE's Transitional Math Webpage](#) – Additional resources and information on transitional math.

U.S. History*

Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
<p>All public schools (grade levels not specified)</p>	<p>History of the United States shall be taught in all public schools and in all other educational institutions in the state supported or maintained, in whole or in part, by public funds. The teaching of U.S. history must include study of all of the topics outlined in Section 27-21 of the School Code. 105 ILCS 5/27-21</p> <p>Please be mindful to click on the link above for specific content requirements including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study of the role and contributions of ethnic groups (including but not limited to those specifically enumerated in statute) and the labor unions in the history of this country and this state; • The study of events related to the forceful removal and illegal deportation of Mexican-American U.S. citizens during the Great Depression; • The study of the role and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in the history of this country and this state; • Contributions made to society by Americans of different faith practices (including, but not limited to, those specifically enumerated in statute); and • Instruction in the history of Illinois. <p>The teaching of history shall also include teaching about Native American nations' sovereignty and self-determination, both historically and in the present day, with a focus on urban Native Americans. Public Act 103-0422</p> <p>The requirement for U.S. history shall be provided through history and social sciences courses. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(r)</p>
<p>7-12</p>	<p>All students in Grade 7 and all high school students enrolled in a course concerning U.S. history or a combination of U.S. history and American government must view a Congressional Medal of Honor film made by the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation. 105 ILCS 5/27-3.5</p> <p>No student may graduate from the eighth grade unless he or she has received such instruction in the history of the United States as outlined in Section 27-21 of the School Code and gives evidence of having a comprehensive knowledge thereof, which may be administered remotely. 105 ILCS 5/27-21</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [PBS – U.S. History](#) – Videos, lesson plans, and more that can be filtered by grade level.
2. [KidCitizen](#) – Primary sources for teaching history to elementary grades
3. [National Museum of American History](#) – Resources, units, and case studies.



Violence Prevention & Conflict Resolution



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
K-12 – each grade level	School districts shall provide instruction in violence prevention and conflict resolution education for Grades kindergarten through 12 and may include such instruction in the courses of study regularly taught therein. 105 5/27-23.4

Helpful Resources

1. [CASEL](#) – Resources and implementation guides for social and emotional learning to help mitigate conflict from happening.
2. [Conflict Resolution Education](#) – Resources for teachers and administrators.
3. [Western Justice Center](#) – Lesson plans with videos to teach conflict resolution.

Women in History



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every elementary and high school – grade level not specified	Every public elementary and high school must provide a unit of instruction studying the events of the history of women in America. 105 ILCS 5/27-20.5 Each school system shall provide history and social sciences courses that include the study of the events of women's history in America. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.420(r)(6)

Helpful Resources

1. [National Women's History Museum](#) – Lesson plans, photographs, primary resources, and more.
2. [Smithsonian's American Women's History Museum](#) – Various materials organized by grade level.
3. [Library of Congress](#) – A collection of resources and links to additional pages with even more resources.
4. [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) – Collection of resources for Women's History month with links to additional resources.

World (Foreign) Languages



Grade Levels	Summary of Requirements
Required at every HS – grade level not specified	<p>Each district must provide a comprehensive curriculum that includes foreign language in its high school course offerings. The time allotment is the option of the local board of education. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(a)(5)</p> <p>The description for any foreign language course shall indicate whether the school district will award a State Seal of Biliteracy in accordance with the requirements of Section 1.442 of this Part and Section 2-3.159 of the School Code and state the qualifications for receipt of the Seal. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 1.440(d)(2)</p>

Helpful Resources

1. [World Language Webpage](#) – The Illinois Learning Standards for World Languages guide learners to develop competence to communicate effectively and interact with cultural competence to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world.
2. [Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy](#) – A public school district or nonpublic school may establish the State Seal of Biliteracy program to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in English and in one or more other foreign, or world, languages.

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Right-Sizing Illinois' Proficiency Benchmarks

Giving families, teachers, and students more
accurate data about student performance

Dr. Tony Sanders
State Superintendent of Education

The Problem

Illinois' students are nationally recognized for their academic achievements.

U.S. News & World Report

Fourth in the nation for Pre-K-12 education

CNBC

"A" & Third in the nation for Education

Illinois Report Card

Graduation rate in 2024 reached an **all-time high** at 87.7%

Above the national average in eighth grade reading and math

NAEP

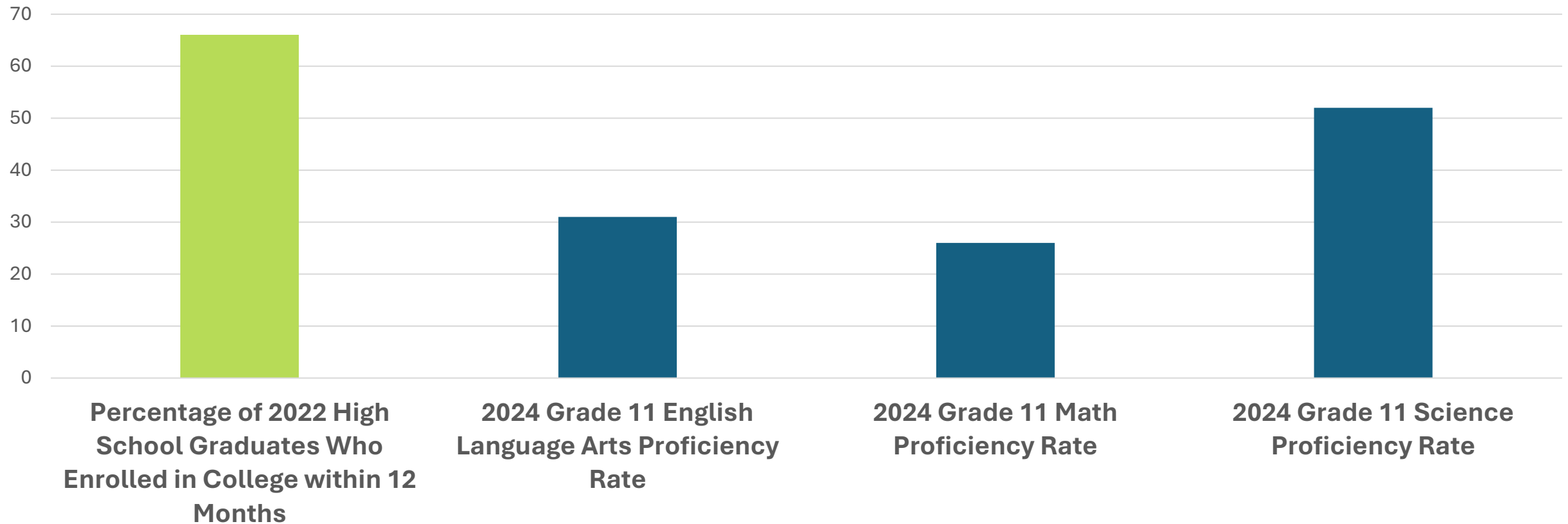
Held steady across all subjects and grades from 2022 to 2024

NAEP

Among **top five states** in multiple Advanced Placement metrics

College Board

Proficiency rates have not reflected college readiness, enrollment and success.



Let's clarify...

Key Definitions

Performance Levels

Are the score ranges that divide the full spectrum of performance on the state assessment into categories.

The State decides how many levels there are, the **cut scores** that divide each level, and which levels qualify as “proficient.”

Proficiency

Being proficient means that a student is on track in their learning.

The proficiency benchmark is the score a student needs to reach on a state assessment to be considered on track for their grade level.

Proficiency Benchmark

Cut Score

Cut Score

Cut Score

Below Proficient

Approaching Proficient

Proficient

Above Proficient

Why Performance Levels Matter

ISBE

To identify schools for additional support and track progress in proficiency over time.

Schools

To improve teaching and learning for all students.

Families

To understand how a student is doing.

What Proficiency Data Impacts

- **Individual Score Reports** families receive with their students' assessment results
- Aggregate reporting for schools, districts, and the state on the **Illinois Report Card**
- School **accountability** designations
- Identifying students for **acceleration** (Accelerated Placement Act)

What
Proficiency
Data **Does Not**
Impact

- State funding
- Teacher evaluations
- Grade promotion and graduation
- Student eligibility for an individualized education plan (IEP)
- Score reports students choose to send to colleges
- Illinois Learning Standards (what schools teach/expectations for learning)
- Assessments themselves (format/content/length)

Misalignment had serious, real-world consequences.

Illinois' misaligned performance levels **mislabeled** students.

Misaligned benchmarks identified the **wrong** students for additional supports or acceleration.

Real Student
Example
**Naperville
North High
School**



- **GPA: 3.9**
- 7 AP courses
- 2 industry certifications
- Basketball, competitive marching band, volunteering
- **English language arts: 490**
(“not proficient”)
- **Math: 530** *(“not proficient”)*

Real Student
Example
**Liberty High
School**



- **GPA: 3.75**
- 4 AP courses
- 2 dual credit courses
- Maintained consecutive year-round employment and multiple co-curricular activities
- **English language arts: 530**
("not proficient")
- **Math: 530** *("not proficient")*

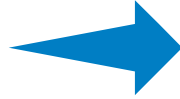
Real Student
Example
**East St. Louis
Senior High
School**



- **GPA: 4.0**
- 6 dual credit courses
- Consistent summer employment
- Work-based learning experience
- 10+ clubs and leadership activities
- **English language arts: 500**
(“not proficient”)
- **Math: 530** *(“not proficient”)*

If they had listened to us, they may not have enrolled in higher education...

Naperville North High School graduate



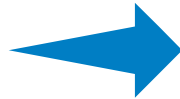
Currently enrolled at Mizzou - University of Missouri

