



Achieve, Inc.

Taking Stock

A Report to
Education
Policymakers in
Illinois

**Achieve's
Benchmarking
Initiative**

About Achieve, Inc.

Achieve, Inc., is an independent, nonprofit, bipartisan organization created by the nation's governors and business leaders to help them follow up on the commitments made at the 1996 National Education Summit. Achieve provides advice and assistance to state policy leaders on issues of academic standards, assessments and accountability. It has a small staff, augmented by a team of senior associates, and conducts much of its work in partnership with other education and business organizations. To carry out this review, Achieve drew upon four nationally respected experts: Warren Simmons, executive director of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform; Kati Haycock, director of The Education Trust; Susan Traiman, director of the Education Initiative at The Business Roundtable; and William Porter, executive director of The Washington State Partnership for Learning. The review team was headed by Achieve's president, Robert Schwartz, and was assisted by Jennifer Vranek of Achieve and Marian Robinson, doctoral candidate, Harvard Graduate School of Education (short biographical sketches of the review team and staff are included in Appendix C).

About This Review

In August 1999, State Superintendent of Education Glenn “Max” McGee invited Achieve, Inc. to organize a short external review of systemic education reform in Illinois. The review was sponsored by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and co-planned with staff from ISBE and the Illinois Business Roundtable. The review was designed to complement the more extensive, in-depth benchmarking analysis of Illinois’ academic standards and assessments that Achieve had undertaken several months earlier at Superintendent McGee’s request. The purpose of this review was to place the major findings from the benchmarking study into a broader policy context and to provide the superintendent, his leadership team, ISBE, and key business and governmental leaders with an outside perspective on the status of Illinois’ education reform efforts. This report incorporates the principal findings of the benchmarking study of Illinois’ standards and assessments and then focuses on the state’s role in four key areas: strengthening the quality of the teaching force; helping districts build capacity to implement reforms in teaching and learning; holding districts and schools accountable for results; and sustaining public support for standards-based reform.

Achieve assembled a review team whose members have expertise in several areas that were of particular concern to reform leaders in Illinois. The review team analyzed a comprehensive set of written documents dealing with various aspects of the state’s education system, with a special focus on recent policy initiatives (a complete list of these documents is provided in Appendix A). The review team then spent three days in Illinois in early December interviewing a cross-section of leaders from government, education, business and other stakeholder groups, as well as senior staff from ISBE (a complete list of those interviewed is included in Appendix B). After conducting these interviews, the reviewers compared notes and impressions and drafted this report. Although we invited staff from ISBE to review a draft for factual accuracy, the observations and conclusions in the report are entirely our own.

We are keenly aware of the limits of this kind of review and of the dangers inherent in offering up findings and recommendations based upon such limited exposure to a rich and complex set of issues. We also are painfully aware that despite the very real progress we have made over the past decade in learning what works in education reform, there is much we do not yet know. These caveats aside, we have attempted to provide state policymakers with our best judgement about the strengths and shortcomings of Illinois’ reform strategy. We much admire the willingness of Superintendent McGee and other leaders to open their work to external scrutiny, and we hope this report will prove helpful to those with policymaking responsibility for the education of Illinois’ schoolchildren.

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Prepared by Achieve, Inc.

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I. INTRODUCTION: THE ILLINOIS CONTEXT AND REFORM STRATEGY

Over the past 15 years, school reform increasingly has become a central concern of policymakers, civic leaders and the general public. From the 1983 release of *A Nation at Risk* through the National Education Summits in 1989, 1996 and, most recently, 1999, Americans have acknowledged that the quality of our civic life and economic prosperity depend largely on our ability to ensure that all young people leave school with a solid foundation of academic knowledge and skills. To this end, virtually every state in the union now is engaged in raising its expectations for student performance and crafting policies designed to enable students to meet these expectations.

Now that new academic standards are in place in virtually every state, educators, policymakers and the public are beginning to focus their attention on the big question: What will it take to enable virtually all students to meet higher standards? Although there is no single right answer to this question, the action statement adopted by the governors, corporate chief executives and education leaders who participated in the 1999 National Education Summit reflects an emerging consensus that states must concentrate on meeting four challenges: creating and sustaining a quality education workforce; ensuring that all students are exposed to a rich curriculum aligned with standards and providing extra time and learning opportunities for students who are furthest behind; designing an accountability system that provides incentives and rewards for success, intervention and support for schools in trouble, and consequences for persistent low performance; and building sufficient public understanding and will to sustain support for these reforms through the inevitable pain of early implementation.

Each state must respond to these issues in a way that is consistent with its own history, governance system, political culture and demographics. Illinois faces some specific challenges, given its size, diversity and decentralized governance system. The state contains 927 school districts, 45 regional education offices and roughly 4,230 schools. Taken as a whole, Illinois' student population is sizable and diverse. Of the 2 million children served by the K-12 education system, 38 percent are students of color, 19 percent are in poverty, and 12 percent have disabilities requiring special services. While most of Illinois' landscape is rural, almost 50 percent of the state's student population is enrolled in schools in 53 large districts. Urban areas in particular serve not only a higher proportion of students, but stronger concentrations of special student populations. The Chicago Public School System presents the most unique political and educational subsystem within the state, as it serves more than 20 percent of all Illinois students, including 96 percent of the state's low-income students, 56 percent of the state's limited-English-proficient students, and 50 percent of the state's minority student population. The state Legislature repeatedly has recognized the extraordinary challenges within the Chicago school system with special legislation that outlines unique governance arrangements and targeted educational programs for the Chicago system alone. These features must be taken into account when considering appropriate state policies aimed at influencing and improving a *system* of education.

STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

Illinois has worked carefully and thoughtfully over the past several years to put into place the key building blocks of a standards-based education system. Its first major reform initiative came in 1985, with the passage of an omnibus education bill that established learning goals in six core subjects and a statewide assessment program, the Illinois Goals Assessment Program (IGAP), to measure student progress against the learning goals. The learning goals remained in place until 1997, when they were replaced by the Illinois Learning Standards. The standards are accompanied by benchmarks, which serve as indicators of progress on five education levels toward meeting the standards: early elementary, late elementary, middle/junior high school, early high school and late high school. Draft performance standards also have been developed to explicate the levels of performance needed to meet the learning standards.

In 1997, the state also began the process of developing a new statewide assessment program (to replace IGAP) to measure achievement of the learning standards. The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) assesses students in reading, writing and mathematics at grades 3, 5, 8 and 10, and in social studies and science at grades 4, 7 and 11. The Prairie State Achievement Exam, a high school exam currently under development, will assess students in all of these five subjects and qualify students for an honors designation, beginning in 2001.

