

**ASSESSING PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING THE  
GOALS OF *THE ILLINOIS COMMITMENT*:  
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS  
2003 ANNUAL REPORT**

**Submitted for:** Information.

**Summary:** The *Performance Indicators 2003 Annual Report* represents the first report on the performance indicators adopted by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in February 2003 to assess progress toward the six goals of *The Illinois Commitment*. This first report focuses on statewide and common institutional indicators for which data are currently available and is a companion to the *Statewide Results Report*.

**Action Requested:** None.



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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GOALS OF *THE ILLINOIS COMMITMENT*:  
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS  
2003 ANNUAL REPORT**

The *Performance Indicators 2003 Annual Report* represents the first report on the performance indicators adopted by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in February 2003 to assess progress toward the six goals of *The Illinois Commitment*. This initiative is a “work in progress” that will be implemented and refined over multiple years. This first report focuses on statewide and common institutional indicators for which data are currently available, as well as examples of “effective practices” reported by institutions relative to each goal. This report is a companion to the *Statewide Results Report*.

***What environmental factors are influencing Illinois higher education’s ability to meet the goals of The Illinois Commitment?***

**Demographic Factors.** Illinois colleges and universities are facing a growing and more diverse student population. Increasing enrollments and changing demographics will challenge higher education institutions in the coming years to meet the needs of these individuals while maintaining a high-level of quality.

**Educational Factors.** Higher levels of education are required for success in the “knowledge economy” and this demand will place pressures on the higher education system to respond. At the same time, data indicate that the K-12 student population projected to grow the most in coming years (Hispanic) also has one of lowest percentage of students currently meeting state K-12 learning standards. This has major implications for both K-12 and higher education in providing opportunities for these students to participate and succeed at all levels of education.

**Economic Factors.** Illinois’ educational capacity exceeds that of the national average on many measures. However, further enhancement of educational participation and attainment levels is needed to help ensure the future economic viability of the state.

**Fiscal and Policy Factors.** Funding constraints in recent years have contributed to tuition increases that fuel both affordability and fiscal accountability concerns. In addition, a greater reliance on student loans and a widening of the affordability gap for low-income students may hinder a student’s access to, and choice among, higher education opportunities.

***What are the policy implications of the results for economic growth (Goal 1)?***

Illinois colleges and universities currently appear to do a good job preparing students to enter the workforce, providing graduates at all levels and across a broad array of program areas. However, further attention is required regarding the ability of the state’s system of higher

education to meet emerging needs given the projected Illinois workforce demands to have a more educated workforce and to fill the void of retiring baby boomers.

***What are the policy implications of the results for partnerships with P-12 education (Goal 2)?***

The overall number and distribution by certificate area of students completing requirements for initial teacher certification has remained relatively stable over the past few years. However, a more fundamental issue centers on the ability of both new and experienced teachers to meet the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse K-12 student population. Additional information is needed to gain a more complete understanding of how well Illinois' higher education system is meeting this goal. Initiatives such as the "Teacher Data Warehouse" are under development as a means to help close the data gap.

***What are the policy implications of the results for affordability (Goal 3)?***

While the growing proportion of Illinois students receiving some form of financial assistance continues to grow, so does the "sticker price" and "net price" of attendance relative to income. The relatively significant proportion of student/family income required to cover out-of-pocket costs for those at the lowest income levels can serve as a barrier to access and degree completion. Although general research findings suggest that financial barriers are a primary reason why individuals do not attend college, the number of potential students who are not attending for this reason is currently unknown.

***What are the policy implications of the results for access and diversity (Goal 4)?***

The number and diversity of students completing programs has increased over time at all levels and across all sectors of Illinois higher education. However, as the population of Illinois becomes more diverse, higher education institutions must continue their efforts to ensure that all students have the opportunity to pursue and complete a postsecondary education.

***What are the policy implications of the results for quality (Goal 5)?***

Measures of student learning outcomes are limited and incomplete at this time. The ongoing development and implementation of assessment plans for general education and all undergraduate and graduate programs are also primary components in achieving this goal. Efforts are underway to obtain information on student learning outcomes to be presented within the next performance indicators report in 2004.

***What are the policy implications of the results for productivity and accountability (Goal 6)?***

The overall cost of instruction at public universities and community colleges has remained stable in recent years when controlling for inflation and enrollment. The proportion of students completing degree programs within the expected benchmark time period has increased in all sectors on average. However, the continuing budget constraints facing Illinois higher education will require that all institutions continue to ensure that resources are directed to the highest priority areas in as productive a manner as possible.

### *Next Steps*

The next reporting cycle (the 2004 report) will incorporate additional indicators and analyses, as well as an assessment of progress toward specific institutional goals established relative to the common institutional indicators. Each institution has initiated this goal-setting process. Board staff also will work with the higher education community to refine and improve upon the reporting process for 2004.

