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Contact:

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY FOR ILLINOIS STUDENTS
Board will hold discussion to identify strategies to increase affordability for Illinois' college students and their families

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SPRINGFIELD – On August 11, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) will focus its meeting on improving college affordability in Illinois. A key goal of the *Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success* is to **ensure college affordability for students, families, and taxpayers**. [The mid-point analysis of outcomes for the Illinois Public Agenda](#) shows that in the last five years Illinois higher education has become less affordable faster for middle and low income families than in almost all other states. In response, the Board has established an Action Team for Increasing Affordability.

Earlier in the year the Board enlisted national experts to identify effective practices being used to address college affordability in other states and nationally. The Board Affordability Action Team, building on that work, has drafted a white paper focused on Illinois' challenges and strategies/interventions to contain costs and reduce financial burdens imposed by college on low and middle income families. The draft analysis has been shared with higher education colleagues. At the meeting the Board will engage in a roundtable discussion to identify next steps in addressing the college affordability challenge. Joining the Board in this discussion will be Ms. Kelle Parsons and Mr. Scott Jenkins, representatives from the National Governors Association (NGA) and Dr. Lisa Freeman from Northern Illinois University. The NGA is working with the Board and the Governor's office in the launch of a higher education efficiency and effectiveness initiative in Illinois. The NGA has worked with other states to elevate and expand practices that reduce college costs. Dr. Freeman will bring an institutional perspective to the discussion.

“After assessing effective practices around the nation in improving college affordability, the Board is ready to support implementation of interventions that will make a difference for Illinois. That work cannot come too soon for the thousands of Illinois citizens who need and deserve access to the college degree that will prepare them for 21st century jobs,” said Lindsay Anderson, IBHE Chair. “While we know that one factor in the increase in college costs is directly attributable to reductions in state support for higher education, there is much we can and should do within our system to make college more affordable for students.”

The Board also will discuss the 2016 budget.

The IBHE will meet at 1:00 p.m. on August 11, in Rooms A-1273E and A-1273W, Kishwaukee College, 21193 Malta Road, Malta.

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