



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM

I W E R C

Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative

I N S I G H T S

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A Note from IWERC's Director

Hello, all! I hope you will have a moment to browse the stories below, where we share findings from our ongoing work and introduce new staff. If you notice a fresh look to our update emails, it's because IWERC has welcomed a wonderful **Assistant Director for Outreach, Quetzalli Castro!** You will hear from her as she makes the rounds to understand how we can better support our collaborators.

Additionally, I'm delighted to report that IWERC will be expanding its work with three new funding sources:

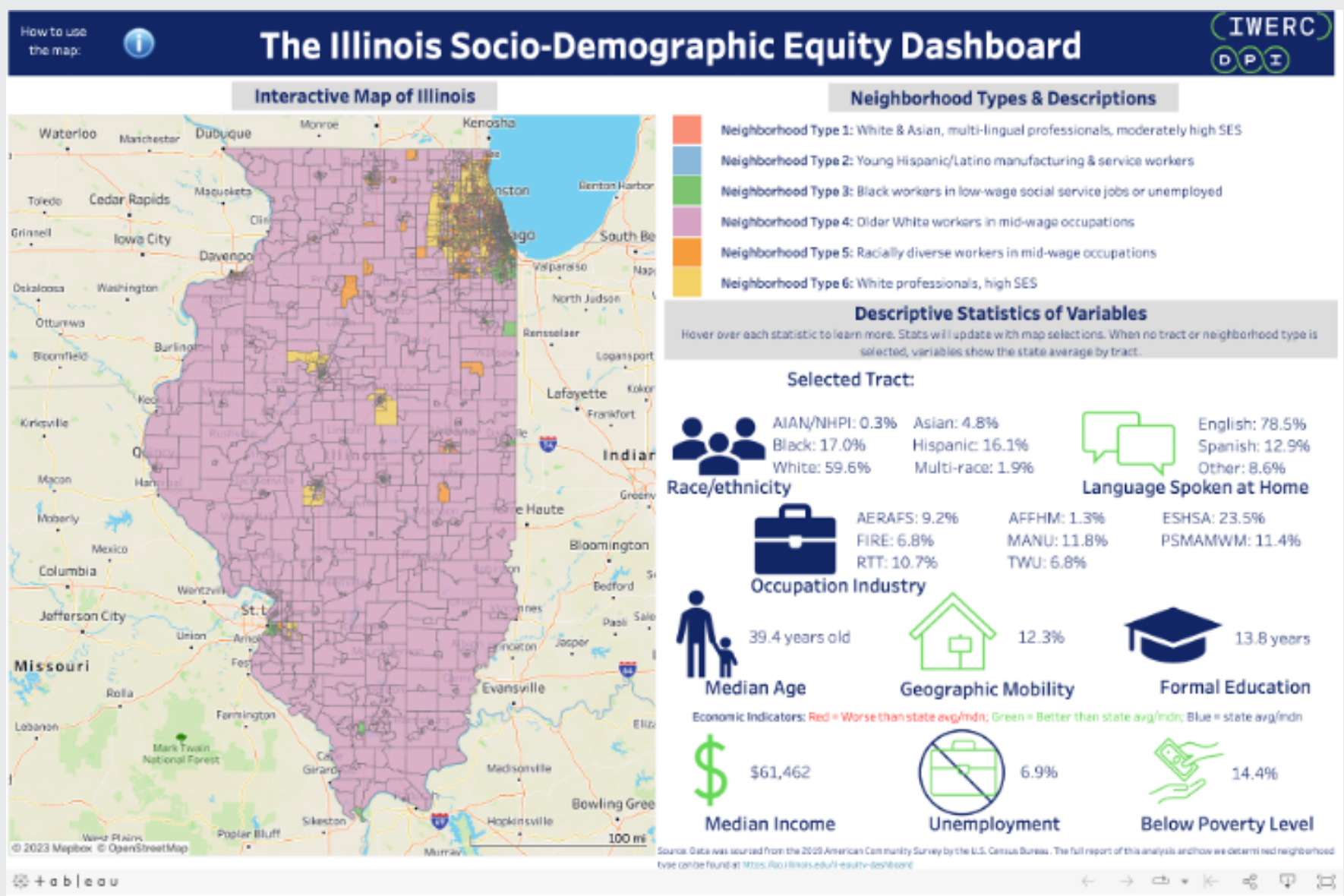
- Continued funding from the **Joyce Foundation** to support IWERC's general operations, which includes expanding our dissemination and outreach efforts, as well as building a statewide COVID research agenda (with input from stakeholders like you).
- **Funding from the Chicago Education Equity COVID-19 Response Fund** (including **Joyce Foundation** and **Chicago Community Trust**) and **Steans Family Foundation** for a partnership with ISBE to examine best practices for learning renewal across the state.
- An intergovernmental agreement with ISBE to serve as the evaluator for the state's new **Preschool Development Grant Birth Through 5** planning grant.