Liberty High School graduate



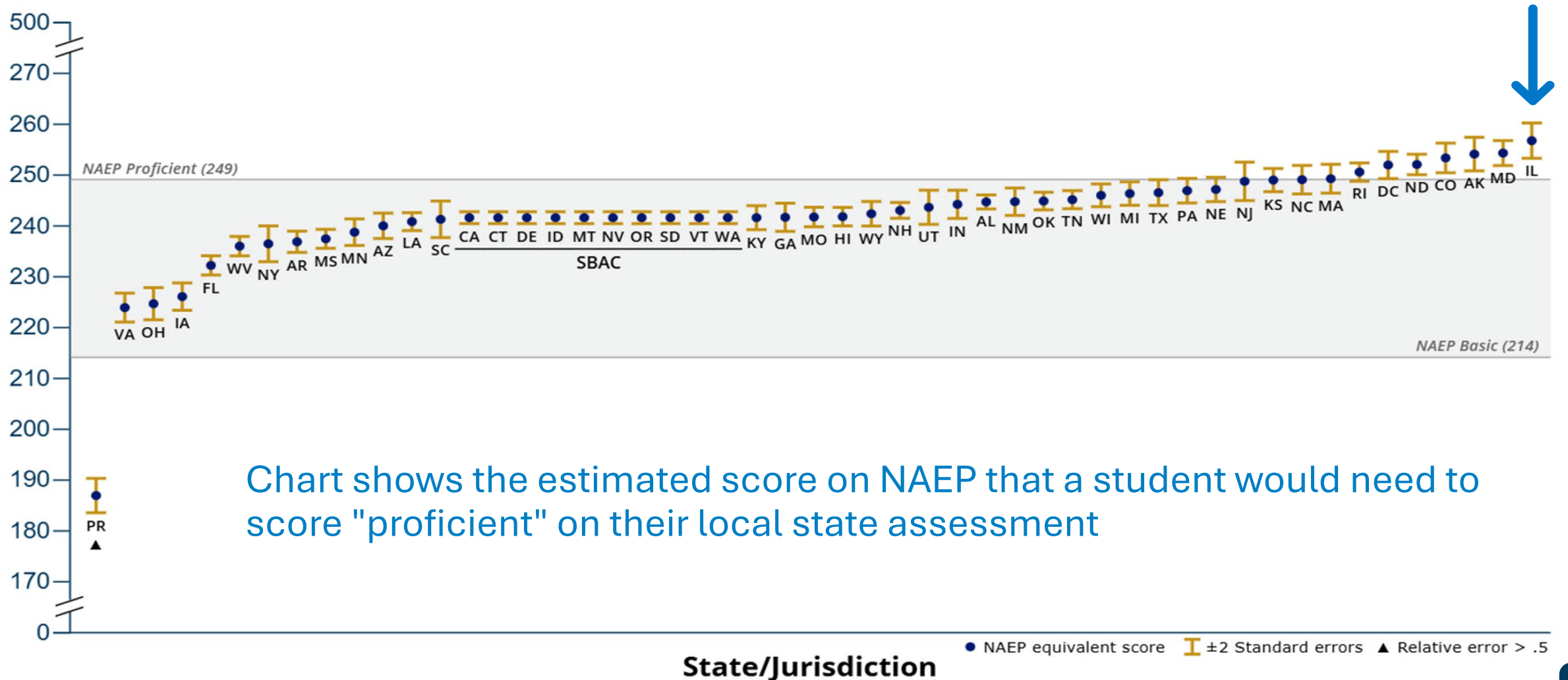
Currently enrolled at John Wood Community College

East St. Louis Senior High School graduate

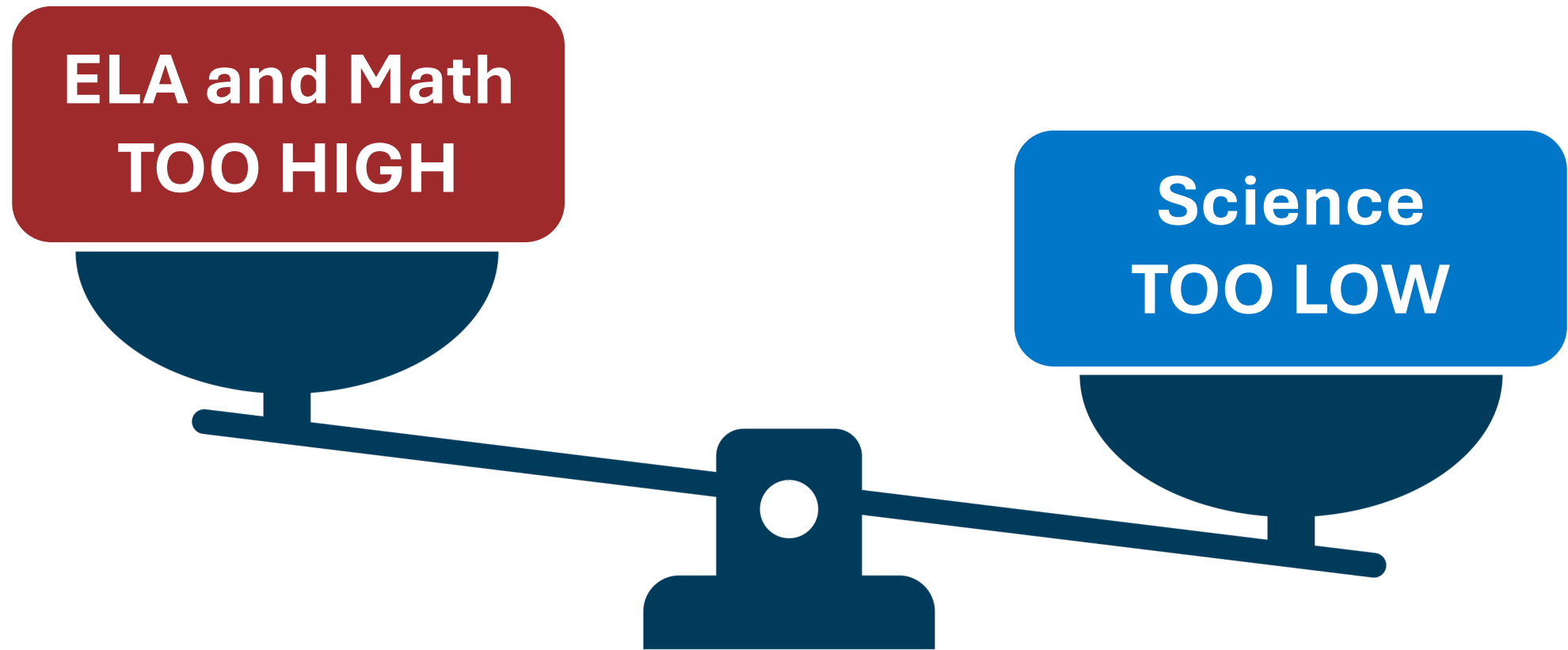


Currently enrolled at Southwestern Illinois College

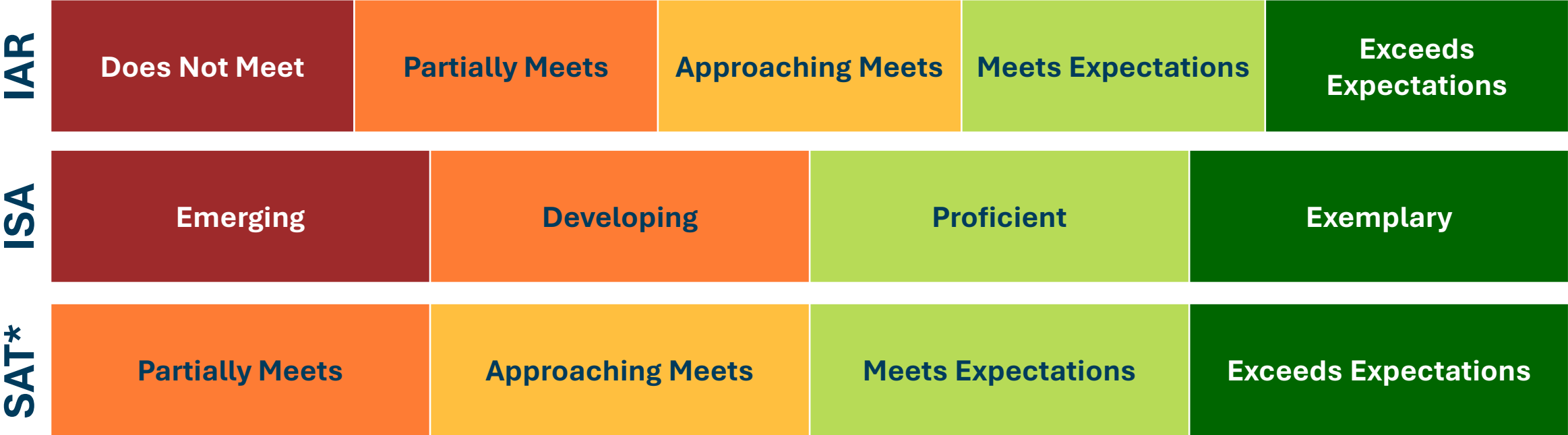
Illinois had the most restrictive benchmarks for ELA and math proficiency.



**Performance levels did not match
classroom realities.**



Levels had no alignment between tests, grade levels, or college and career expectations.



*Previous high school assessment – new levels will apply to new high school assessment (ACT)

How did we get there?

ELA + MATHEMATICS

SAT adopted as the state's
high school assessment in
2017

Aligned high school
benchmarks to 3-8 assessment
instead of to college and career
expectations

How did we get there?

SCIENCE

Set science performance levels using 2021 data

Had insufficient student participation and representation

Resulted in misaligned performance levels

The Process

ISBE launched an 18-month, deliberate, and transparent process to right-size performance levels.

- 1 Launched in March 2024
- 2 Presented at 12+ education conferences and regional convenings
- 3 Statewide listening tour with nine in-person stops, attended by hundreds of educators & stakeholders
- 4 Sought the feedback of student leaders, postsecondary voices, and community members
- 5 Provided regular public updates throughout

Process led by educators and validated by experts

- 1 Policy leaders determined the number of performance levels and gave guidance on how to recognize “right-sized.”
- 2 100+ educators and content specialists created **performance level descriptors** (rubrics that describe the range of performance via the standards within each performance level).
- 3 147 teachers evaluated the difficulty of items from the most recent test to recommend cut scores for each performance level.
- 4 Entire process guided by the Technical Advisory Committee and monitored by experts from Center for Assessment.
- 5 State Board of Education voted to approve new levels on Aug. 13.

Goal:

Alignment with College and Career Expectations

Changes aligned ACT proficiency benchmark to the score a student needs to **get into college**

English language arts

- 18 to place into English Composition I (Eastern Illinois University)
- 19 to earn scholarship (Harper Community College)
- 23 for exemption from writing placement test (Loyola University)

Math

- 17 for Intermediate Algebra (Eastern)
- 20 for College Algebra (Eastern)
- 22 for scholarship (Harper)
- 26-27 for Calculus (Loyola, Eastern)

Goal:

Alignment with College and Career Expectations

Changes aligned ACT proficiency benchmark to the score a student needs to **pass college coursework**

English language arts score of 18

- A probability: 14%
- B or higher probability: 43%
- C or higher probability: 71%

Math score of 19

- A probability: 11%
- B or higher probability: 35%
- C or higher probability: 63%

Science score of 19

- A probability: 8%
- B or higher probability: 31%
- C or higher probability: 65%

Goal:

Alignment with College and Career Expectations

Changes aligned ACT proficiency benchmark to the score a student needs to **succeed in the workforce**

Career readiness

- Students with scores in the 17-19 range on ACT are more likely to earn a Silver level National Career Readiness Certificate (ACT WorkKeys), indicating that they possess the essential work skills needed for success in many jobs across industries and occupations.



