

Working Together *Pk-12 & Higher Education Relationships*

Collaborations between P-12 and higher education in Illinois are broad and diverse. Strong relationships between the three state education agencies have enabled and advanced a reform agenda that establishes Illinois as a national education leader.

Educator Preparation

Principal Preparation

ISBE and IBHE worked in partnership for seven years to bring together over 1,300 stakeholders from public and private institutions of higher education, practitioners, professional organizations, and legislators to review and redesign principal preparation programs. A strong component of these new programs is the school district-higher education partnership which jointly develops, sustains and evaluates the newly-designed program. The collaborative process and the work accomplished in this reform initiative lay the foundation for succeeding educator preparation reform.

- Jointly wrote legislation and legislative resolutions to advance reform work
- Jointly developed and facilitated conferences, workshops and meetings

Alignment of Approval

All principal preparation programs undergoing redesign are required to reapply for approval under the new requirements. To facilitate a timely approval process for those institutions reapplying (not new programs), an IBHE staff serves as ex-officio on the Illinois State Educator Licensure and Preparation Board. Upon approval by the Licensure Board, the program is deemed compliant with IBHE requirements. A similar approval system will be used for redesigned elementary programs.

Teacher Preparation

ISBE has passed rules to completely restructure teacher licensure, thus requiring all programs to be redesigned and reviewed. Both IBHE and ICCB have served on redesign committees (comprised of practitioners and higher education) that have rewritten the Professional Teaching Standards and age-appropriate content standards and also made recommendations for new program requirements. Currently, elementary and middle grade preparation requirements are advancing through rules and early childhood is reviewing its requirements. Soon to be convened are secondary programs and career/tech programs.

Common Core Standards Integration into Educator Preparation

A statewide summit, sponsored by the three agencies, was held June 6, 2012 for faculty and administrators in colleges of education their counterparts in colleges of liberal arts and sciences to provide an overview of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and their integration into professional and general education coursework. Over 250 educators from community colleges and public and private universities participated.

Two- and Four-year Educator Preparation Alignment

Three mini-grants have been awarded, to UIS, GSU and SIUE, respectively, to convene faculty from their institutions, feeder community colleges and, if possible, nearby private institutions to

review educator preparation coursework, determine what new Professional Teaching Standards can be introduced in the first two years and what courses would integrate those standards to create a pathway to a preparation program.

Common Core State Standards/College and Career Readiness (CCR)

Secondary/Postsecondary Curriculum Alignment

Cross-institutional curricular alignment is essential in ensuring that students graduating from high school seamlessly enter either postsecondary education or a career. The three agencies have worked together on several projects related to curricular alignment.

- Regional Alliance Grants: Three grants, funded through ISBE federal Dollars and awarded by IBHE, have been awarded to NIU, ISU and EIU, respectively, to develop regional alliances (high schools, community colleges and lead university) that will conduct cross-institutional curricular alignment, as well as provide professional development in the CCSS for college and university faculty. A major IBHE objective is to bring to scale the use of the practices developed through these alliances to advance curricular alignment across the state, and so dissemination of results is an expectation associated with each award.
- Bridging the Gap workshops: David Conley's staff from EPIC presented regional workshops on what CCR actually is and how to work collaboratively to align expectations and coursework between secondary and postsecondary. A toolkit was developed to aid schools and colleges in this work and was made widely available to workshop participants and others.
- CCR grants: ICCB piloted six sites to develop tactics, in concert with feeder high schools, to increase postsecondary readiness.
- High School to College Success reports: The three agencies worked together with ACT to develop a new statewide feedback report series for high schools, colleges and universities. Regional workshops were held to gain support for the report prior to its release, and then to provide professional development in its use following its release. These workshops also fostered the nurturing or development of regional secondary and postsecondary relationships.
- Gaps Analysis: A gaps analysis is being undertaken to determine alignment of the CCSS to the introductory coursework in math and communications.
- Developmental Coursework: ICCB, in concert with IBHE, is reviewing developmental coursework to align courses to the appropriate CCSS.

PARCC

Illinois is a PARCC governing state. IBHE staff serve on the PARCC Higher Education Leadership Team and work with the Advisory Committee on College Readiness (ACCR) representative from Illinois (Lt. Governor Sheila Simon) and her staff. IBHE is working with the other two education agencies on an engagement plan to bring K-12 leaders and postsecondary system and institution leaders in Illinois together to collaborate on the development of college- and career-ready assessments given in high school that can be used to signal whether students have acquired the prerequisite knowledge and skills for success in entry-level, credit-bearing postsecondary courses.