As always, please reach out to ask questions or talk about partnership!

Best,

Meg Bates

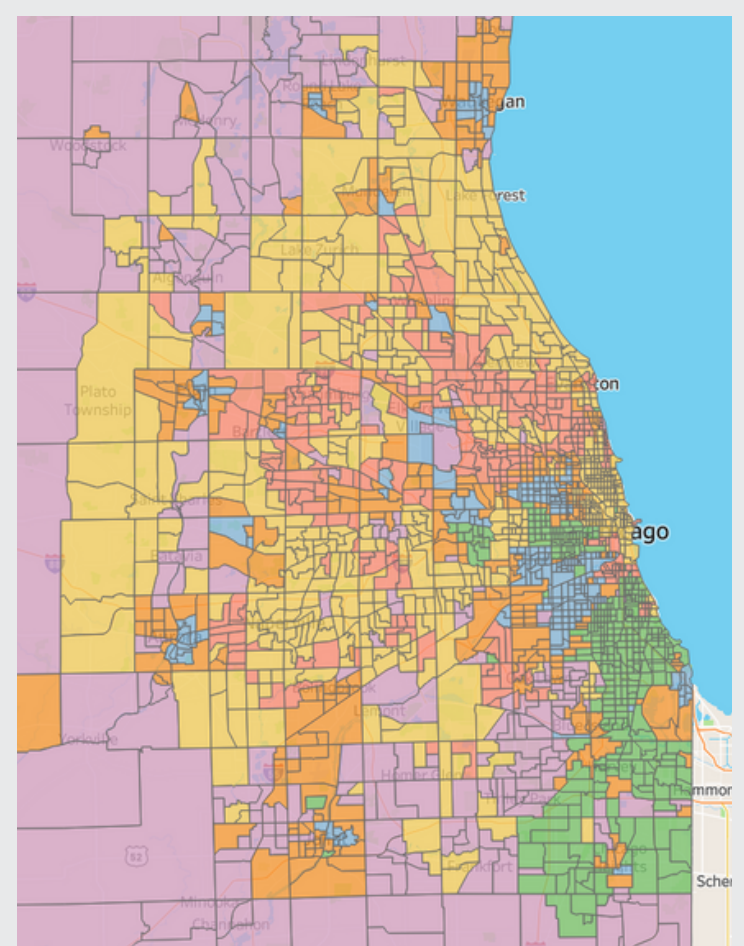
The Illinois Socio-Demographic Equity Dashboard launched to fight inequities and avoid gap gazing.



The Illinois Socio-Demographic Equity Dashboard reveals key information about the diverse characteristics of our state's neighborhoods. It serves as a tool for researchers, policymakers, and advocates to visualize and identify the needs of Illinois residents. It reveals key information about the diversity of our state and wealth disparities, but it isn't "gap gazing." This tool helps Illinois see its own reflection now and itself in the future.

[Read Summary](#)

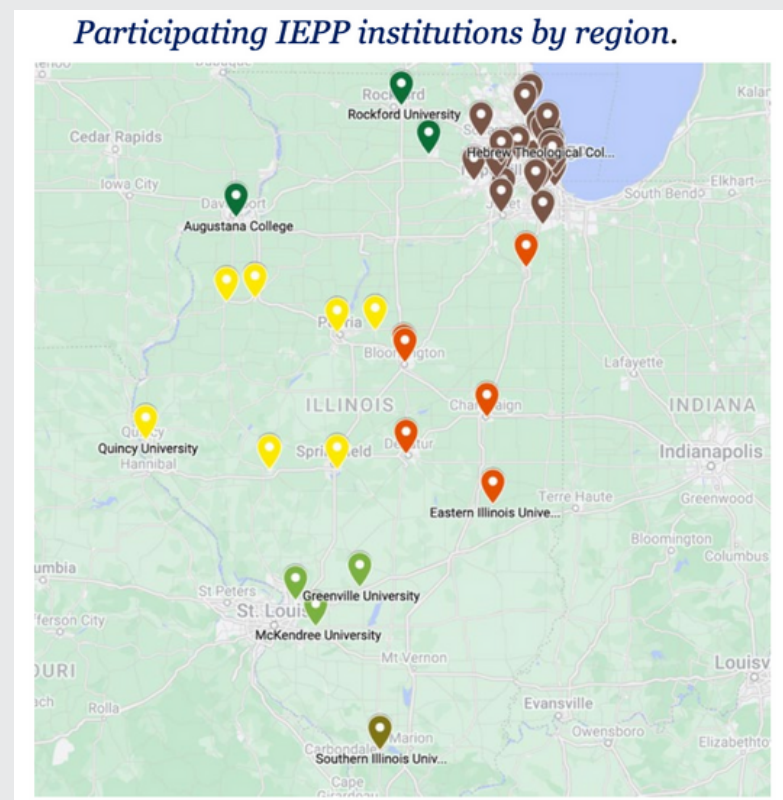
[Read Full Report](#)



Future projects will analyze and evaluate equitable access and opportunity to various education and workforce resources in the state.