TEACHER PREPARATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As the state has been phasing in its new learning standards and learning tests, it also has been engaged in overhauling its teacher preparation and licensing requirements and in substantially strengthening its recertification requirements. The state's strategy has drawn heavily on the recommendations of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, as outlined in its 1996 report *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*. The state has adopted a set of content-area standards for teachers that can be linked directly to the Illinois Learning Standards for students and is intended to drive ISBE's review and approval process of teacher preparation programs, beginning July 1, 2000. Illinois also has enacted a new three-tier standards-based teacher certification system that provides for:

- an assessment of basic skills and content knowledge prior to initial certification and an assessment of teaching competence prior to standard certification;
- continuous professional development for teachers throughout their careers as a condition of renewal of the standard certificate; and
- a master certificate for highly accomplished teachers who earn certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

The teacher certification legislation also established an induction period during which districts are expected to provide mentoring and support for beginning teachers, but as of this writing, the state has neither required nor funded such programs.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Illinois was one of the first states to address the issue of school-level accountability. In 1991, the state launched a School Quality Review process designed to link school accreditation to student performance. As part of this initiative, state specialists have conducted comprehensive school audits, built around an examination of student data and a review of school curriculum plans. For districts whose financial management practices are unacceptably poor, the state is piloting a financial receivership arrangement, under which a case manager and oversight panel work collaboratively to examine local resources and services to develop improvement plans.

In 1996, ISBE replaced its School Accreditation and Quality Review System with a program designed to build stronger local ownership for continuous improvement. The Quality Assurance and Improvement Planning (QAIP) program, derived in part from the British school inspection model, begins with an internal school review process, followed by a cyclical external review by a panel of visiting educators, business and community members who are coordinated by ISBE. The review is much more holistic and qualitative than the previous curricular audit model, and it culminates with a set of reflective questions to which the school must respond. Illinois is also one of six pilot states in the National Baldrige in Education Initiative program sponsored by the National Alliance of Business, through which schools can adopt the Baldrige-based quality management process to improve student and system performance.

While the state has been implementing its new student assessment program, it also has been working to develop a new performance-based accountability system. This system will accredit districts using five categories, ranging from “full” to “nonaccredited,” and designate schools using seven categories or levels, ranging from “exemplary” to “academic distress.” These designations would be based largely, but not wholly, on the percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards in math and English, and each performance level would trigger some form of state recognition or intervention. At the time of our visit, this plan had not yet been presented formally to ISBE.

LEADERSHIP

In addition to developing these key building blocks of systemic reform, Illinois currently enjoys energetic and credible new leadership for reform in State Superintendent Glenn “Max” McGee and ISBE Chairman Ronald Gidwitz. The business community, led by the Illinois Business Roundtable and the Illinois Business-Education Coalition, signaled its readiness to play a more proactive role in state education policy issues by hosting a first-ever business leaders education summit in March 1999. The summit produced agreement around a five-part improvement agenda, as well as a commitment to speak with a more unified voice and engage governmental and education leaders in developing a more unified vision for reform.

In inviting Achieve to undertake this external review of its education reform policies and overall strategy, as well as the more in-depth analysis of its standards and assessments, ISBE’s leaders were indicating

their desire to hold themselves to high standards. It is Superintendent McGee's expressed goal to make the Illinois education system "second to none," a goal warmly embraced by his board. We have taken the superintendent at his word, and with this in mind, the next section of this report will focus on the major issues, problems and weaknesses we found in our all-too-brief site visit. We offer these comments in the belief that Illinois has a solid policy foundation on which to build an enlightened leadership that is motivated by a genuine commitment to create a world-class public education system.

II. KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

We have organized our observations under four broad headings: standards and assessments, capacity building and professional development, accountability, and public leadership. These categories are inevitably somewhat arbitrary, and treating these issues separately may deflect us inadvertently from the most important question about systemic reform: How well do the pieces fit together? Nonetheless, we needed some kind of scheme to organize a large and complex body of issues, and we have attempted to address questions of coherence and alignment throughout our analysis.

STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

As part of its mission, Achieve provides states with candid feedback on the quality of their academic standards and assessments. At the request of Superintendent McGee, Achieve conducted an in-depth benchmarking study for Illinois during the summer and fall of 1999. Involving more than 20 experts in subject matter and assessment, the study analyzed the Illinois Learning Standards and Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) for grades 3, 5 and 8.

The study had two components. First, a team of national experts in mathematics and English language arts examined Illinois' standards against benchmark standards from other states and nations¹, using criteria such as clarity, rigor, comprehensiveness, and balance between content knowledge and skills. Second, the alignment of the ISAT to the Illinois standards was analyzed closely by national experts and teams of curriculum and assessment specialists using an alignment protocol developed for Achieve. The alignment analysis answers three critical questions: First, does each assessment measure only content and skills reflected in the standards? Second, does each assessment measure the full range of content and skills in the standards? And, overall, is each assessment sufficiently challenging for students?

The results of the standards and assessment benchmarking study are being conveyed separately in a technical report, but we will summarize some of the major findings here.

¹ Benchmark standards for English language arts were those of California and Massachusetts; for early literacy (K-3), North Carolina and Texas; and for mathematics, Arizona and Japan.

The headline from the standards review is that, while the standards represent a significant advance over the state's earlier learning goals, there is clearly room for improvement.

The Learning Standards represent a substantial improvement over the previous Goals for Learning. The Goals were very broad statements that provided little guidance to educators or parents about what students should be learning. In contrast, the Learning Standards are well organized, highlight the main ideas of the subjects and include benchmarks for key grade levels that provide considerably more detail than the Goals did.

However, Achieve's experts also noted several key areas in which the Illinois standards can be improved:

- The standards could be more clear, specific and detailed.
- There is important content missing from the standards.
- In some cases, the standards are repeated throughout the grades, making progression of learning and mastery of skills difficult to determine.
- The standards underestimate what students are capable of at certain grade levels, and lower-level skills sometimes are emphasized at the expense of higher-level thinking skills.

These findings should come as no surprise, for most states have developed their standards without the benefit of a well-developed set of criteria and benchmarks against which to work.

In many cases, the standards are broad and general and may not provide adequate guidance to teachers or test developers.

Consider an Illinois mathematics early elementary school benchmark for measurement: "Sort, classify and compare familiar shapes." Contrast this with Arizona's grade 3 standards for the same concept:

5M-F1: Demonstrate that a single object has different attributes that can be measured in different ways (e.g., length, mass/weight, time, temperature, area and volume).

5M-F1 PO 1: Determine the characteristics (attributes) of an object that are measurable (e.g., length and weight are measurable; color and texture are not measurable).

5M-F1 PO 2: Identify the type of measure (e.g., weight, height, volume) for each attribute.

With regard to missing content, our experts found, for example, that the Illinois early literacy standards for early elementary school are insufficiently explicit about the importance of phonemic awareness and decoding and should be made more specific in order to provide clearer guidance to teachers about reading instruction. Similarly, the middle grades mathematics standards do not establish the foundations of geometry, a common shortcoming in American standards but a central element in the expectations that Japan and other high-performing countries have for their middle grades students.

