

# THE STATE WE'RE IN 2019

Regional Analysis



## Introduction

*The State We're In 2019* report measures Illinois' educational performance from early childhood through postsecondary. To assess how well Illinois educates its students, we track state-level metrics on current and past performance, how Illinois compares to other states, and report on equity gaps.<sup>1</sup>

As a state, we have important progress to celebrate. Over the past decade Illinois has posted academic gains, and the state exceeded national norms in some key areas. We've narrowed some performance gaps between Latinx students—the state's fastest-growing population—and their white peers. More Illinois students are graduating high school and enrolling in higher education, and overall degree attainment in Illinois is on the rise. Such gains demonstrate our ability to make true, lasting improvements. And, indeed, some districts have made strides despite high poverty levels and inadequate funding, underscoring again that real change is possible. At the same time, the data makes it clear that we are not serving all students equally well. Significant achievement gaps start early and persist.

Over the years, many have asked how their own schools, districts or regions are doing and how they compare to statewide averages and trends. In response, we offer this new regional supplement to shed light on local outcomes and progress and to help inform community conversations along with statewide efforts.

The maps and charts that follow offer local and regional insight where available and around key issues and measures. Data is sorted by school district, except early education, where information is reported by county.<sup>2</sup>

Interactive maps that allow you to filter by district, demographics, and measure will be accessible online starting in the winter of 2019–2020 at [advanceillinois.org](http://advanceillinois.org).

We hope you find this information useful as you make decisions and work to ensure strong outcomes and opportunities for your own families and communities.

## Percentage of 3- and 4-year-old children from low-income households who have access to publicly funded pre-kindergarten seats

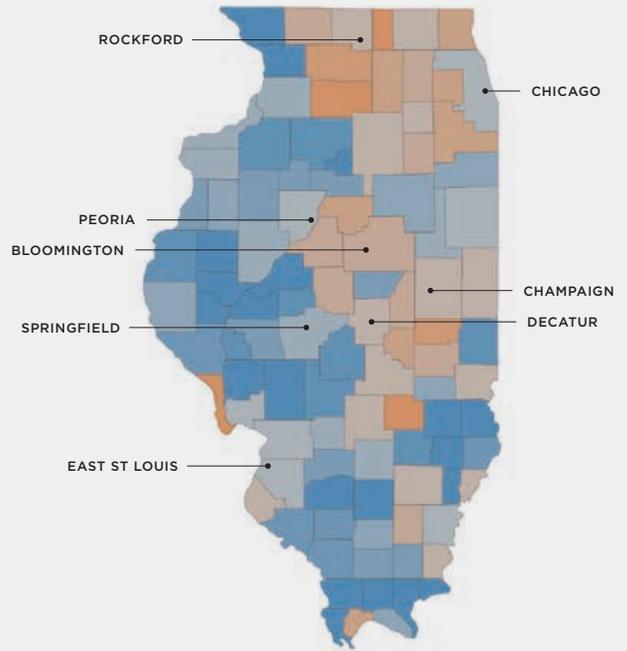
Access to quality early childhood services affords children a strong start and helps close persistent achievement gaps to ensure that every student is college- and career-ready. Overall, Illinois is serving roughly 50% of its birth to 5-year-old children from low-income families. When you break out just 3- and 4-year-olds, we are doing a better job—supporting about 84% of 3- and 4-year-olds from low-income homes with state- or federally funded preschool seats. However, as you can see from the chart to the right, access varies significantly across the state.

Some parts of the state have more seats than needed; others are provider deserts with more need than seats. These are communities where children are being left behind.

### PERCENTAGE OF NEED MET BY COUNTY



SOURCE: ILLINOIS EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSET MAP, 2017.