PRODUCTION
& INDUSTRY



HEALTHCARE
SUPPORT



SKILLED
TRADES



TECHNICAL
SERVICES

Process Integrity Safeguards

Independent Observation

- Center for Assessment monitored all sessions
- Affirms that the cut scores recommended by the panels were derived through a rigorous process consistent with industry standards

Multiple Rounds of Feedback

- Daily evaluations and adjustments
- Statistical analysis of panelist agreement
- Identification and resolution of inconsistencies

Vertical Articulation Review

- Cross-grade patterns analyzed for logical progression
- Policy-relevant discussions about coherence expectations
- Final consensus building across all participants

The Result

New Unified Performance Levels

IAR	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
ISA	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
ACT	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient

Reminder: Former Misaligned Performance Levels



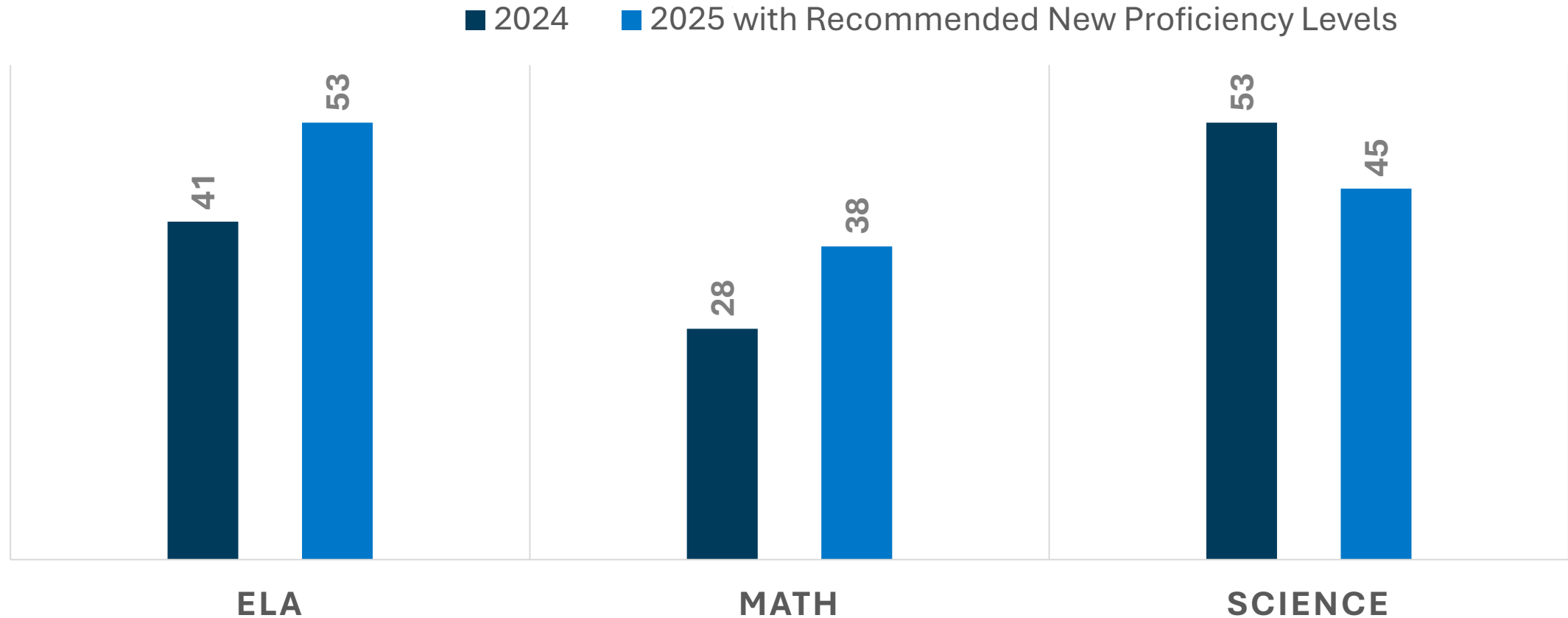
New Aligned Benchmarks for Proficiency

		ELA		Math		Science	
		Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
IAR & ISA	Grade 3	750	735	750	732		
	Grade 4	750	737	750	740		
	Grade 5	750	739	750	740	799	812
	Grade 6	750	741	750	742		
	Grade 7	750	743	750	745		
	Grade 8	750	745	750	745	799	812
ACT	Grade 9*	N/A	14	N/A	17	N/A	14
	Grade 10*	N/A	15	N/A	18	N/A	16
	Grade 11*	N/A	18	N/A	19	N/A	19

(*Note: Illinois' high school assessment changed from SAT to ACT, starting with spring 2025 testing, so there are no prior ACT benchmarks to compare.)

A Truer Picture of Student Performance

RATES OF PROFICIENCY BY SUBJECT IN 2024 VS 2025 WITH THE RECOMMENDED NEW PROFICIENCY LEVELS



Note: 2025 data is preliminary and will not match report card calculations.

We can continue to compare performance over time through the Student Growth Percentile.

SGP allows families, educators, and the state to continue to track progress from year to year.

Apples to apples comparison:

SGP uses raw scale scores, not performance levels.

Longitudinal SGP only available for grades 3-8.

ISBE will calculate SGP for high school for the first time using spring 2025 data.

Key Outcomes Achieved

College and Career Readiness Integration

- ACT benchmarks directly linked to post-secondary success data
- Better preparation signals for students and families

Coherence Across Assessments

- Consistent 4-level system eliminates confusion
- Aligned expectations from elementary through high school

Educator-Driven Process

- 250+ Illinois educators made all recommendations
- Content expertise combined with real-world classroom experience

Rigorous Methodology

- Established psychometric procedures followed
- Independent oversight confirmed process integrity

Key Takeaways

- Illinois' education system leads the nation, but proficiency data did not reflect actual student performance.
- Misaligned proficiency benchmarks sent the wrong message to students – leading to students missing out on opportunities for acceleration and students who were college-ready being told they were not.
- The new, unified performance levels align to college and career readiness expectations.
- ISBE proceeded transparently and followed an 18-month, research-based process, led by educators and validated by external experts.
- We maintain our ability to track progress over time through the Student Growth Percentile.

Appendix

Example of what each performance level means

Operations & Algebraic Thinking				
3.OA.1	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
<p>Expectation at Proficient:</p> <p>Interpret the product of two whole numbers in terms of the number of groups and size of each group.</p>	<p>What is the product of 5×4 ?</p>	<p>There are 4 rows of 5 desks in a classroom.</p> <p>Which expression represents the total number of desks in the classroom?</p> <p>A. $4 - 5$</p> <p>B. $4 + 5$</p> <p>C. 4×5</p> <p>D. $4 \div 5$</p>	<p>Which question can be answered with the expression 5×4 ?</p> <p>A. There are 5 books on 4 shelves. How many total books are on all the shelves?</p> <p>B. There are 5 books on a shelf and 4 fall off. How many books are left on the shelf?</p> <p>C. There are 5 books on a shelf. A student puts 4 more books on the shelf. How many books are now on the shelf?</p> <p>D. There are 5 books on a shelf. The books are placed into 4 boxes. How many books are in each box?</p>	<p>A teacher is packing boxes of books. Each box contains 4 books, and the teacher needs to pack 24 boxes.</p> <p>Explain how to determine the total number of books the teacher will pack.</p>

New Cut Scores: IAR ELA

IAR Scale 650-850

Grade Level	Approaching Proficient		Proficient		Above Proficient	
	Former	Current	Former	Current	Former	Current
3	700	685 (-15)	750	735 (-15)	810	780 (-30)
4	700	695 (-5)	750	737 (-13)	790	780 (-10)
5	700	700 (0)	750	739 (-11)	799	780 (-19)
6	700	705 (+5)	750	741 (-9)	790	780 (-10)
7	700	710 (+10)	750	743 (-7)	785	785 (0)
8	700	710 (+10)	750	745 (-5)	794	795 (+1)

New Cut Scores: IAR Math

IAR Scale 650-850

Grade Level	Approaching Proficient		Proficient		Above Proficient	
	Former	Current	Former	Current	Former	Current
3	700	705 (+5)	750	732 (-18)	790	781 (-9)
4	700	708 (+8)	750	740 (-10)	790	784 (-6)
5	700	709 (+9)	750	740 (-10)	790	782 (-8)
6	700	705 (+5)	750	742 (-8)	785	773 (-12)
7	700	712 (+12)	750	745 (-5)	785	781 (-4)
8	700	705 (+5)	750	745 (-5)	785	791 (+6)

New Cut Scores: ISA

ISA Scale 700-900

Grade Level	Approaching Proficient		Proficient		Above Proficient	
	Current	Recommended	Current	Recommended	Current	Recommended
5	770	770 (0)	799	812 (+13)	832	856 (+23)
8	770	770 (0)	799	812 (+13)	832	856 (+23)

New Cut Scores: ACT ELA, Math, Science

Grade 9 (PreACT 9 Secure) Scale 1-32

Grade 10 (PreACT Secure) Scale 1-35

Grade 11 (ACT with Writing) Scale 1-36

Grade Level	Approaching Proficient			Proficient			Above Proficient		
	ELA	Math	Science	ELA	Math	Science	ELA	Math	Science
9	11	15	11	14	17	14	25	24	25
10	12	15	11	15	18	16	26	25	25
11	13	15	14	18	19	19	27	28	27

Note: Illinois' high school assessment changed from SAT to ACT in spring 2025, so there are no prior cuts to compare.

Right-Sizing Illinois' Benchmarks for Proficiency

Topline Messages & Talking Points

We needed to right-size our proficiency levels on state assessments. For years, Illinois' assessment data sent the wrong message to students, families, and educators. Proficiency rates on state assessments did not match up to realities in the classroom.

- Illinois' benchmarks for English language arts proficiency were the most restrictive in the country, resulting in the mislabeling of high-achieving, college-ready students as “not proficient.”
 - In 4th grade math, Illinois had the most difficult-to-reach proficiency benchmark in the nation, according to the [National Assessment for Educational Progress](#).
 - For every other grade and subject, our proficiency benchmarks ranked among the top four most restrictive.
 - When ISBE adopted the SAT as the state's high school assessment in 2017, the benchmarks for proficiency were set 60 points higher in English language arts and 10 points higher in math than the College Board's own research-informed national college readiness benchmarks.
 - This meant that students who were succeeding in school—passing Advanced Placement and dual credit courses, taking on leadership roles, and enrolling in college—were often still labeled “not proficient” on the state assessment.
- In science, the challenge was reversed—the benchmark was too low, overstating student mastery. This also led to confusion and inflated results that didn't align with classroom performance or readiness expectations.

Proficiency benchmarks were misaligned with other trusted national and state indicators.

- Illinois' previous performance levels did not align to national standards, to any other state assessments, or to any other student success data.
- To add to the confusion, each state assessment had a different number of performance levels, each with different names, and with different score thresholds.
- The result created an uneven playing field for Illinois students and confusion and frustration for Illinois teachers and families.

Our North Star has been to align the performance levels and proficiency benchmarks to real college and career expectations.

- ACT benchmarks are directly linked to post-secondary success data.
 - Educators participating in the performance level setting considered data on Illinois college placement requirements, such as the ACT score needed for a student to place into English Composition I or Intermediate Algebra at Illinois colleges and universities, as well as the probability of getting a C or higher in credit-bearing coursework. For example:
 - Eastern Illinois University uses a minimum score of 18 to place students into English Composition I.
 - A math score of 19 gives students a 63% chance of earning a C or higher.
 - Educators also considered alignment to career readiness, such as the ACT score that would likely earn a student a Silver Level National Career Readiness Certificate.
- Aligned expectations from elementary through high school give better, more meaningful readiness signals for students and families.

This change will bring clarity and consistency across assessments for families and educators alike, reflecting a truer picture of student learning and readiness.

- All state assessments will now use four unified performance levels: Above Proficient, Proficient, Approaching Proficient, and Below Proficient.
- Due to the recalibrated benchmarks, proficiency rates will shift to reflect a truer picture of student learning and readiness.

Illinois' education system leads the nation, and our students are out-performing national averages on assessments like NAEP, Advanced Placement (AP), and other key metrics. Many of those same students are being told they do not meet standards on Illinois exams based on the benchmarks. Educators and families deserve more accurate information about student performance.