Another weakness our experts observed in the Illinois standards was a tendency to repeat expectations across grade levels rather than make expectations progressively more demanding. The following reading benchmarks illustrate the problem:

Early elementary: Summarize content of reading material using text organization (e.g., story, sequence).

Late elementary: Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate to purpose of material.

Middle/junior high school: Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate them to purpose of material.

Early high school: Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate them to purpose of material.

Late high school: Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate them to purpose of material.

Superintendent McGee has indicated his interest in overseeing the development of new performance standards for each grade in the pre-K–12 system in the core content areas to clarify and supplement the Learning Standards. We view this as an excellent opportunity to maintain the Learning Standards while making careful choices about what is most important for students to learn and responding to local demands for guidance in meeting the standards.

The headline from Achieve’s analysis of the alignment of the ISAT tests to the Illinois standards is that while there are pockets of excellence — particularly in the writing assessments for grades 3, 5 and 8 — overall, the ISAT tests do not measure the full breadth and depth of the standards, nor are they as rigorous as they could be.

Areas needing improvement include:

- The statutory limits on testing time and open-ended items restrict the assessments’ ability to measure the full range of the standards.
- Some key content and skills laid out in the standards are not measured adequately or fully.
- Some of the assessments fail to measure higher-level skills, particularly in the upper grades, and the level of rigor across the tests is mixed.
- The state’s method of grouping standards for the purpose of reporting results inadvertently obscures the alignment of the assessments to the standards.

Because the standards are often broad and general (in part by design, for Illinois wanted to leave room for districts and schools to fill in the specifics), they do not provide a great deal of guidance to assessment developers. As a consequence, the tests do not measure all of the standards evenly. Some standards are assessed too much, while others are underassessed. Frequently, less complex ideas and skills are emphasized at the expense of more challenging concepts.

For example, the reading tests focus on measuring students' vocabulary knowledge and ability to recall facts from reading passages. There is a relatively minor emphasis on interpreting, analyzing or drawing conclusions from passages; distinguishing among the characteristics of genres; or comparing and contrasting — all of which are skills required by the Learning Standards. The mathematics tests tend to slice math into small parts and underestimate the connections among topics and concepts. In particular, the middle school tests overemphasize low-level computation at the expense of higher-level mathematics, particularly geometry.

As with the standards findings, the observations we put forth on the Illinois assessments also could be made about other states' assessments that Achieve has analyzed. But the legislatively mandated 25-hour limit on the time students may spend taking state tests over their entire K–12 experience forces Illinois to write relatively brief tests that may rely too heavily on multiple-choice items and may lead to some of the problems we note above, particularly the lack of higher-level questions on some of the tests.

A final and important observation from this analysis is that the way test results are reported inadvertently obscures the alignment between standards and tests. Because of the testing time limitation, there typically are not enough test items per Learning Standard to communicate how well students are meeting the benchmarks. Consequently, the state must report results based on *sets* of Learning Standards rather than according to each individual Learning Standard. Because as many as seven different Learning Standards may be grouped together, it is difficult for parents, teachers and the general public to get an accurate picture of whether some of the more demanding and challenging standards are being assessed adequately and whether or not students are meeting these standards. Thus, the problem we alluded to earlier — that lower-level fact and recall types of questions are overrepresented and higher-level reasoning and analysis items are underrepresented — is difficult to ascertain from test results. Most importantly, the grouping of standards obscures to parents and educators whether students are meeting the full range of the state standards. There are more logical and reasonable ways to group Learning Standards and report results, and we are confident that the state will be able to implement a better reporting system in the future.

As these kinds of examples suggest, and as Achieve's full benchmarking report points out in much more detail, there is clearly room for Illinois to strengthen the clarity and rigor of its standards and the alignment and rigor of its assessments. That being said, statewide academic standards constitute a necessary foundation for student learning. We respect the state's commitment to leave these standards in place until 2002 in order to give districts and schools the promise of stability as they work to align their curricula and instructional programs to the standards. However, we trust state policymakers will find the observations and recommendations contained in this report and the technical benchmarking report helpful as they lay plans to assist educators in implementing the state standards.

There is one other assessment issue that fell outside the bounds of Achieve's benchmarking study but that the review team believes to be crucial to the overall success of standards-based reform in Illinois. The Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) is currently under development and not scheduled for its first field test until the upcoming academic year, and the review team did not learn enough about its design to offer any comments. We did learn, however, that current law prohibits requiring the test

as a condition of high school graduation, but that there has been at least some preliminary discussion about the need to connect PSAE results to college admissions, placement policies and corporate hiring practices. We believe this could be a very significant development for Illinois education reform, as we will elaborate in our recommendations section.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

The single biggest challenge facing states as they move from the development of ambitious new standards and assessments to implementation in classrooms is the challenge of capacity building. The bottom-line questions for states are: How do they ensure that their current and future teaching force has the knowledge and skills to teach to the new standards, and how do they help all districts and schools develop the ability to become high-performance organizations focused on improving student learning? These questions have many subparts, but if districts and schools aren't able to organize themselves to provide all students with a challenging curriculum aligned with standards, high-quality instruction, and extra time and help for those students who are furthest behind, it will be difficult to hold students accountable for performance on state assessments. And if teachers aren't given the training and support they need to teach to higher standards, it also will be difficult to hold them accountable for results. By now, it is axiomatic that if standards and tests are not accompanied by some form of accountability for results, neither teachers nor students will be likely to take them seriously. It also should become axiomatic that unless states accompany the development of new accountability systems with a substantial and sustained strategy for helping districts, schools and teachers implement standards-based reform, student performance will be unlikely to improve significantly, no matter what sanctions and rewards are provided.

In our judgment, Illinois has a promising strategy for ensuring the quality of new entrants into the teaching profession, a weak strategy for supporting the continuous development of its current teaching force, and virtually no strategy in place for strengthening the organizational capacity of districts and schools to implement the state's ambitious reform agenda. Let us discuss each of these in turn.

Teacher Preparation

Illinois has moved further than most states in beginning to bring teacher preparation and professional development policy in line with the increased demands of standards-based education. As we noted in the previous section, Illinois is to be commended for the steps it has taken to strengthen the academic content knowledge it will require of new teachers. The state has built a reasonably solid set of teacher standards and has set in motion a phased process for making its approval of teacher preparation programs contingent on their ability to demonstrate that their graduates are equipped to teach to the state's Learning Standards. In addition, the state is among only a handful of leading states that have acknowledged the need for closer coordination between K-12 and higher education by creating a structure — the P-16 Council — to tackle issues surrounding the alignment of high school and college testing, teacher preparation, and technology.

As in many states, however, arts and sciences faculty seem to have been underrepresented in the process of establishing teacher standards, with the result that standards in some fields are not as rigorous as they should be. This is reflective of a larger problem: How to get colleges and universities as a group to take more ownership and responsibility for teacher preparation, rather than leaving teacher preparation mostly in the hands of education schools or departments. As states like Illinois expect significantly deeper academic content knowledge of their new teachers, provosts and academic deans need to pay more attention to the quality and rigor of the courses teachers take to acquire that content knowledge. When large numbers of prospective teachers fail state licensing exams, as was recently the case in Massachusetts, it reflects on all of the preparing institutions, not just the education schools — especially if the tests (as in Massachusetts and Illinois) are focused mostly on basic literacy and academic content, not on pedagogy.