Illinois Educator Preparation Profiles: A First Look at Program Performance and Related Factors

There is a need for action in several areas to improve the accountability and transparency of teacher educator programs in Illinois. IWERC has now produced preliminary findings and areas for IEPP refinement. By working with ISBE to refine the IEPP indicators, promote diversity in teacher education, identify promising practices, address data limitations, and collaborate between stakeholders, we can ensure that teachers are adequately prepared to teach and that the teacher workforce reflects the diverse population of Illinois.



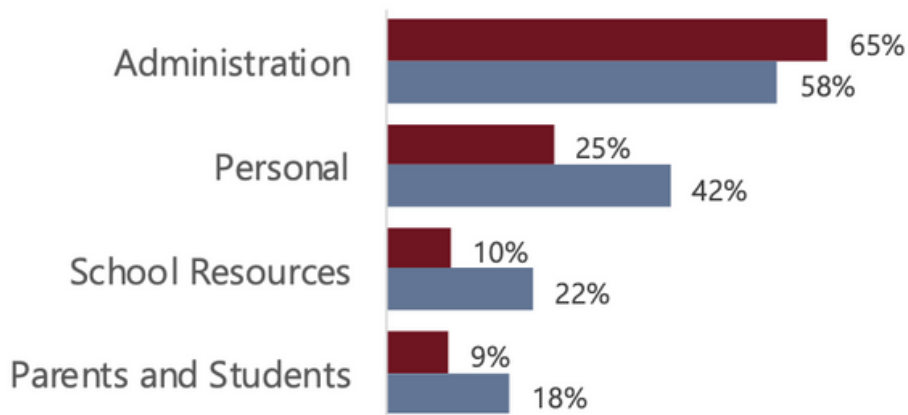
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“Having to fight for everything”: Voices of Illinois Educators on Why They Leave or Stay in the Profession

Top Themes for Educators Commenting on Their Former Positions Compared to Those Commenting on Their Current Positions

Comments from both subgroups of educators fell into the same top four categories, in the same rank order.



Teacher retention rates in Illinois vary widely across districts, with persistent shortages underscoring the importance of keeping qualified teachers. A recent survey of nearly 3,500 educators revealed that dissatisfaction with administration was the most common reason for leaving or switching schools. This underscores the critical role that strong leadership plays in retaining talented educators. Other factors included personal reasons (e.g., resigning to care for family or pursue further education) and school resources (e.g., salary). Many educators called for more support, including better communication, professional learning opportunities, and tailored mentorship.

[Read Summary](#)

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Inclusion in practice: a systematic review of diversity-focused STEM programming in the United States

This article, recently published in the International Journal of STEM Education, systematically reviews studies of diversity-focused college STEM programs and their outcomes for underrepresented minorities. These programs provide institutional support for STEM students and can boost their retention, academic success, and well-being. However, the article highlights the need for further research to enhance our understanding of how to promote and sustain equity in STEM for minoritized students. Specifically, review findings suggest a need for studies to employ more rigorous quantitative methods to evaluate program effectiveness.



[Read the Journal Article](#)

Did you miss our webinars? Watch the recordings now to catch up on the latest insights and expert advice.

Learning from Learning Loss: What We Know & Where We Go From Here

December 7, 2022

This webinar includes information on how to support recovery, examples of successful districts, and policy districts have put in place. Presenters include: IWERC, Illinois State Board of Education, UChicago Consortium on School Research, and Chicago Public Schools.

Supporting Illinois teacher preparation programs

January 19, 2023

This webinar focuses on how IWERC has worked with the Illinois State Board of Education to use these findings as part of its ongoing improvement of the IEPP, policy implications, and a Teacher Educators Panel discussion.

IWERC IN THE NEWS

3 Misconceptions About Pandemic-Related Learning Loss

By Sarah Cashdollar, Mariana Barragan Torres & Meg Bates

The 74 Newsletter

Our Turn | Teacher shortages: Everything old is new again, or is it?

By Shereen Oca Beilstein & Meg Bates

The News-Gazette

IWERC PRESENTS

Going to these conferences? We'll see you there!