- [U.S. World and News Report](#) ranks Illinois fourth in the nation for Pre-K-12 education, fifth for college readiness, seventh for NAEP reading scores and ninth for preschool enrollment.
- CNBC gives Illinois an "A" and ranks us third in the nation for Education.
- Results from the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show Illinois students performed above the national average in eighth grade reading and math. Illinois students' performance held steady across all subjects and grades from 2022 to 2024, despite the nation showing significant reading declines for students in grades 4 and 8.

- Illinois' high school graduation rate in 2024 reached an all-time, 14-year high at 87.7%.
- Illinois [ranks](#) among the top five states in [multiple Advanced Placement success metrics](#), including overall participation and performance, with especially strong gains among Black, Hispanic, and Asian graduates.

Misalignment has serious, real-world consequences.

- Misaligned proficiency data leads to the wrong students and the wrong schools being identified for additional support.
- Our assessments should give students, educators, and families meaningful information about students' readiness for college and career, not hold students back or discourage them from pursuing opportunities to the fullest extent of their abilities.
 - Take, for example, an actual Naperville North High School graduate.
 - They had a 3.9 GPA and had taken seven AP courses.
 - They had earned two industry certifications, participated in basketball and competitive marching band, and actively volunteered.
 - Wouldn't you say that's an ideal student record? Someone clearly qualified for success in college and career? Yet our assessment cut scores told them they were not proficient, not college ready.
 - Thankfully, they did not listen to our assessment and went on to enroll at Mizzou (University of Missouri).
 - Or consider a real student from Liberty High School.
 - They had a 3.75 GPA and took four AP and two dual credit courses, in addition to maintaining consecutive year-round employment and participating in multiple co-curricular activities.
 - Aren't these exactly the kind of college and career preparation experiences we're encouraging all students to have? Yet our state assessment told them no, they were not proficient. Thankfully, they did not listen either and went on to enroll at John Wood Community College.
 - Here's another example: This East St. Louis Senior High School graduate had a 4.0 GPA, had taken six dual credit courses, engaged in consistent summer employment and work-based learning, as well as 10+ clubs and leadership activities. But our assessment cut scores told them they were not proficient.
 - They went on to enroll at Southwestern Illinois College, illustrating just how misaligned our proficiency benchmarks are to actual student outcomes.
 - All of these students went on to enroll in college, *but think of the students who did not*. Think of the students who decided not to enroll in dual credit or AP or

even honors courses because our assessment incorrectly told them they were not on track.

- Misleading proficiency data also leads to high-achieving students missing out on opportunities for accelerated learning.
 - The Accelerated Placement Act requires school districts to automatically enroll students into the next most rigorous level of advanced coursework if they meet or exceed state standards on a state assessment.

ISBE has proceeded deliberately, thoughtfully, and transparently, following research-based best practices for establishing performance levels. The process spanned 18 months and involved hundreds of educators and content experts, overseen and validated by national technical experts.

- This unprecedented 18-month effort was truly collaborative, research-driven and transparent:
 - ISBE [announced](#) the effort in March 2024.
 - ISBE presented at over a dozen education conferences and regional convenings in 2024.
 - ISBE conducted a statewide listening tour in 2025 with nine sessions, attended by hundreds of educators and stakeholders.
 - More than 200 educators from diverse backgrounds helped develop Performance Level Descriptors that define what performance on the state test looks like at each performance level, in each subject, all the way from grade 3 to grade 11.
 - We sought the feedback of student leaders, postsecondary voices, and community members, to ensure relevance and clarity.
 - 150 highly qualified educators and subject-matter experts set updated performance benchmarks based on actual test items.
 - The entire process was monitored and validated by ISBE’s Technical Advisory Committee and national experts from the Center for Assessment.
- The state board voted to approve the new performance levels on Aug. 13, 2025.
- Students, families, and educators will see the aligned proficiency levels and right-sized “percent proficient” data for Illinois schools and districts on the 2025 Illinois Report Card this October.
- The accountability system and accountability designations will stay the same for 2025 but will utilize the new proficiency rate data to better identify schools for support.

Illinois’ high expectations for students remain rigorous and unchanged.

- Illinois learning standards and the assessments themselves remain rigorous and unchanged.
- What’s changing is how we align our definition of “proficiency,” across assessments and to other trusted measures of student performance, so that we deliver more useful and accurate data to students, educators, and families.

Illinois students have shown tremendous recovery after the pandemic, even under a misaligned system.

- Even based on our current, restrictive benchmarks for proficiency, Illinois students have made nation-leading progress in recovering from the pandemic.
 - Students in grades 3-8 achieved a proficiency rate of 40.9% in English Language Arts, the highest ever since students began taking the Illinois Assessment of Readiness in 2019.
 - The overall state-level ELA proficiency rates now exceed pre-pandemic levels for students in every race/ethnicity group, as well as English Learners, students with IEPs, and low-income students.
 - Our math proficiency rates have also improved in grades 3-8.
 - The overall state-level math proficiency rates increased in every race/ethnicity group, as well as among English Learners, students with IEPs, and low-income students, but remained lower than pre-pandemic levels.
 - Growth continues to outpace growth pre-pandemic.

We will maintain our ability to compare performance over time.

- The Student Growth Percentile allows us to continue to track our progress in recovering from the pandemic.
- The Student Growth Percentile uses raw scores (not proficiency rates or performance levels) to compare how much students grew in a given year.
- The Student Growth Percentile still allows apples-to-apples comparisons over time.
- ISBE will calculate a Student Growth Percentile at the high school level for this first time this year.
- Additionally, families will still be able to track their individual student’s progress by comparing raw scale scores from year to year, which are not affected by these changes.

New Proficiency Benchmarks: What Families Need to Know

What does “proficient” mean?

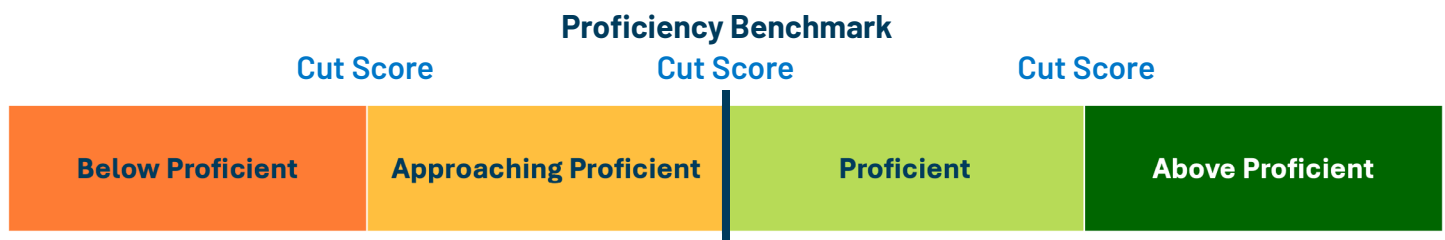
Being proficient means your child is on track in their learning.

Each spring, students in Illinois take required tests:

- Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR)
- PreACT or ACT
- Illinois Science Assessment (ISA)

Performance levels are the score ranges that divide the full spectrum of performance on the state assessment into categories. Each state decides how many levels there are, the cut scores that divide each level, and which levels qualify as “proficient.” The proficiency benchmark is the score a student needs to reach on a state assessment to be considered on track in their learning for their grade level.

New, Unified Performance Levels for All State Tests



Why does proficiency matter?

Having accurate data about student performance is essential for:

Reporting The state reports how many students at each school scored “proficient” on each test. This is known as the proficiency rate. (Illinois publishes proficiency rates on the Illinois Report Card.)	:	Accountability The state uses proficiency rates as one of multiple measures to help decidewhich schools need extra support and funding.	:	Local Decision-Making Schools use state test scores (along with classroom performance and local assessment results) to decide if a student should get extra help, like tutoring or summer school, or opportunities for acceleration.	:	School Improvement Teachers and principals use this data to improve teaching and learning for all students.
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What's the problem with the old proficiency benchmarks?

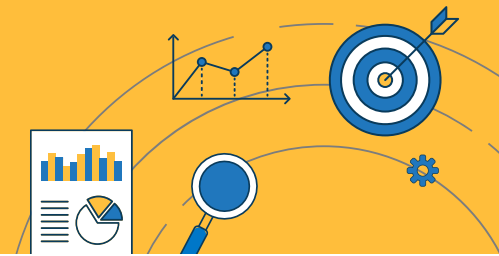
For years, Illinois' assessment data has sent the wrong message to students, families, and educators. Proficiency rates on state assessments did not match up to realities in the classroom and did not align to real college and career readiness expectations.

Illinois has had the toughest benchmarks in the country for math and English language arts – meaning, many students who were doing well in school were somehow not “proficient” on state assessments.

In science, the bar was too low, so many students looked “proficient” on paper, even if they hadn't fully mastered the material.

Why was that confusing?

- Each test had a different number of performance levels with different names.
- Families, students, and teachers got mixed messages about student performance and whether students were college and career ready.
- The performance levels did not match how well students were doing in class and on other trusted indicators of student success.



Real Student Example East St. Louis Senior High School



- 4.0 GPA
- Six dual credit courses
- Consistent summer employment
- Work-based learning experience
- 10+ clubs and leadership activities
- English language arts: 500 (“not proficient”)
- Math: 530 (“not proficient”)

Our assessment cut scores told them they were **not proficient** or college ready. If they had believed us, maybe they would not have enrolled in those AP courses or college.



This student is currently enrolled at Southwestern Illinois College, demonstrating how misaligned our assessment proficiency benchmarks were to what it actually takes to get into and succeed in college.

What is changing?

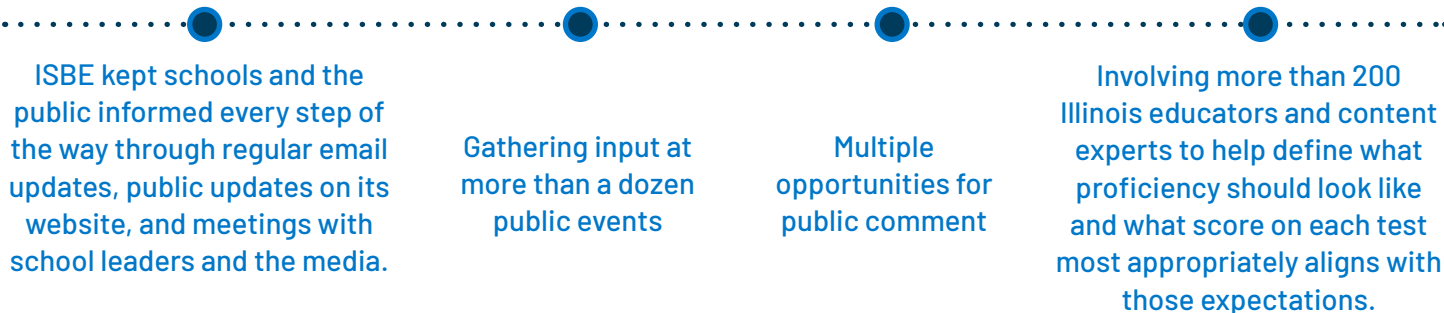
- **New benchmarks for proficiency** that better reflect real college and career readiness expectations
- **Unified performance levels** on all tests:
 - Above Proficient
 - Proficient
 - Approaching Proficient
 - Below Proficient

What is NOT changing?