The big hole that needs to be filled in Illinois' strategy for new teacher entrants is support for induction. The case for an intensive and sustained induction program has been well made by several task forces in Illinois and has been accepted by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), but as of the time of our site visit, induction support had not yet been funded. There is now substantial evidence to support the common-sense proposition that new teachers are much more likely to be successful and remain in the classroom for more than five years if they receive substantial mentoring and coaching in their initial years on the job. One of the virtues of a three-tier certification system is its implicit acknowledgement that, no matter how good the initial preparation, much of what teachers need to know to be truly effective can be learned only on the job. In Japan, a culture in which teachers are valued highly and teaching is taken seriously, new teachers are apprenticed to master teachers, are given much lighter teaching loads, and take part in intensive school-based seminars and study groups.

Quality Professional Development

Illinois acknowledged the importance of continuing professional education and development in the redesign of its teacher preparation and licensing system by hinging certification renewal on the completion of eight semester-hours in an approved educational program, 24 Continuing Education Units, 120 Continuing Professional Development Units, or work toward certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards every five years. These recertification requirements are considerably more sensible and flexible than others we have examined in terms of allowing credit for participation in teacher networks and other noncourse-based professional activities. The major challenge is to expand the supply of high-quality standards-based professional development opportunities and create incentives that drive teachers toward those programs. A secondary challenge is not to allow the process of reviewing and approving professional development plans to become just another exercise in bureaucratic compliance.

In a state as geographically diverse and politically decentralized as Illinois, considerable attention should be given to the development of an adequate supply of high-quality standards-based professional development opportunities for educators. In the past few years, an emerging consensus has developed within the education community, based on research and experience, about what high-quality professional development should look like in a standards-based system. For one thing, it should be content-driven,

focused on helping teachers understand the concepts underlying the standards and equipping them with a repertoire of instructional skills to help students master them. It also should be woven into the fabric of the teachers' work life, not relegated solely to after-school hours, Saturdays and summers. And it should be sustained over time and engage teachers in professional networks that take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

The best-developed state model based on these principles is the California Subject Matter Projects (CSMP). These are independent, teacher-led projects administered through the president's office of the University of California that offer multiweek summer workshops, with year-round follow-up in the schools, to thousands of California teachers each year. (In 1996–97, nearly 70,000 teachers participated in CSMP activities.) There are nine projects, each providing discipline-specific professional development in its content area. The projects focus on deepening teachers' content knowledge, helping them develop pedagogical strategies based on that knowledge and fostering professional habits of reflection.

Each project has multiple sites; there are 100 sites in all, most housed on university campuses. The state contributes about half of the funds for the program, with sponsoring campuses and participating school districts contributing the rest. Over the years, CSMP projects have produced a pool of more than 10,000 teacher leaders who have played a wide variety of leadership roles in schools and districts and have served as master teachers and supervisors in the teacher education programs of sponsoring institutions.

The implementation history of CSMP has been mixed over the years, but we offer it as a powerful conceptual and organizational example of how a state even larger and more diverse than Illinois has addressed the challenge of equipping its teachers to teach to higher standards. Illinois has no such comprehensive strategy in place. Instead, it has relied principally on local districts, either alone or in consortia with other districts, to address this issue. Illinois' capacity to address the professional development challenge systemically is hampered by an anachronistic feature of its governance system: the existence of 45 independently elected regional superintendents, among whose functions is the delivery of professional development. We are not in a position to comment on the quality of the services these offices provide to the schools in their regions, but the fact that these regional offices are not accountable to ISBE makes them a weak vehicle for carrying out a coherent, comprehensive state strategy to help teachers teach to the state's learning standards.

One promising in-state model for delivering high-quality professional development is represented by the work of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA). Created by the Legislature in 1985 to teach math and science to talented high school students and to serve the Illinois education system as a catalyst and laboratory for good teaching, IMSA provides on-site professional development to hundreds of educators and develops a variety of competency-driven learning materials for students and teachers that support the Learning Standards. The Academy has developed educator networks, such as the Illinois Problem-based Learning Network, to help teachers sustain innovative practices.

In recent months, IMSA, in collaboration with the Teachers Academy for Mathematics and Science, the Illinois Business Roundtable, and ISBE, has been crafting an innovative statewide professional development initiative focused on improving instruction in reading, mathematics, science and technol-

ogy. The initiative's programs, called academies, would focus on building schoolwide competencies by targeting whole faculties as well as individuals, would be competency-based, and would be evaluated based on measurable improvements in student performance. This initiative, first proposed by Deputy Governor Hazel Louckes and now co-sponsored by Superintendent McGee, if funded adequately and implemented carefully, could begin to address the systemic challenges of scaling up high-quality professional development across whole schools and districts.

In a parallel effort, Illinois should ensure that professional development opportunities also extend to principals and superintendents, who must guide and sustain instructional reform efforts at the school and district levels. Transforming schools into organizations that can improve their teaching practices continuously, such that all students meet the Learning Standards, requires local leaders to develop new knowledge and skills focused on the complexities of organizational change and instructional leadership. Standards-based reform redefines the role of principals, shifting the old emphasis from administrative and managerial tasks to a new, stronger emphasis on teaching and learning. Few programs in Illinois even partially address the critical role principals play in raising the quality of teaching and learning in schools. The Educational Leadership Institute, a partnership between the Illinois Principals Association and Motorola University, appears promising, in that it aims to help principals develop skills focused on cultivating a personal vision for school improvement, strategic planning and team building. The skills emphasized, however, are largely generic in nature, process-oriented, and not focused sufficiently on helping principals fulfill their core responsibility — leadership for continuous instructional improvement.

One symptom of this problem may lie in the focus of the Illinois Professional School Leadership Standards. Our review of the standards found only a passing mention of the principal's role in instructional improvement, addressed in part by only one of the seven school leadership standards. These standards, meant to guide new professional development activities for school leaders, only briefly highlight the important new role that school-based leadership must assume in implementing the Learning Standards.

System Capacity for Change

When we move from examining state policies focused on teacher development to the larger question of state support to help districts strengthen their capacity to implement standards-based reform, we encounter a challenge that virtually all education agencies in large states are facing: How do organizations that historically have been concerned principally with monitoring district compliance with federal and state program rules transform themselves into agencies that can provide leadership and high-quality advice and assistance to districts attempting to implement an ambitious new reform agenda?

Illinois labors under several special handicaps in mounting a credible state capacity-building strategy. One obstacle is the sheer number of school districts, most of which are too small to have instructional improvement specialists of their own or much organizational development capacity themselves. A second handicap is the one alluded to earlier in this report: a regional office structure outside ISBE's con-

trol. A third handicap is the agency's reputation in the field, which is not good. We encountered very substantial good will toward the new superintendent and key members of his leadership team, but much skepticism about ISBE's ability to become customer friendly, outward looking, and generally responsive to the needs and priorities of the field.

