



Illinois Board of Higher Education

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The Public Agenda: 5 Years Later Assessing Illinois' Education Progress

The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), the recognized national leader in assessing higher education data, was commissioned to do a midpoint report for the IBHE five years into its 10-year plan: *The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success*. What follows highlights some of the important findings of the report. Illinois has made progress in many areas but needs to accelerate that progress. In other areas (e.g., college success gaps for underrepresented groups and affordability) we have fallen behind. The full data report is available on the IBHE web site.

1. Illinois is making strides in increasing the education level of its adult population, especially its younger workforce. The gain in Illinois is greater than that of the nation as a whole.
2. Relative to leading competitor countries, Illinois is improving at a slower rate. Relative to other states, the most notable gains have been made in young adults acquiring high school credentials. At the postsecondary level, Illinois is losing ground with the greatest loss being among adults with an AA degree.
3. At the high school diploma level, Illinois is closing the gap between whites and minorities, but at a rate lower than the US.
4. At the postsecondary level the gap continues to widen. Illinois is losing ground.
5. These changes vary significantly from one part of the state to another
 - At the high school level, gains are being made in the Chicago area and the southern part of the state.
 - At the postsecondary level, gains have been made in Chicago and the east central part of the state.
6. Illinois has improved at every step of the educational pipeline, but remains far behind best performing states at each step.
7. Participation rates for low income students have improved in all states. The gain in Illinois is less than the US average.
8. Enrollments of adults have increased but at rates well below most states and the US average.

9. The Great Recession slowed economic growth in all states. The slowdown in Illinois was similar to the US average.
10. Earnings of college graduates have increased at rates greater than the US average. The exception is the wage rates of AA holders.
11. Funding per FTE student for the 2007-12 period increased faster in Illinois than in all other states. However, this increase is almost entirely attributable to funding increases tied to benefit liabilities. Operating support for Illinois higher education has declined.
12. Tax capacity in the state continues to increase relative to the US average, while tax effort is declining.
13. The cost of attendance in Illinois relative to family income has escalated more than almost all other states. Cost increases are particularly acute relative to incomes of families in the lowest income quintile. These increases come at a time when state need-based aid relative to Pell funds decreased more in Illinois than in almost all other states.
14. With regard to Universities' involvement in economic development, the following points are noted:
 - Increases in numbers of patents far surpasses the US average,
 - But these patents translate into licenses at a rate far below the US average;
 - This at a time when venture capital is much more available than it was 5 years ago.
 - The state's position in funding for R&D is generally holding steady with the exception of a three point drop in rankings for life sciences, one of the centerpieces of economic development in the state.
15. The state is losing ground in the rankings of the New Economy Index.