- The tests themselves
- The state learning standards (what students are expected to know and be able to do)

How did the state decide on the new benchmarks?

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) took its time to get this right. The process began in March 2024 and took 18 months, including:



The process to develop the new performance levels was led by educators and validated by external experts. ISBE's North Star throughout the effort was to align the proficiency benchmarks to real college and career expectations: the ACT scores necessary for students to get into college, pass college coursework, and succeed in the workforce.

When will I get my child's score?

You'll receive your child's Individual Score Report for any state test they took in spring 2025 through your school this fall. These results will include your child's score and performance level (e.g., proficient), as well as a Student Growth Percentile that will allow you to compare your child's performance to other students and to prior years.

How do I interpret the Student Growth Percentile?

The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) describes how much a student grew compared to their peers who started at the same level.

The SGP represents a percentile – not a percent. It tells you how your student's growth on average compares to other students' growth. It does not indicate how much they grew – only whether their growth was above or below the state average, which is always the 50th percentile. It's like when the pediatrician says your child is in the 75th percentile for height, that means your child is taller than 75% of other children of the same age.

Where can I see school, district, and state results?

You'll find school, district, and state proficiency rates Oct. 30 on the Illinois Report Card website: www.illinoisreportcard.com

What is the impact of the new benchmarks on proficiency rates going forward?

These shifts show that the old benchmarks were too high in ELA and math and too low in science. The new numbers give a more accurate picture of student learning. We won't be able to compare proficiency rates going forward to prior years, but you can still track your own student's growth by comparing their score or their Student Growth Percentile, since those measures are not affected by the new performance levels.

	2024 Percentage of All Students That Were Proficient	2025 with New Benchmarks, Projected Percentage of All Students That Were Proficient
Science	53%	45%
ELA	41%	53%
Math	28%	38%

How can I use my child’s test results to support their learning?

You can use state test results along with report cards, classwork, and teacher feedback to understand how your child is doing. Assessment scores are one piece of the puzzle. If your child scores “approaching proficient” or “below proficient,” talk to their teacher about how you can support their learning at home or access extra help. If your child scores “proficient” or “above proficient,” talk to their teacher about opportunities for advancement or accelerated learning to ensure they stay challenged.

Why does my child take multiple tests?

State tests like IAR, ACT, and ISA are required by federal law. They measure what your child has learned over the full school year.

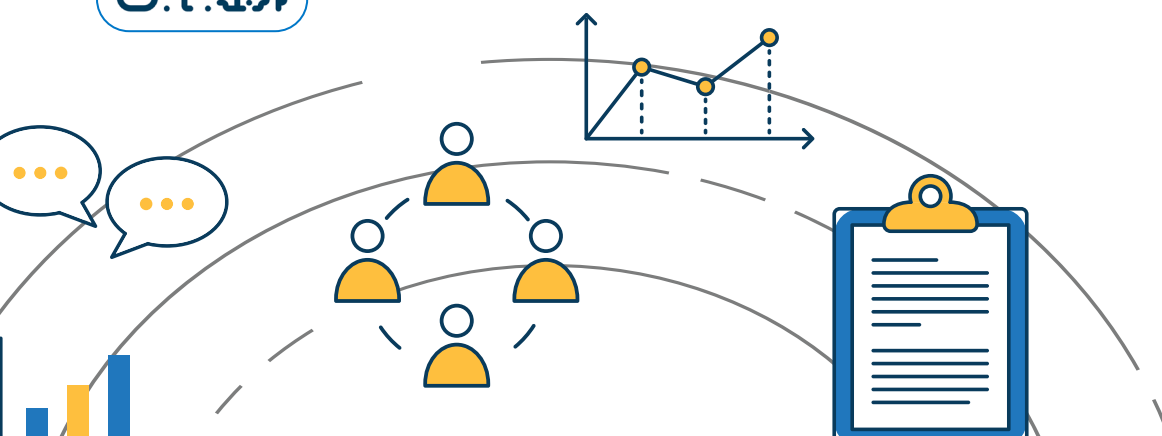
Other tests that your child might take, like NWEA MAP or i-Ready, are chosen by schools locally to track progress during the year and help teachers adjust instruction for individual students.

Will my child be able to graduate if they do not reach proficient?

Your child does not need to score proficient to graduate. State graduation requirements in Illinois are based on students getting passing grades in required courses, not on test scores. Your local school district may have additional graduation requirements, like community service or additional coursework. You can view all of the state graduation requirements on the [ISBE website](#).

How can I learn more about these changes?

Click or scan to learn more at www.isbe.net/feedback.



Right-Sizing Illinois' Benchmarks for Proficiency Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

1. Why is the state changing its proficiency benchmarks?

Illinois' benchmarks for proficiency in English language arts and math were among the most restrictive in the country and did not reflect the reality of student performance in the classroom. For example, in 4th grade math, Illinois had the most difficult-to-reach proficiency benchmark in the nation. For every other grade and subject, our proficiency benchmarks ranked among the top four most restrictive. This meant that students who were succeeding in school—passing Advanced Placement and dual credit courses, taking on leadership roles, and enrolling in college—were often still labeled “not proficient” on the state assessment.

In science, we faced the opposite issue—the benchmark was set too low. Far more students were being labeled "proficient" than what educators observed in classrooms. This misalignment made it difficult to identify where deeper support was needed.

This misalignment has serious, real-world consequences. Inaccurate proficiency data leads to the wrong students and the wrong schools being identified for additional support, misdirecting state resources and taxpayer dollars. This change is about better aligning our proficiency benchmarks with research-backed indicators of college and career readiness.

2. What are the new, unified performance levels?

All state assessments will now use four unified performance levels: **Above Proficient, Proficient, Approaching Proficient, and Below Proficient**. This change will bring clarity and consistency across assessments for families and educators alike. The benchmark for proficiency – or the lowest score needed to be considered “proficient” – will also now align to other rigorous and trusted measures of student achievement and real postsecondary expectations.

Previous Misaligned Performance Levels

IAR	Does Not Meet	Partially Meets	Approaching Meets	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
ISA	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary	
SAT	Partially Meets	Approaching Meets	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	

New Unified Performance Levels

IAR	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
ISA	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
ACT	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient

Process

3. How did ISBE consider college and career expectations in setting the performance levels?

Illinois’ new performance levels align to real college and career readiness expectations. The new performance levels are designed to ensure that “proficient” means a student is truly on track for success after high school. Educators considered how each grade level connects to the one above it, leading to the ultimate goal of college and career readiness. The ACT benchmarks, to which all other grades are vertically aligned, are directly linked to post-secondary success data. Educators participating in the performance level setting considered data on Illinois college placement requirements, such as the ACT score needed for a student to place into English Composition I or Intermediate Algebra at Illinois colleges and universities, as well as the probability of getting a C or higher in credit-bearing coursework. For example:

- Eastern Illinois University uses a minimum score of 18 to place students into English Composition I.
- A math score of 19 gives students a 63% chance of earning a C or higher in college credit-bearing math coursework.

Educators also considered alignment to career readiness, such as the ACT score that would likely earn a student a Silver level National Career Readiness Certificate.

Aligned expectations from elementary through high school give better, more meaningful college and career readiness signals for students and families.

4. Was this decision based on research?

Yes. This decision is grounded in national studies from the [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#) comparing state benchmarks, as well as national benchmarks for college readiness, real college placement and success probability from Illinois colleges and universities, and actual student outcomes.

Take, for example, an actual 2022 Naperville North High School graduate with a 3.9 GPA, seven AP classes, two industry certifications, participation in athletics and marching band, and volunteer experience. Despite these achievements, the state assessment labeled them “not proficient” – yet today, they are thriving at Mizzou (University of Missouri). Or consider a 2023 East St. Louis Senior High School graduate with a 4.0 GPA, six dual credit courses, summer employment, work-based learning experience and extensive club involvement and student leadership positions – also deemed “not proficient” by our state assessment benchmarks. Today they are excelling at Southwestern Illinois College.

ISBE worked with hundreds of Illinois educators and content experts, as well as national technical experts, to ensure we followed a validated process and to ensure our new benchmarks reflect what students truly need to be ready for college and career.

Educators, school leaders, and families have long asked for a more realistic and useful way to define proficiency. The Illinois State Board of Education is listening.

5. Why were Illinois’ benchmarks misaligned in the first place?

When Illinois adopted the SAT as the state’s high school assessment in 2017, the benchmarks for proficiency were set 60 points higher in English language arts and 10 points higher in math than the College Board’s own research-informed national college readiness benchmarks. The high school benchmarks were aligned to the benchmarks for the grades 3-8 assessment, and neither took data on college and career expectations into consideration.

In science, the U.S. Department of Education denied Illinois’ request to delay the setting of its performance levels in 2021, forcing ISBE to establish performance levels based on assessment data from 2021, which was heavily impacted by the pandemic. Participation in state assessments in 2021 was extremely low and was not representative of the statewide student population.

To add to the confusion, each assessment in Illinois’ system had a different set of performance levels, each with different names.

The result was an uneven playing field for Illinois students and confusion and frustration for Illinois teachers and families. Through the new system, we are bringing coherence and alignment to the state assessment system and delivering more meaningful and accurate data to teachers, families, and students.

6. What process did ISBE use to determine the new performance levels? Were parents or teachers consulted?

ISBE proceeded deliberately, thoughtfully, and transparently, following research-based best practices for establishing unified performance levels.

ISBE presented at over a dozen education conferences and regional convenings in 2024, then in 2025, conducted a statewide listening tour with nine stops all across Illinois. We engaged not only parents and teachers, but also student leaders, postsecondary partners, and community members.

More than 200 educators—representing diverse regions, backgrounds, and areas of expertise—participated in working groups to develop the Performance Level Descriptors that define what proficiency looks like in each subject all the way from grade 3 to grade 12, which we further refined through public comment.

ISBE then convened a group of highly qualified educators and subject-matter experts to establish updated performance benchmarks, based on the Performance Level Descriptors and considering alignment to other measures of secondary and postsecondary success, for all our state assessments that will offer a more accurate view of student learning.

The state board will discuss and vote on the recommended benchmarks on Aug. 16, 2025.

7. How does this change compare to other states?

Federal law requires states to administer state assessments and to report out about student performance on those assessments. But each state can decide for itself how many performance levels there are, where the cut scores dividing the levels fall, and which levels count as “proficient.”

Illinois’ proficiency benchmarks in ELA and math were significantly more restrictive than those used in almost every other state. That’s what makes comparing proficiency rates across states like comparing apples to oranges. Previously, a student who was judged “not proficient” in Illinois could step over the border into one of our neighboring states and be deemed “proficient” with the exact same score.

Right-sizing our benchmarks gives students, families, and educators more accurate, more useful, and more comparable proficiency data, while still holding high expectations.

Comparing Data Across Years

8. Can we still compare year-over-year data reliably?

While the definition of “proficient” is changing, this change does not affect students’ raw scale scores or the calculation of [Student Growth Percentiles](#). This ensures we can continue to compare performance over time and monitor ongoing recovery from the pandemic. ISBE will calculate a Student Growth Percentile at the high school level for the first time in 2025.

