



## News

from the ILLINOIS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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### IBHE BOARD APPROVES HIGHER EDUCATION BUDGET REQUEST BOLSTERING EQUITY-DRIVEN STRATEGIC PLAN

**SPRINGFIELD** – The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) today approved a fiscal year 2023 budget recommendation that increases funding to support its equity-driven strategic plan adopted in June 2021 and subsequently endorsed by the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. The budget proposal is \$2.1 billion and would reflect a 7 percent (\$139 million) increase for general funds, excluding the State University Retirement System (SURS).

The IBHE budget reflects the three goals of the higher education strategic plan, [A Thriving Illinois](#): Equity, Sustainability and Growth.

**IBHE Chair John Atkinson said**, “IBHE’s recommended budget recognizes the role higher education plays as an inclusive economic driver and puts Illinois on a path to achieve the goals laid out in our strategic plan for a thriving Illinois to: close the equity gaps for students who have been left behind, build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions, and increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth.”

IBHE recognizes that now more than ever, higher education must be affordable to students and families. That’s why this budget recommends a \$50 million increase to the Monetary Award Program (MAP grants)—a program that provides meaningful access to higher education for low-income students statewide each year. Additional funding for MAP will not only serve more students, but will improve affordability by increasing the size of grants.

At the same time, IBHE knows that colleges and universities must receive adequate and sustainable funding to provide top-tier education that prepares our students for the jobs of the future. IBHE applauds Governor Pritzker’s commitment to funding institutions of higher education following years of crippling disinvestment. To continue building back while also

prioritizing closing equity gaps in access, persistence, and completion, IBHE is recommending a \$58.4 million (+5%) increase in funding allocated to public universities. IBHE is also recommending that these new funds be distributed based on equity, with more funds going to institutions that serve higher percentages and numbers of low-income students. This will allow universities to provide additional academic and social-emotional supports to ensure students' success, particularly for low-income students and students of color.

IBHE's budget also recommends a corresponding \$13 million (+5%) increase in funding to community colleges, which are central to achieving the equity goals of *A Thriving Illinois* and play a vital role in meeting the state's workforce needs. Community colleges contribute more than [\\$3.5 billion and 43,000 jobs annually](#) to the Illinois economy, making an investment in Illinois' community colleges an investment in our future.

IBHE knows that higher education has an essential role to play in preparing the state's teachers who shape students' lives and education outcomes. That's why this budget recommends increased investment in teachers, specifically in supporting teachers of color. The budget proposes an increase of \$2.3 million to the Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship to encourage more students of color to enter the teaching field. The additional funding, if adopted, will increase the number of eligible scholarship recipients, provide more funding, and expand eligibility.

In addition, IBHE's budget recommendations also allocate an additional \$535,000 to the Illinois Teachers Loan Repayment Program, which provides awards to encourage academically talented Illinois students to teach in Illinois schools in low-income areas. These additional funds will increase the number of teachers served from 90 to an estimated 195.

"This budget was written through an equity lens, because the only way to ensure equity is with a relentless focus on everything it will take to achieve it," **said Ginger Ostro, IBHE Executive Director.** "That's why our recommended increases focus on serving students of color, rural students, working adults, and low-income students who have been traditionally left behind."

Highlights that focus on equity include:

- \$50 million increase for MAP
- \$58 million (5 percent) increase for public universities, distributed through an equity lens
- \$13 million (5 percent) increase for community colleges, adult education, and career and technical education
- \$2.8 million increase to recruit and retain minority teachers through scholarships and loan repayment programs
- \$0.5 million to increase faculty diversity through the Diversifying Faculty in Illinois (DFI) program

The budget recommendation next goes to Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker and the General Assembly for consideration.

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