Association for Education Finance & Policy

A Great Upheaval:
Research And
Evidence In A Time
Of Political And Social
Transformation
Denver, Colorado
March 23–25

Exploring factors associated with educator attrition and retention: Working conditions matter most.

Beilstein, S. O., Withee, T., Feldmann, M., & Bates, M. (2023, March).

Trends in School Instructional Modality During the 2020-21 School Year: Implications for Learning Recovery.”

Barragan Torres, M., Cashdollar, S., and Bates, M. (2023).

American Education Research Association

Interrogating
Consequential
Education Research in
Pursuit of Truth
Chicago: April 13–16
Virtual: May 4–5

Latinx Postsecondary Pathways: A Comprehensive Research Review and Synthesis.

Bates, M., Alcala, R., Basaldua, F., Kom Nguiffo, J., Barragan Torres, M., & Werner, S. (2023).

Elementary Mathematics Teachers Endorse Growth Mindset, But Do They Also Harbor Ties to Fixed Mindset?

Curry, K. S., Moran, C. G., Cimpian, J. R., Kearfott, H., Oca Beilstein, S., Perry, M., & Bates, M. S. (2023).

Inclusion in Practice: A Systematic Review of Diversity-Focused STEM Programming in the United States.

Palid, O., Deangelo, S., Chu, C., Cashdollar, S., and Bates, M. (2023).

Building Relationships Around Research Methodology: A Collaborative Autoethnography of Graduate-Undergraduate Mentorship

Barragan Torres, M. (2023).

Socio-Demographic Mapping of Illinois: Assessing Equitable Access and Opportunity to Workforce and Education Resources.

Werner, S. M., Cashdollar, S. (2023).

Grade Band Trends in the Relationship between Pandemic-Related Instructional Modality and Student Achievement.

Cashdollar, S., Wang, Y., Barragan Torres, M., & Bates, M. (2023).

A systematic review to measure reformed teaching in science classrooms: What do we learn from diverse raters.

Chen, Y., Werner, S. M., Yin, Y. (2023)

Automatically generated assessment reports for teachers' formative uses: A review of dashboard design.

He, X., Chen, Y., Zhai, X., Yin, Y. (2023)

National Council on Measurement in Education

Leveraging
Measurement for Better
Decisions
Chicago: April 12–15

Exploring the Validity Properties of The Illinois Educator Preparator Profiles (IEPP) is in the session of “clustered eBoard - Validity”

Barragan Torres, M., Bates, M., and Oca Beilstein, S. (2023).

WELCOME NEW STAFF

Hi, I'm **Quetzalli Castro** and I'm the Associate Director of Outreach here the Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative. My current focus is optimizing IWERC's newsletter and social media in collaboration with the comms team and our authors. My background is in education. Before joining this team, I worked as a middle school educator in Chicago Public Schools. I've been an educator, organizer, and advocate for 12 years. Outside of work I enjoy going to concerts, camping, buying too many plants and spending time with my corgi and my fiancé. I'm excited to work with you all to disseminate the research that IWERC publishes!

Hello, my name is **Ying Chen**, and I am pleased to introduce myself as a new member of the IWERC team. I am currently collaborating with the team to assist with data analysis and instrument development. My academic background is in Educational Psychology, with a specialization in Measurement, Evaluation, Statistics, and Assessment. Prior to joining IWERC, I worked on multiple research projects funded by NSF and IES, where I utilized advanced psychometric models and quantitative methods to measure complex learning and affective outcomes. When not working, I am an (amateur) street photographer, where I capture the spontaneous and natural moments of humanity. I am enthusiastic about being a part of the IWERC team and look forward to contributing to impactful research.

Hi, I'm **Sebastian Kiguel** and I'll be joining IWERC as a Research Associate in May. At the moment, I'm completing my PhD in Human Development and Social Policy (HDSP) at Northwestern University. My research focuses on bullying, peer relations, and the social experience of schooling more broadly. My dissertation uses quantitative methods to examine how schools can reduce bullying and what this means for students' socioemotional development and educational outcomes. Prior to attending graduate school, I worked as a high school teacher in Buenos Aires, Argentina. I'm honored to be joining IWERC and look forward to performing research on pressing issues for schools in Illinois.

TO OUR PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

Thank You.

IWERC's research is possible due to our dedicated and invested funders. We thank them deeply. We also appreciate all our collaborators and friends—including our Research Advisory Council, Advisory Committee, and the many wonderful folks working in local and state education agencies!

Funders

CME Group Foundation
Crown Family Philanthropies
Joyce Foundation
Pritzker Traubert Foundation
Robert R. McCormick Foundation
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Collaborators

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