We mention this perception of ISBE not because we necessarily agree with it — we interviewed a substantial cross-section of agency leaders and were generally impressed with their thoughtfulness and commitment — but because we think the perception has to be acknowledged as a significant barrier in fashioning a state capacity-building strategy that will be credible with the people who most need help.

What kind of help do schools and districts need and want? In a meeting with representatives of most of the state organizations representing educators, we heard a strong appeal for the state to take a more active leadership role in developing model curricula and in identifying and disseminating exemplary locally developed curriculum units and other materials aligned with state standards. District superintendents and principals suggested repeatedly that the state develop computer-based management and analysis tools that educators could use to mine and report performance data.

Suggestions like this point to one promising development in the state's technical assistance strategy: the creation of a technology-based infrastructure system and Internet-based applications that support the spread of best practices. Through the Achieving High Academic Standards Project (AHAS), in collaboration with the Leadership for Accountability and Quality Assurance Technology School Districts, the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, and the North Central Regional Technology in Education Consortium, ISBE is creating staff development workshops via the Internet that enable teachers to disseminate instructional units and student projects that demonstrate achievement of the Illinois Learning Standards. Work also is under way in collaboration with the North Central Regional Education Laboratory and the Illinois Business Roundtable to develop a user-friendly, Web-based data management tool to enable educators to analyze ISAT data for school improvement planning and to exchange best practices with other schools that work with similar student populations and perform well on the ISAT. Seven learning technology hubs are in place across the state, as well as 152 Star School downlink sites managed by Western Illinois University. There is great potential for Internet-based applications, particularly in a rural state such as Illinois, to help deliver quality professional development and create networks among teachers for continuous sharing of model curricula units, lesson plans and examples of student work across performance levels.

The proposed Academies project and AHAS point to an emerging role for ISBE as a funder and sponsor of regional consortia of districts, as an organizer of networks of intermediary organizations that can provide high-quality technical assistance and content-based professional development, and as the operator of an electronic clearinghouse of the best teacher-developed units and materials linked to standards. These kinds of indirect service functions, rather than more direct technical assistance to districts, may be more consistent both with ISBE's organizational capacity and with the state's political culture, and over time may help to build the agency's credibility in the field.

ACCOUNTABILITY

In the briefing book *Achieve* prepared for the participants in the 1999 National Education Summit, we defined a comprehensive state accountability system as having the following six elements:

- *Report cards* that provide achievement and other data about individual schools;
- *Ratings* that classify schools based on performance;
- *Assistance* for low-performing schools to help them improve;
- *Rewards* for highly successful schools, including monetary bonuses and public recognition;
- *Sanctions* for chronically failing schools, including takeovers and reconstitution; and
- *Student incentives and consequences*, such as graduation or promotion exams or college scholarships tied to performance.

By these criteria, only five states in 1999 had comprehensive accountability systems in place: Indiana, Maryland, New Mexico, North Carolina and Texas. Illinois is in the much larger group of states with only two elements — school report cards and assistance for low-performing schools — in place, but with the other pieces very much under development. Although the state is moving forward with a high school exam, it is not clear, given the legislative prohibition against requiring the test for graduation, how or if it will create incentives or consequences for students.

We noted earlier that the state has had in place for several years a state-sponsored, school-level review process. The School Quality Review program originally was designed as part of the state's accreditation process, and thus, for whatever its flaws, was part of the state accountability system. Its successor, the Quality Assurance and Improvement Planning program (QAIP), does not appear to be data-driven, and because the review team's findings are cast in the form of "reflective questions" back to the school leaders and are not tied to any system of sanctions or rewards, QAIP would seem to be a very weak accountability vessel. Participation in QAIP may in fact be a powerful professional development experience for the reviewers, and the process of conducting a prior internal review and then responding to the review team's "reflective questions" may contribute to the creation of a more collegial and reflective culture in the school under review; however, the early evaluation of QAIP conducted by researchers at Illinois State University suggests that the hard questions about teaching, learning and instructional improvement are unlikely to be addressed seriously in this process.

The new accountability proposal we have reviewed in draft seems to us highly promising. It creates a set of school designations based principally on ISAT performance and then proposes a calibrated set of rewards and sanctions for each designated category. Although we make a number of suggestions for streamlining and strengthening the proposal, we applaud its basic direction.

As Illinois moves forward in implementing its accountability strategy, one challenge will be in how the state considers the unique educational subsystems, Chicago in particular. Parallel efforts by state and city officials toward the same end goal — higher student achievement — create potential for confusion and conflict. State policymakers are rightly concerned with equal application of the same rules to all schools

and districts, an essential condition in any accountability system that will dole out rewards and sanctions for performance. However, they also must recognize and take into account the unique laws and policies that govern Chicago, particularly its aggressive reform strategy already in place to meet the needs of its unique population. In a diverse, decentralized state such as Illinois, in which multiple sets of players need to be on the same page to advance, state policymakers and local officials will have to find effective ways to work together in order to make common progress toward shared goals. The necessity for strengthening communication lines between the state and Chicago officials will only increase as the state uses its ISAT results to identify low-performing schools for placement on its academic warning and watch lists, the majority of which consistently are located in Chicago.

The confrontation earlier this year between the state and the city of Chicago around the administration of the ISAT underscores the need for a much closer ongoing working relationship between state and city education leaders. Chicago's extraordinary turnaround over the past decade was spurred by two bold pieces of state legislation: the 1988 law creating powerful local school councils and the 1995 act creating much stronger centralized authority in a mayoral-appointed board and chief executive officer. Although these two sets of reforms sit in uneasy tension with one another, Chicago is clearly an example of an urban district on the move. For all of its uniqueness in size and demographics, its extraordinary school improvement efforts have implications for other districts of all sizes with low-performing schools, and the state needs to help other districts learn from Chicago's experience. Chicago should be seen and used by the state as a laboratory for innovation, not just as a special case or problem child.

This brings us to a final point related to accountability. It is tempting in state accountability systems to focus attention primarily on the treatment of schools at the two ends of the performance continuum, and we certainly share the belief that persistently low-performing schools ought to receive the highest priority for state action. However, we also believe that states need to worry about the vast bulk of schools that are somewhere in the middle — not good enough to warrant state recognition but not bad enough to warrant state intervention. How can state accountability systems challenge the complacency of such schools and build stronger incentives for continuous improvement? We do not yet see an Illinois strategy for addressing these schools, which leads us into the final set of observations regarding public leadership.

PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

The states that have made the most progress in raising student achievement during the 1990s — states like Colorado, Connecticut, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina and Texas — typically have had at least two things in common: They have systematically pursued a coherent agenda built around higher standards, more rigorous assessments and clearer accountability for results; and they have had broad-based sustained political leadership for reform. Sometimes this leadership has come principally from an education-minded governor or a highly respected state superintendent, but often there has been a business-led coalition that has provided forceful public advocacy for reform and stability and continuity during periods of political transition.