Educators and parents/families should not compare 2025 proficiency rates to prior years but should utilize the [Student Growth Percentile](#) to understand how a school’s performance on the state assessment compares to other schools and to prior years.

9. How do I interpret the Student Growth Percentile?

The Student Growth Percentile describes how much a student grew compared to their academic peers who started at the same level. An academic peer is a student in the same grade and the same subject with the same test score in the previous year.

The SGP represents a percentile, not a percent. It tells you how students’ growth on average compares to other students’ growth. It does not indicate how much they grew – only whether their growth was above or below the state average, which is always the 50th percentile. It’s like when the pediatrician says a child is in the 75th percentile for height, that means the child is taller than 75% of other children of the same age.

Where to See Changes

10. Where do parents/families and schools see proficiency information?

Parents/families see their individual student’s scale score, performance level, and whether that performance level qualifies as proficient, on the on the Individual Score Report they receive after their student takes a state assessment.

Educators also have access to their students’ individual assessment results.

School and district leaders receive aggregate information about their school or district’s performance on the state assessment, including the “proficiency rate” or the percentage of students who scored in a performance level that qualifies as “proficient.” Federal education law requires ISBE to publish state-, district-, and school-level [report cards](#) with each entity’s proficiency rate, as well as to utilize proficiency rates in math and English language arts as part of an overall accountability system that assigns each school an [Annual Summative Designation](#) describing how well each school is meeting the needs of all its students.

Illinois’ accountability system weights math proficiency at 7.5%, English language arts proficiency at 7.5% and science proficiency at 5% of a school’s summative designation.

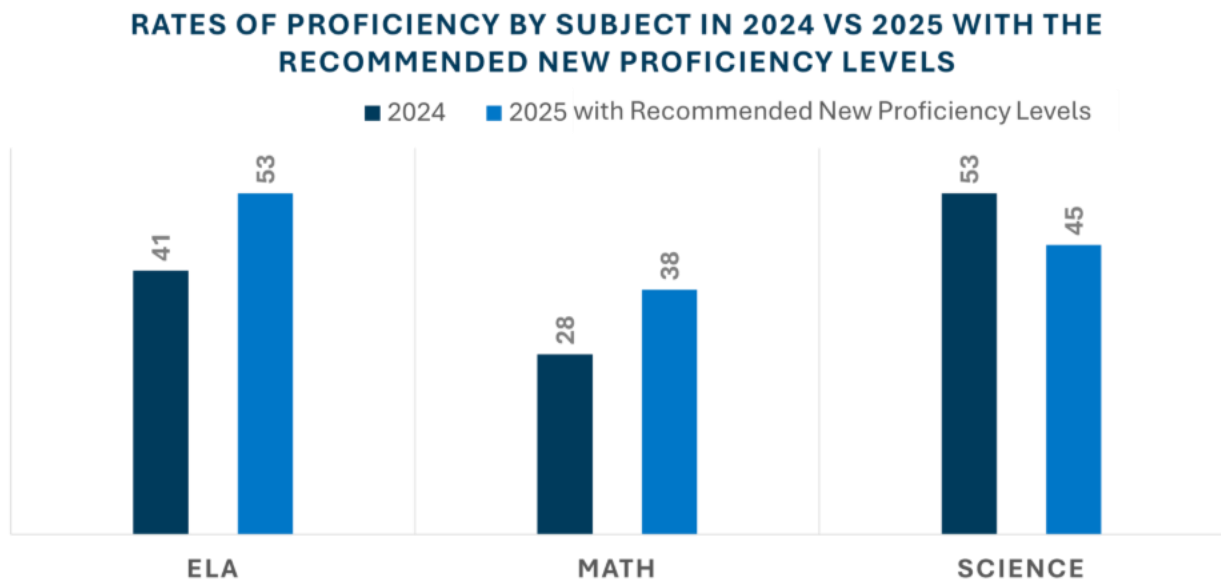
11. When will schools and parents/families see the new proficiency rates?

Pending state board approval, students, families, and educators will see the aligned proficiency levels and right-sized “percent proficient” data for Illinois schools and districts on the 2025 Illinois Report Card in October 2025. School and district leaders will have the opportunity to preview their 2025 proficiency rates in September. Individual Score Reports from 2025 assessments will contain scale scores and Student Growth Percentiles but not performance level or proficiency information.

Impacts

12. How do the new, right-sized performance levels impact 2025 proficiency rates?

Due to the recalibrated benchmarks, proficiency rates will shift to reflect a truer picture of student learning and readiness. The chart below provides 2024 data compared with preliminary proficiency rates with the new thresholds. (Note: 2025 data below is preliminary and will not match final report card calculations.)



13. Are the tests or learning standards changing?

No. Illinois’ assessments and learning standards remain rigorous and unchanged. What students are expected to learn—and what teachers are expected to teach—has not changed. The tests themselves (format, length, testing platform, etc.) also remain the same.

Only how we calculate proficiency is changing, so that our benchmarks more accurately reflect college and career readiness.

14. Will benchmark changes affect how my school identifies students for supports?

The state assessment is only one of several tools schools can use to identify which students need additional support. Many schools primarily use local assessments, classroom performance, and teacher input. The state assessment should never be the sole instrument used to identify students for supports, particularly to determine if a student needs special education services.

The goal of this change is to equip schools and the state with a more accurate picture of who needs help—but it will not reduce support for students who need it. In fact, it may better highlight strengths that the old benchmarks overlooked.

15. Should schools change how they teach because of the new benchmarks?

No. Illinois’ standards for what students should know and be able to do have not changed. Teachers should continue delivering high-quality instruction aligned to those standards. What’s changing is how the test results are interpreted and reported to reflect a clearer, more accurate picture of readiness. Educators can use state assessment data to more accurately identify students for interventions, such as acceleration or additional support.

16. Will this change what information colleges or future schools see?

No. The college reportable score that grade 11 students receive for college applications will continue to only include the scale score, not the state-determined performance level or whether that level qualifies as “proficient.”

17. How do the new performance levels affect the Accelerated Placement Act?

The automatic enrollment provision of the Illinois Acceleration Placement Act currently applies to high school students (grades 9-12). It mandates automatic eligibility for placement in the next most advanced course based on state assessment results for high school students who are above proficient on state standards. In other words, high school students who score in the Above Proficient performance level should be placed automatically in the next most rigorous course.

For high school students who score in the Proficient performance level, they should be given the *option* to take the next most rigorous course.

While the law does not require automatic acceleration in grades K-8, the Illinois Accelerated Placement Act does require each district to have a policy in place for acceleration in a single subject, for whole grade acceleration, and for early entrance.

According to 105 ILCS 5/14A-32, the policy must include the following requirements:

- A provision that states that participation in accelerated placement is not limited to those children who have been identified as gifted and talented, but rather is open to all

children who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from accelerated placement;

- A fair and equitable decision-making process that involves multiple persons and includes a student’s parents or guardians;
- Procedures for notifying parents or guardians of a child of a decision affecting that child’s participation in an accelerated placement program; and
- An assessment process that includes multiple valid, reliable indicators.

According to 105 ILCS 5/14A-32, the policy also may include:

- Procedures for annually informing the community at-large, including parents or guardians, about accelerated placement opportunities and the methods used for the identification of children eligible for accelerated placement;
- A process for referral that allows for multiple referrers, including a child’s parents or guardians: other referrers may include licensed educational professionals, the child, with written consent of a parent or guardian, through a licensed educational professional who has knowledge of the referred child’s abilities, or in case of possible early entrance, a preschool educator, pediatrician, or psychologist who knows the child; and
- A provision that provides that children participating in an accelerated placement program and their parents or guardians will be provided a written plan specifying the type of acceleration the child will receive and strategies to support the child.

Accountability

18. How will this affect my school’s annual accountability designations and school report card?

The new benchmarks will be reflected in the proficiency rates reported on the 2025 Illinois Report Card released in October 2025.

[Accountability designations](#) (Exemplary, Commendable, Targeted, Comprehensive, or Intensive) will still be based on the [current system of indicators](#) for one more year. However, the proficiency indicator will use the new proficiency rates in order to more accurately identify schools for support.

A new, more transparent and criterion-based accountability system will go into effect in fall 2026, after additional feedback and federal approval. Stay informed about ISBE’s work to update the accountability system via [ISBE’s Better Systems for Better Outcomes webpage](#).

19. Will the new performance levels and proficiency benchmarks affect schools who are currently in school improvement status (Targeted, Comprehensive, or Intensive status)?

No. There are no schools currently in school improvement status who are expected to exit status based on their 2025 summative designations. ISBE sought and received waivers of accountability requirements in school years 2019-20 and 2020-21, meaning no schools were newly identified for support in those years. Schools newly identified for support based on their 2022 summative designation are slated to exit status based on their performance in the 2025-26 school year, and their designation will be produced under the forthcoming updated accountability system.

Accountability designations (Exemplary, Commendable, Targeted, Comprehensive, or Intensive) will be based on the current system of indicators for one more year (2025). The proficiency indicator in 2025 will use the new proficiency rates in proficiency indicator calculations.

20. How will the new cut scores affect the College and Career Readiness Indicator criteria?

The new proficiency cut scores will not affect the College and Career Readiness Indicator criteria at this time. An updated, criterion-based accountability system will go into effect in fall 2026, after extensive feedback from the field and federal approval. Any changes to the College and Career Readiness Indicator will be implemented as a part of that process.

21. Which performance levels are considered “proficient” and included in percent proficient calculations?

The Above Proficient and Proficient categories are both considered “proficient” and included in the numerator of proficiency calculations.

22. How will these cut scores affect the proficiency targets and points awarded for the proficiency indicator in the accountability system?

[Proficiency targets for 2025](#) remain unchanged. Proficiency for accountability will continue to be calculated using the same grades (3-8 and 11 for ELA and math, 5, 8 and 11 for science) but will use the new performance levels and cut scores to determine which students are proficient. If the school is at or above the target, they receive the full points possible for the indicator. If they are not, they receive points proportional to how close to the target they are. This method of allocating points remains the same in 2025 as it has been in previous years.

ACT

23. Will ISBE provide proficiency scores for middle schools that give PreACT?

There are no state-established cut scores specific to grade 8 PreACT testing. The established PreACT Secure 9 cut scores are specific to the state-administered PreACT Secure. The specific population considered in establishing the cut scores are students completing the test in spring of grade 9. Schools giving PreACT to grade 8 students should consider the purpose for which

they are administering the assessment when considering what score thresholds to use to evaluate student performance.

24. How will the ACT cut scores affect the criteria for students to earn the State Seal of Biliteracy?

All three components of the ACT ELA score (English + Reading + Writing) are required to be considered for the Seal of Biliteracy. ISBE is currently re-evaluating the scoring criteria considering the recent standard setting. Stay tuned for more information.

25. What does “English language arts (ELA)” encompass for the ACT and PreACT score? Will ISBE calculate proficiency rates for the individual test sections within ELA? Why is the Writing portion of the ACT required, and why is it included in ELA composite scores?