When we look at the political landscape in Illinois, we do not yet see a strong, unified public leadership team for reform. Superintendent McGee has been an aggressive, forceful advocate for ISBE's agenda, but we do not see other prominent leaders arrayed alongside him. The governor signaled his commitment to make education a top priority in his administration by appointing a "deputy governor" for education, but the creation of such a high-profile position in the governor's office runs the risk of creating public confusion about who is in charge. Illinois needs a single, unified public leadership voice on education — not a divided one — and a vehicle for bringing together all of the key players — the superintendent, the state board chair, legislative leaders and the "deputy governor" — to fashion a common public strategy. The business community recently has emerged as a forceful advocate for educational improvement. The depth, breadth and continuity of their commitment is as yet untested, however, and they have not yet been able to fashion a shared systemic improvement agenda and implementation strategy with key public sector leaders. The rallying cry that has united the Illinois Business-Education Coalition — "One Vision, One Voice" — needs to be broadened to include all of the key players, public and private, who need to work together if the state's ambitious goals for its schools are to be realized. As long as there is the perception of multiple agendas and competing initiatives, it is difficult to imagine that much progress will be made in building stronger public support for standards-based reform in Illinois.

One powerful example of the need for a unified public leadership voice on standards can be seen in the findings from a study of the first year of implementation of the Learning Standards at the local level. In a survey of 1,500 teachers and interviews with school administrators, researchers from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign found "a high degree of skepticism among district and school-based educators about the commitment of state leaders to standards" — a lack of confidence that may be holding schools back from seriously engaging the challenges of implementation. Illinois schools are responding slowly, with 75 percent in the surveyed sample still in the early stages of implementation, demonstrating only a simple "awareness of a standards-led system." An additional 10 percent of schools showed neither awareness nor support of such a system. Many educators are adopting a "wait and see" attitude, doubtful that ISBE will continue to support standards when faced with public hostility from low student performance on the ISAT. This skepticism was cited in the survey more often than inadequate resources and lack of time as a major reason for not rushing into standards implementation. Although these kinds of attitudes are common in the early years of any major reform, they dramatize the need for policymakers to communicate a clear and consistent message that the standards movement is here to stay.

The study also found "exceedingly low community and stakeholder involvement around standards," with indications that "parents, school boards, and the community had low levels of awareness or understanding of the Learning Standards and limited access to information and education opportunities about them." We believe this is due to the absence of any serious public communications and engagement strategy that is at all analogous to the ongoing campaign in states like Kentucky, Maryland and Washington.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

ON STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

1. Leave the Learning Standards in place until 2002, as promised, but move immediately to develop new performance standards for each grade, pre-K–12.

Superintendent McGee has indicated his interest in overseeing the development of new “performance standards” for each grade, pre-K–12, in the core content areas to clarify and supplement the Learning Standards. We view this as an excellent opportunity to maintain the Learning Standards while providing more detail and clarity for those who want it about what students are expected to know and be able to do. Grade-by-grade performance standards will allow the state to articulate a progression of content through the grades, making careful choices about what is most important for students to learn in each grade. The new documents will help respond to requests from teachers and schools for more guidance in how to help their students meet the Learning Standards.

Other states have developed such “bridging” documents that describe successfully the content and skills that are essential and that will be measured on the state assessments. It will be key, however, to make sure that the performance standards address the critical issues raised in our benchmarking study and that they are the primary documents used by educators, parents, students and test developers. To be successful, the performance standards cannot be viewed as one of several optional documents that typically are produced by state education agencies.

2. Preserve the trend data provided by the Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT), but begin making selective improvements to the assessments.

Without disturbing the overall testing program, the state immediately could make minor modifications in the selection of test items to strengthen the alignment of assessments with standards. Then, when the next generation of the ISAT is developed, the state should make sure that the tests measure the most important content and skills described in the performance standards and Learning Standards. While it is unlikely that a single test can measure all of a state’s standards, a test can assess a reasonable and balanced sampling of knowledge and skills. Test developers also should make sure that the tests are as rigorous as the standards.

3. Revise the statutory limits on testing time and open-ended items.

Illinois has among the strictest statutory restrictions on statewide testing time of any state in the nation. The restrictions prevent the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) from assessing the state standards in the most efficient and effective ways. Achieve’s review found that the open-ended items could be put to good use in the state testing program to assess more rigorous content and skills. Other states have managed to expand the time allowed per student for statewide testing and include a broader range

of items without unduly burdening students or jeopardizing the technical quality of the assessments. We believe that expanding the time available for testing will allow the state to address the shortcomings of the current method for reporting results, discussed earlier.

ON TEACHER QUALITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

4. Fund district-based induction programs that are focused on helping beginning teachers develop the classroom knowledge and skills required for the Standard Teaching Certificate.

One key to attracting and retaining a high-quality teaching force is to provide new teachers with sustained mentoring and support throughout their first years in the classroom. Illinois policymakers clearly recognize the need and have articulated a well-thought-out induction program. The state now should fund it.

5. Create a statewide network of subject matter-based professional development academies.

Such academies should be selected competitively, operate year-round, serve all regions, and engage higher education faculty and K–12 faculty together. As recommended by the statewide professional development working group, the focus of these academies should be on helping whole-school faculties better align their instructional practices with the Illinois Learning Standards and performance standards. Academies could be sponsored by higher education institutions, nonprofit organizations, consortia of districts, regional offices and teacher organizations — alone or in partnership.

6. Create a statewide leadership academy that is focused on helping current and prospective principals become more effective leaders of instructional improvement.

Ohio recently has created such an academy, with a mix of public and private funding and strong participation in its design from the state organizations representing principals and other administrators. The academy should be independent of state government, but its focus should be on equipping principals and other administrators with the skills needed to lead the implementation of the state's reform agenda.

7. Focus the Quality Assurance and Improvement Planning (QAIP) program on schools “above the line,” and clarify the purpose of this program.

QAIP can be a powerful tool for helping schools analyze their own performance data and, with the help of an outside visiting team, create a more reflective culture built on continuous improvement. As currently designed, QAIP is not an appropriate vehicle for accountability, especially for low-performing schools (see Recommendation 10).

ON ACCOUNTABILITY

8. Simplify the proposed school rating system by reducing the number of publicly reported school designation categories, and incorporate attendance and dropout rates into the rating criteria in all categories.

Measuring and reporting continuous improvement is critical, particularly in helping individual schools sustain their efforts to improve student learning. However, it is important for public credibility and understanding to have a consistent, easily communicated scheme for designating student, school and district performance. The seven school designation categories do not meet that test. Perhaps they could be used internally to target intervention or support resources, but we recommend reducing their number to four for public consumption, to match the ISAT student performance levels. Performance levels and student dropout and attendance rates should be included to ensure that all students are served by schools and to discourage schools from neglecting the students that may be the most difficult to reach.

9. Develop a school rewards program that acknowledges absolute performance as well as improvement, and that rewards schools only if all groups within the school show performance gains.

Under the current proposal, only schools “on the move” get monetary rewards, and schools are not required to demonstrate improvement for all subgroups of students. To ensure that all students are meeting the standards and benefiting from improvement efforts, schools should be required to report student performance data that is disaggregated by race and socioeconomic status.

10. For schools “below the line” (i.e., on Academic Warning, Watch or Distress), replace the Quality Assurance and Improvement Planning process with an ISBE-appointed consultant team that is charged with providing on-site advice and assistance.

An endless process of improvement planning is highly unlikely to turn around chronically low-performing schools. The state needs a targeted, intense intervention strategy similar to that of Kentucky and North Carolina, in which an exemplary educator or team of experts works directly with a failing school. These teams should be armed with the power to recommend needed next steps, including removing the principal or reconstituting the school.

11. Allow parents to opt out of schools that remain in the lowest performance category for three consecutive years and to enroll their children in other public schools at state expense.

The state has a responsibility to ensure that no student is sentenced to remain indefinitely in a persistently failing school. If a school has not shown improvement, even after substantial intervention, parents should have access to other public school options.

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12. Engage the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Illinois Business-Education Coalition (IBEC) in a public review of the proposed Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE), with the goal of aligning the exam with higher education admissions requirements and employers' entry-level hiring standards.

The PSAE presents an opportunity to connect high school learning with continued studies in postsecondary institutions and entrance into the workforce. Involving both the IBHE and IBEC not only will strengthen the content of the PSAE but also will encourage both the higher education and business communities to consider using the tests as a way to assess the skills and knowledge of graduating students.

ON PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

13. Create a single, high-level, cross-sectoral leadership group for standards-based reform in Illinois and launch an ongoing public information and communications campaign.

The group should include top education, business and government leaders and should be both an informal coordinating body and a clearinghouse for policy initiatives. The group should build on the "One Vision, One Voice" summit and follow up the recent governor's education luncheon. Business leaders also should support the development and implementation of an ongoing public information and communications campaign aimed at providing educators, parents and the public with reliable data and information about the progress of education reform in Illinois. The publications and media strategies of Washington State's Partnership for Learning, the Partnership for Kentucky Schools and Mass Insight in Massachusetts represent useful examples for Illinois to study.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As Illinois moves forward to improve its standards and assessments, we encourage state leaders to communicate to all Prairie State citizens, and especially educators, that continuous improvement does not mean a total change in direction or a change in the course of reform. Illinois residents need to understand that the state is committed to standards-based reform for the long term and that this reform is not a passing fad. At the same time, people need to understand that the expectations for students and schools must grow and evolve over time, so that Illinois' students are prepared for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Standards are here to stay in public education, but they cannot remain stagnant and must be communicated clearly and continuously to schools and the public.

We at Achieve are grateful for the cooperation and support Illinois officials provided to enable us to conduct this analysis. We hope that the information we have provided in this report and in the benchmarking technical report is helpful to Illinois as the state continues to build a higher-performing and more accountable education system.

APPENDIX A: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

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APPENDIX B: INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATING IN MEETINGS AND INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEWS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

First name	Last name	Title	Organization
Peggy	Agnos	Representative	Legislative Education Network of DuPage (LEND)
Jacqueline	Anderson	Principal	Ella Flag Young Elementary, Chicago, Ill.
Ken	Arndt	Representative	Large Unit District Association (LUDA)
Donna	Baiocchi	Representative	ED-RED
Heidi	Beiderman	Representative	Large Unit District Association (LUDA)
Art	Berman	Senator (Retired)	Illinois State Legislature
Jerry	Birkey	Principal	Mt. Zion Junior High School
Ann	Bragg	Associate Director	Illinois Board of Higher Education
Joyce	Briston	Chicago Liaison to ISBE	Chicago Public Schools
Brock	Butts	Representative	Illinois Association of School Administrators
Rebecca	Cecil	Principal	Washington-Monroe Grade School
Harvey	Chiles	Principal	Springfield High School
Dale	Crawford	Board President	Sullivan CUSD 300
Paul	Cross	Representative	Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents
Paula	Czuppek	Representative	South Coop. Org. for Public Ed. (SCOPE)
Anne	Davis	Representative	Illinois Education Association
Victoria	Davis	Representative	Illinois Learning Partnership
Lizanne	DeStefano	Assistant Professor	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Ann	Dickett	Representative	South Coop. Org. for Public Ed. (SCOPE)
Brenda	Diehl	President	Illinois Congress of Parents & Teachers
Tom	Doyle	Former Principal	Byrne Elementary
Janet	Elenbogen	Quality Assurance	Chicago Public Schools
R. E.	Everett	Executive Director	Illinois Association of School Business Officials

First name	Last name	Title	Organization
Ed	Geppert	Representative	Illinois Federation of Teachers
Ronald J.	Gidwitz	Chair	State Board of Education
Paul	Goren	Representative	MacArthur Foundation
Cheryl	Gray	Representative	IASCD
Bob	Hill	Superintendent	Springfield SD 186
Star	Hull	Representative	Bradley University
Jerry	Hunt	Representative	Millikin University
Bob	Kidd	Superintendent	Lincoln Elementary SD 27
Bill	Kienzle	Representative	Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities
Richard	Laine	Director of Education Policy & Initiatives	Illinois Business Roundtable
Hazel	Loucks	Deputy Governor for Education	Governor's Office
Mike	Lynch	Director of Public Affairs	Illinois Tool Works, Inc.
John	Maitland	Senator	Illinois State Legislature
Stephanie	Marshall	President	Illinois Math and Science Academy
Jeff	Mays	President	Illinois Business Roundtable
Marilyn	McConachie	Board Member	Illinois State Board of Education
Virginia	McMillan	Representative	Illinois Community College Board
Julie	Miller	Principal	South Elementary School
Gary M.	Moriello	Principal	Gladstone Elementary, Chicago, Ill.
Barbara	Nourie	Representative	Illinois State University
Michael	Palmisano	Public Policy and Service	Illinois Math and Science Academy
Lee	Patton	Representative	ISBE Policy and Board Services
Rita T.	Pedone	Principal	Mt. Greenwood Elementary, Chicago, Ill.
Barbara	Phillips	North Park University	Illinois Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Group
Merv	Roberts	Board President	Adlai E. Stevenson High School Dist. 125
Gerald J.	Roper	President	Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
Carlos	Rosa	Director, Quality Assurance	Chicago Public Schools
Harry	Rossi	Representative Superintendent	ED-RED Northbrook Glenview District 30
Susan	Shea	Representative	Illinois Education Association
Zanele H.	Sibanda	Representative	Chicago United