The state is federally required to assess students and report proficiency rates by content area: ELA, math, and science, so Illinois established cut scores for the ELA content area as a whole and not for the individual test sections of English, reading, and writing. States are also required to assess their adopted learning standards. The high school assessment that is used to measure proficiency (ACT with Writing) at grade 11 is expected to assess the full range of Illinois’ ELA learning standards, which includes writing. For this reason, the Writing portion of the ACT is required.

The ELA score for ACT is a weighted rounded average of the three English, reading and writing sections. The writing score is transformed into a 1-36 score to weight it equally with English and reading. The [ACT Technical Manual](#) (Chapter 6) provides additional information on the calculation of the ELA score.

For purposes of accountability, students that did not complete the required writing component of the ACT will have their ELA score computed using the lowest obtainable scale score for writing, which will be averaged with their existing English and reading scores. Without this adjustment, students who did not complete the writing portion would not receive an ELA score at all, which would negatively impact a school’s participation and proficiency rates.

Illinois administers the PreACT at grades 9 and 10 in order to enable the calculation of a growth score at the high school level, which may become an element in the redesigned accountability system. It also provides high schools useful information on student proficiency earlier, when there is still time to intervene. State law requires that the grade 11 assessment be a college entrance exam, which means ISBE is limited to assessments at grades 9 and 10 that align to that grade 11 assessment. The PreACT Secure assessments¹ do not have a writing component. The ELA score at grades 9 and 10 is the rounded average of the two English and reading sections.

Other Assessment Questions

26. What is the purpose of state assessments?

State assessments ask students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understanding on a common measure. Federal education law requires all states to administer summative (meaning, end-of-year) standardized tests in English language arts, math, and science at specific grade levels.

State assessment data allow us to see patterns in performance that should guide school improvement, helping identify areas of strength and opportunity.

Since state assessments are federally required to be summative in nature, capturing how well students have mastered grade-level standards, they are not intended to inform day-to-day classroom instruction.

27. How does this relate to other tests students in Illinois take?

State test results are just one part of a student’s academic story. This change better aligns Illinois’ benchmarks with other trusted indicators college enrollment, Advanced Placement, and dual credit course performance. It helps ensure that students who succeed in those areas are reflected accurately in their state assessment results.

28. Will ACCESS exit criteria be reevaluated like the proficiency levels were?

The ACCESS test will undergo a national standard setting in the summer of 2026. Following the establishment of new cut scores, states will have the ability to convene stakeholders to consider adjustments to state-specific exit criteria.

29. Do these changes affect the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA)?

The performance levels for the DLM-AA are established at the consortia level. The new performance levels for IAR, ISA, and ACT will not be applied to the DLM-AA.

30. Do assessments like the Illinois Assessment of Readiness and ACT focus on the same standards from year to year, or do the assessed standards change?

States are required to assess the full breadth and depth of their learning standards. To balance standard coverage with test length, both the IAR and ACT sample the standards. Each year, multiple test forms are created, and while most standards assessed on each form are the same, a few standards assessed on each form are different.

Resources

31. Where can I find the cut scores and score ranges for the new performance levels for the ISA, IAR, and ACT?

You can find the cut scores and score ranges on the [ISBE website](#):

- [ELA Cut Scores and Score Ranges](#)
- [Math Cut Scores and Score Ranges](#)

- [Science Cut Scores and Score Ranges](#)

32. With this change, are there any new resources for schools or educators?

Yes, ISBE created a suite of resources for both schools and families to better understand what the changes taking place. Educators worked in grade-level and subject teams to create practical tools that connect the state test directly to the Illinois Learning Standards. These include Performance Level Descriptors that outline what students should be able to do at each performance level for every standard on the test (available in detailed form for educators and a summary version for families) and Samples to Success that provide real examples of test questions students at each level would be expected to answer correctly.

Additionally, a communications toolkit is available on [ISBE's website](#). The toolkit includes the "New Proficiency Benchmarks: What Families Need to Know" fact sheet, a slide deck and webinar recording, a set of talking points schools can use to help communicate these changes to families, and more.

33. Will ISBE produce similar resources to the PLDs and Samples to Success for grades K-2? How can districts use the existing resources to support alignment between K-2 and grade 3?

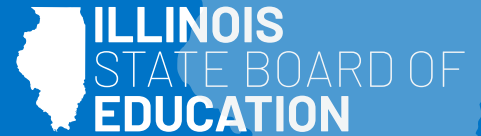
Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) and the Samples to Success were created in close alignment with the assessments at each grade. As there are no statewide standardized assessments in grades K, 1 or 2, we are not able to provide these same resources for those grades. (The Kindergarten Individual Development Survey or KIDS administered in the first 40 days of kindergarten is an observation protocol, not a standardized assessment.) ISBE is exploring ways in which a deep analysis of the range of performance in relationship to the standards that is aligned to classroom performance could be developed instead, but there is not yet a specific timeline for this work. Districts are encouraged to have these conversations locally, and ISBE will be seeking collaborators in the work when it begins.

- E. We can still measure progress against previous years for individual students by comparing scale scores using the Student Growth Percentile, which utilizes raw scale scores, rather than proficiency rates.



2024 ILLINOIS REPORT CARD

UNDERSTANDING STUDENT GROWTH



What is the Student Growth Percentile (SGP)?

The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) describes how much a student grew compared to their academic peers who started at the same level. An academic peer is a student in the same grade and the same subject with the same test score in the previous year.

Growth is responsive to changes in classroom structures and practices.

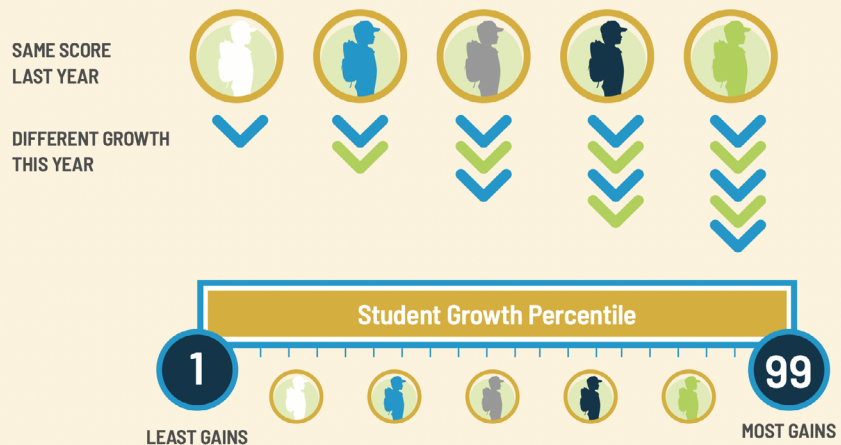
Percentile, Not Percent

The SGP represents a percentile, not a percent. It tells you how your students' growth on average compares to other students' growth. It does not tell you how much they grew – only whether their growth was above or below the state average, which is always the 50th percentile. It's like when the pediatrician says your child is in the 75th percentile for height, that means your child is taller than 75% of other children of the same age.

Why Growth?

Growth recognizes learning gains for all students, whether or not they achieve proficiency. Compared to other growth measures, school's SGPs had slightly lower correlations with prior year achievement, percent English Learners, percent children with disabilities, and percent low-income.

SGP Compares a Student's Growth to Academic Peers in Illinois



How do I talk about my school's SGP?

Example: 2024 School Cohort ELA SGP of 62.1, compared to 2024 State Cohort ELA SGP of 50 **"Our school achieved higher than average growth. Our students grew faster than 62% of comparable students in the state."**

Example: 2024 School Cohort Math SGP of 42.4, compared to 2024 State Cohort ELA SGP of 50 **"Our students' growth this past year was below the state average, but still within the normal range. Our students' growth was in the 42nd percentile."**

Example: 2024 School Baseline ELA SGP of 65.6, compared to 2019 School Cohort ELA SGP of 47.3 **"Our students continued to experience accelerated growth last year. Our students' growth was in the 65th percentile last year, compared to the 47th percentile in 2019 prior to the pandemic."**

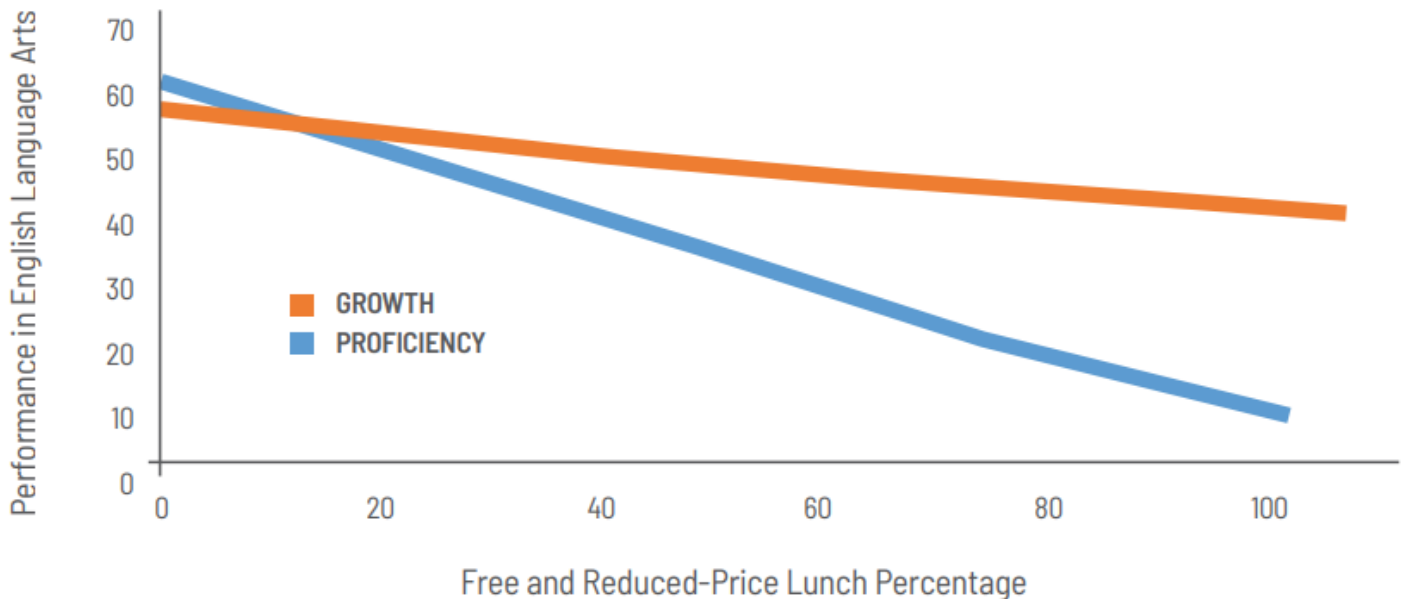
Example: 2024 School Baseline Math SGP of 39.2, compared to 2019 School Cohort Math SGP of 44.1 **"Our students' growth was slower this year than prior to the pandemic. Our students' growth was in the 39th percentile last year, compared to the 44th percentile in 2019."**

What's the difference between proficiency and growth?

Proficiency shows whether or not students have mastered a common, high standard; it's a yes or no question. Growth is responsive to changes in classroom structures and practices; whereas proficiency correlates strongly with family income and education levels. Growth recognizes progress toward and beyond the standard, no matter where each student started. Demographics do not predict growth. Data show that students of all races, income levels, languages, and disability statuses demonstrate growth across the full range.

Proficiency is like the height cut off to ride rides at the fair. A child is either tall enough or not. The growth percentile is a totally different measure that doesn't care how tall a child is, just how much they grew over the past year.

Proficiency and Growth: Correlation with Income



What is Mean SGP?

A school's mean SGP is the average of its individual students' SGPs. If 100 cars drive from Springfield to Chicago, each car's "SGP" would be its average rate of speed across the entire journey. The "mean SGP" would be the average of all 100 cars' individual rates. The mean SGP accounts for 50 percent of a P-8 school's annual summative designation.



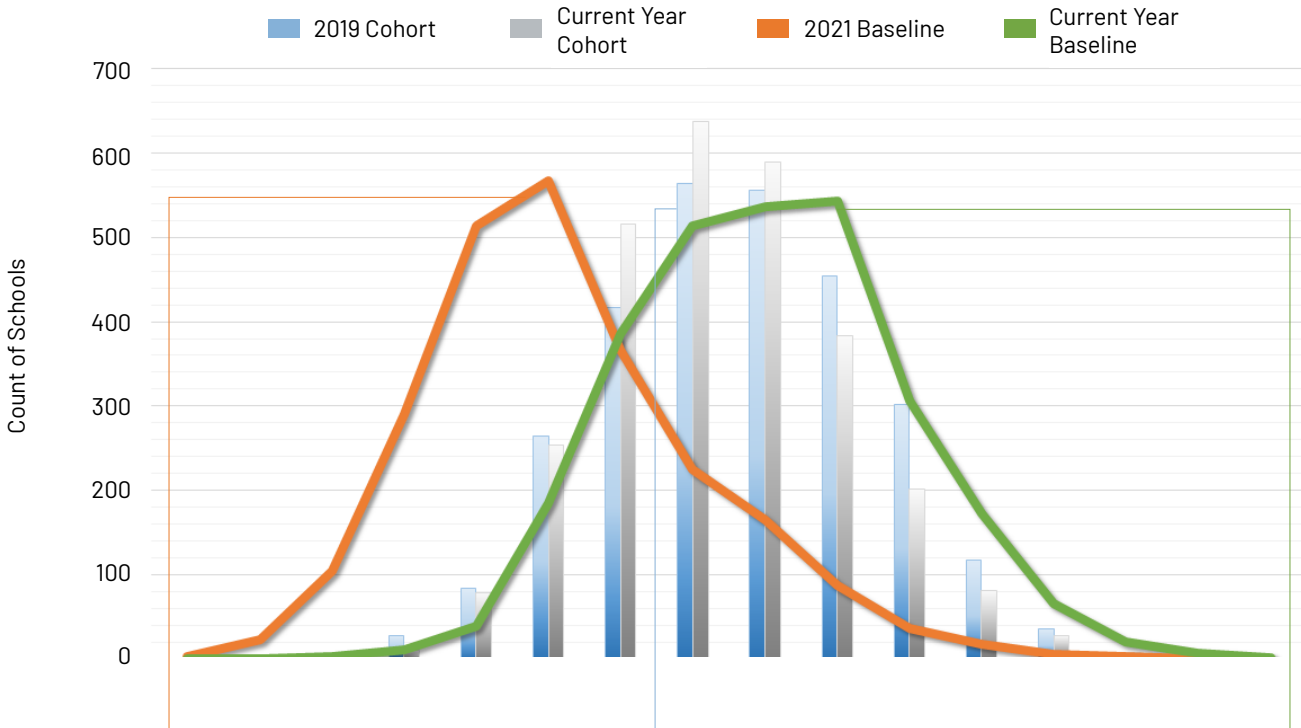
The mean SGP is the average of all students' individual rates

Cohort vs. Baseline SGP

The **cohort SGP** compares the growth of academic peers across the state who had the same scale score **last year**. The state mean SGP will always be the 50th percentile in a cohort SGP calculation.

The **baseline SGP** compares the growth of academic peers across the state to academic peers who had the same scale score in a **specified previous baseline year**. A state mean SGP above the 50th percentile in a baseline SGP calculation means students overall grew more this year than in the prior baseline year.

Sample Distributions of Mean SGPs Cohort vs. Baseline in 2019, 2021, and Current Year



2021 Baseline SGP: State mean in this 2021 baseline SGP, which compares 2021 students to 2019 students, is much lower than in 2019, indicating a much slower rate of growth.

2019 Cohort SGP: State mean in this pre-pandemic cohort SGP is 50. This is the baseline for 2021 and 2022 comparisons.

Current Year Baseline SGP: State mean in this current year baseline SGP is much higher than in 2021 and even higher than the 2019 baseline, indicating that the rate of growth in the current year is even faster than in 2019.

F. Schools' accountability designations for 2025 will use the recalibrated proficiency rates, as one of multiple measures of school performance.



2025 ILLINOIS REPORT CARD

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY



Annual Summative Designations

Schools receive an annual summative designation on the Illinois Report Card. The designation is based on the school's overall data, and the data for each student group, for all of the accountability indicators.

Exemplary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall performance in the top 10 percent of all schools • Must have no underperforming student groups at or below the “all students” group of the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools • High schools must have a graduation rate higher than 67 percent
Commendable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall performance not in the top 10 percent of all schools • Must have no underperforming student groups at or below the “all students” group of the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools • High schools must have a graduation rate higher than 67 percent
Targeted Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or more student groups performing at or below the “all students” group of the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools; groups must have at least 20 students in at least five of eight indicators, one of which must be non-academic <p>A Targeted Support designation initiates targeted school improvement status and the school begins a four-year cycle of school improvement.</p>
Comprehensive Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall performance in the bottom 5 percent of Title I-eligible schools statewide • All high schools with a graduation rate of 67 percent or below • Schools that have completed a full Targeted Support school improvement cycle, where the performance of one or more of the originally Targeted student groups remains at or below the level of the “all students” group in the lowest-performing 5 percent of Title I-eligible schools at the end of the four-year improvement cycle <p>A Comprehensive Support designation initiates comprehensive school improvement status and the school begins a four-year cycle of school improvement.</p>
Intensive Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school that has completed a full Comprehensive Support school improvement cycle, but whose performance remains in the lowest-performing 5 percent of Title I-eligible schools statewide or is a high school with a graduation rate of 67 percent or below at the end of the four-year improvement cycle <p>An Intensive Support designation initiates intensive school improvement status and the school begins a four-year cycle of school improvement.</p>

STUDENT GROUPS

Demographics

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American

- Hispanic or Latino
- Middle Eastern and Northern African (MENA)
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

- Two or More Races
- White

Programs

- Children with disabilities
- Economically disadvantaged students

- English Learners
- Former English Learners

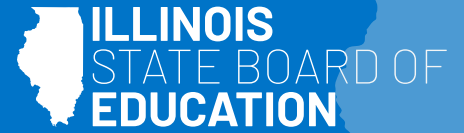
ISBE is redesigning the entire system for 2026. Learn more about the process and opportunities to provide your input at isbe.net/feedback.

isbe.net/summative



2025 ILLINOIS REPORT CARD

MULTIPLE INDICATORS OF STUDENT SUCCESS



A school's annual summative designation describes how well an individual school is meeting the needs of all its students. The designations recognize schools with strong overall performance across a range of academic and student success indicators. Schools with greatest need receive the most support.

Elementary & Middle Schools



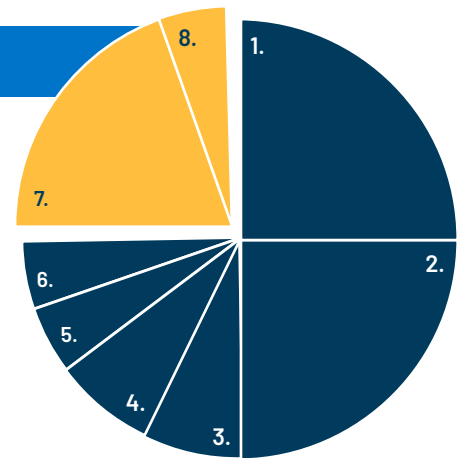
Academic Indicators

1. English Language Arts Growth: 25%
2. Math Growth: 25%
3. English Language Arts Proficiency: 7.5%
4. Math Proficiency: 7.5%
5. Science Proficiency: 5%
6. English Learner Progress to Proficiency: 5%



School Quality & Student Success Indicators

7. Chronic Absenteeism: 20%
8. Climate Survey: 5%



High School



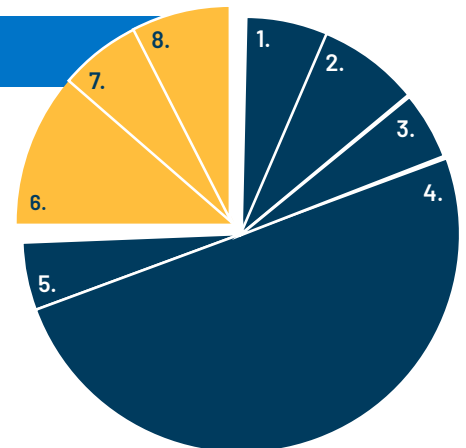
Academic Indicators

1. English Language Arts Proficiency: 7.5%
2. Math Proficiency: 7.5%
3. Science Proficiency: 5%
4. Graduation (composite 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rate): 50%
5. English Learner Progress to Proficiency: 5%



School Quality & Student Success Indicators

6. Chronic Absenteeism: 10%
7. Climate Survey: 6.67%
8. 9th-Graders on Track to Graduate: 8.33%



INDICATOR DEFINITIONS AND WEIGHTS

	INDICATOR	DEFINITION	WEIGHT (% OUT OF 100)		
Academic	Visit isbe.net/indicators for a more detailed definition of each indicator			P-8	9-12
	ELA Growth	Average of individual students' growth percentiles in English language arts (ELA)	Measuring growth against current academic peers and against a 2019 baseline to use whichever best reflects progress	25%	–
	Math Growth	Average of individual students' growth percentiles in math		25%	–
	ELA Proficiency	Percentage of students proficient in ELA	New proficiency benchmarks based on unified standard setting	7.5%	
	Math Proficiency	Percentage of students proficient in math		7.5%	
	Science Proficiency	Percentage of students proficient in science		5%	
	English Learner (EL) Progress to Proficiency	An EL's progress attaining language proficiency within five years of identification	Students who were EL in SY 2020-21 get one extra year to their timeline	5%	
	Graduation		Four-year graduation rate	–	30%
			Five-year graduation rate	–	15%
			Six-year graduation rate	–	5%
School Quality/Student Success	Chronic Absenteeism	Percentage of students who missed 10% or more of the prior academic year (excused and unexcused absences)	20%	10%	
	Climate Survey	Percentage of students who participated in the climate survey	5%	6.67%	
	9th-Graders on Track	Percentage of ninth-grade students with five full-year course credits (or 10 semester) with no more than one semester F in a core subject	–	8.33%	
	Fine Arts	A combination of measures of student participation and teacher qualifications in the fine arts	–	–	
	P-2	Measures of attendance, literacy, and participation in enrichment and acceleration	–		
	3-8	A combination of measures of mathematic proficiency, middle school success, and participation in enrichment and acceleration	Available on the Report Card		
	College and Career Readiness	Percentage of students meeting academic and career readiness requirements	–		

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