First name	Last name	Title	Organization
Mike	Skarr	President	Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce
Randi	Starr	Executive Director	McDougal Foundation
Bill	Steichman	President-elect	Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools
JoAnn	Sterling	Representative	University of St. Francis
Laura	Sullivan	Vice President, Corporate Secretary and Council	State Farm Insurance Companies
Brenda	Sumberg	Director, Education Systems Alliance	Motorola University
Randy	Tinder	Superintendent	Carlinville CUSD 1
Linda	Tomlinson	Representative	Western Illinois University
Steve	Tozer	Representative	National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF); University of Illinois at Chicago
Miguel	Trujillo	Principal	Roosevelt High School, Chicago, Ill.
Dave	Turner	Executive Director	Illinois Principals Association
Paul	Vallas	Chief Executive Officer	Chicago Public Schools
MaryBeth	Vanderwheel	Chicago Inspector General	Chicago Public Schools

INTERVIEWS WITH ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

First name	Last name	Office
Fran	Beauman	Workforce Preparation Partnerships
Xavier	Botana	Middle Level Education
Mary Jayne	Broncato	Program Support
Carmen	Chapman	Assessment
Bill	Conrad	Learning Technologies
Michael	Dunn	Special Assistant to the Superintendent for Reading Improvement
Cliff	Erwin	Quality Assurance
Gary	Ey	Finance
Pat	Glenn	Professional Certification
Eunice	Greer	Reading & Mathematics
Lynne	Haeffele	Standards, Assessments & Accountability
Brenda	Heffner	Regional Office of Education

First name	Last name	Office
Kay	Henderson	Early Childhood
Michael	Hernandez	Legal
Brenda	Holmes	Governmental Relations
John	Klit	Workforce Community Partnerships
Kim	Knauer	Communications
Doris	Langon	Chicago Public Schools Liaison
Frank	Llano	Professional Preparation
Mike	Long	Professional Preparation
Dick	Miguel	Learning Standards & Curriculum
Kathy	Nicholson-Tosh	Staff Development
Lee	Patton	Policy & Board Services
Charlie	Pinto	Standards, Assessments & Accountability
Sheryl	Poggi	School Improvement Initiatives
Sheila	Radford-Hill	Alternative Learning Partnerships
Gordon	Riffel	Special Education
Diana	Robinson	Workforce/Community Partnerships
Rob	Sampson	Professional Certification
Dennis	Williams	Certificate Renewal
Connie	Wise	Research
David	Wood	Operations
Brad	Woodruff	Secondary Education

APPENDIX C: BIOGRAPHIES OF THE REVIEW TEAM

KATI HAYCOCK

Kati Haycock is director of The Education Trust, one of the nation's leading child advocates in the field of education. The Trust provides hands-on assistance to urban school districts and universities that want to work together to improve student achievement, from kindergarten through college. Before coming to The Education Trust, Haycock served as executive vice president of the Children's Defense Fund, the nation's largest child advocacy organization. A native Californian, Haycock founded and served as president of The Achievement Council, a statewide organization that provides assistance to teachers and principals in predominantly minority schools in improving student achievement. Earlier in her career, she served as director of the Outreach and Student Affirmative Action programs for the nine-campus University of California system.

WILLIAM PORTER

William Porter is executive director of The Partnership for Learning in Seattle, Wash., a unique nonprofit business coalition supported by the state's largest companies, including Boeing, Microsoft, Washington Mutual, GTE and Airborne Express. The Partnership conducts a public outreach campaign to local communities and parents on the state's efforts to raise standards in public schools and improve student performance. Its efforts have won national recognition, including the National Alliance of Business' 1998 Distinguished Performance Award for "State Business Coalition of the Year." Earlier in his career, Porter served as director of policy in the Colorado Governor's Office, where his work focused on policy issues related to education, environment, telecommunications and infrastructure. In particular, he crafted state education reform efforts in K-12 and higher education, including writing Colorado's charter school law and overseeing the development of a new system of standards and assessments for student performance in public schools. He holds a B.A. in English from The Colorado College.

ROBERT SCHWARTZ

Robert Schwartz is president of Achieve, Inc. and a lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Earlier in his career, he was a high school English teacher and principal; an education advisor to the mayor of Boston and governor of Massachusetts; assistant director of the National Institute of Education; special assistant to the president of the University of Massachusetts; and executive director of the Boston Compact, a public-private partnership designed to improve access to higher education and employment for urban high school graduates. From 1990 to 1996, Schwartz directed the education grantmaking program of The Pew Charitable Trusts, one of the nation's largest private philanthropies. He holds degrees in English and American literature from Harvard University and Brandeis University.

WARREN SIMMONS

Warren Simmons currently is director of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. Previously, he was executive director of the Philadelphia Education Fund. Prior to joining the Fund, Simmons was senior associate at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, where he was responsible for developing initiatives focused on urban school reform. Before joining the Casey Foundation, he served as director of equity initiatives for the New Standards Project, a coalition of 17 states and six school districts building a performance-based examinations system to drive curricular and instructional reforms. In addition to his work on national and state education reform initiatives, Simmons has served as special assistant to the superintendent of schools in Prince George's County, Md. He received his B.A. in psychology from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn., and earned a doctorate in psychology from Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y.

SUSAN TRAIMAN

Susan Traiman is director of The Business Roundtable's Education Initiative, where she oversees the Roundtable's state education reform policy activities and manages communications strategies to build public support for higher academic standards. Previously, Traiman was education policy studies director at the National Governors' Association and a senior associate with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement. She also served on the staff of the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Before coming to Washington, D.C., Traiman was a teacher and a consultant at a regional service center of the New Jersey Department of Education. She earned her B.A. and M.S. degrees from the University of Pennsylvania.

JENNIFER VRANEK

Jennifer Vranek is director of benchmarking and state services at Achieve. She currently directs Achieve's Benchmarking Initiative and assists with follow-up from the 1999 National Education Summit. Before coming to Achieve, she was a research assistant at the American Federation of Teachers, where she worked on the 50-state progress report on standards-based reform, entitled *Making Standards Matter*, and *Setting Higher Sights*, an analysis of eighth- and ninth-grade mathematics assessments. Earlier in her career, Vranek worked as a consultant to the World Bank's G-7 Pilot Program to Conserve the Brazilian Rainforest and as the administrative secretary to the board of directors of the American School of Brasilia. A graduate of the San Antonio public schools, she holds a Master of Public Policy degree from The Georgetown University Public Policy Institute and an A.B. in history from The College of William and Mary.

MARIAN ROBINSON

Marian Robinson currently is a doctoral candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. From 1994 to 1998, Robinson was an education program specialist with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, where her work focused on research and development activities related to standards-based reform (primarily state standards and assessment development), charter school accountability, and national research agenda planning. Early in her career, Robinson was an assistant English teacher in the Seino District Education Office in Gifu, Japan, from which she provided curricular and instructional support to 12 schools. Robinson's current graduate work focuses on governance and organizational change issues related to standards-based reform. She holds a B.A. in English literature and history and an M.Ed. degree in comparative education studies from the University of Virginia.

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