## Kindergarten readiness

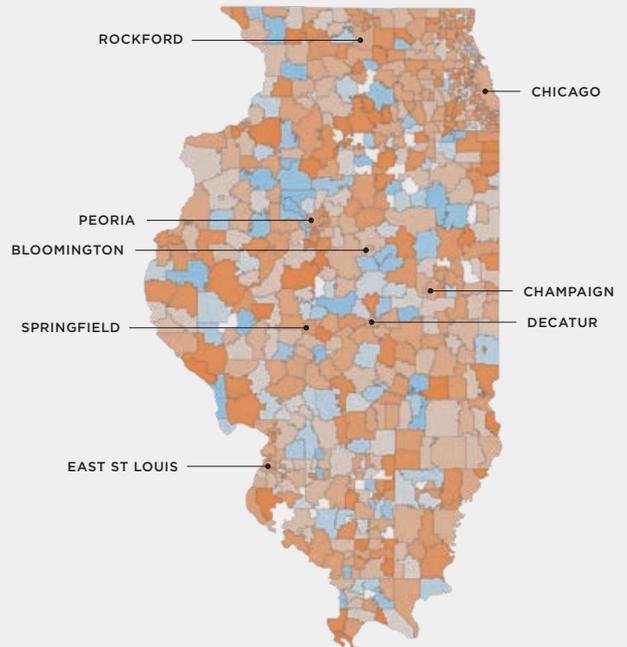
Kindergarten readiness is vital to meeting future academic benchmarks. And for the first time, Illinois has access to kindergarten readiness data. Overall, fewer than a quarter of Illinois' students enter kindergarten socially and academically ready, and across the state we see dramatic variations in readiness.<sup>3</sup> Visit [advanceillinois.org](http://advanceillinois.org) to view how districts are performing across 1, 2, or all 3 developmental areas.

### STUDENTS' KINDERGARTEN-READINESS IN ALL 3 DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS

By District



SOURCE: ISBE, 2018-19 KIDS DATA SETS.

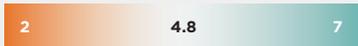


## 3rd-8th grade growth in reading

Illinois ranks among the top 10 states in academic growth between 3<sup>RD</sup> and 8<sup>TH</sup> grade. However, statewide, 3<sup>RD</sup>-8<sup>TH</sup> grade growth varies quite a bit. It is encouraging to see 40 percent of districts outperforming the national average in reading proficiency. Some districts show growth despite the odds relative to their funding adequacy.

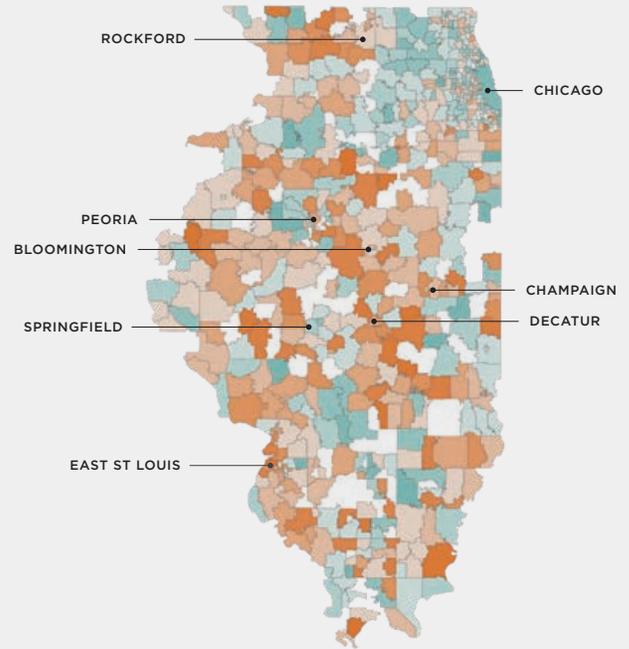
### THERE IS UNEVEN GROWTH ACROSS ILLINOIS DISTRICTS

Academic Growth Between 3<sup>RD</sup> and 8<sup>TH</sup> Grades (in years)



Over this time frame, 5.0 years of academic growth are expected. The national average is 4.8 years of growth.

SOURCE: STANFORD EDUCATION DATA ARCHIVE (VERSION 2.1) 2018.



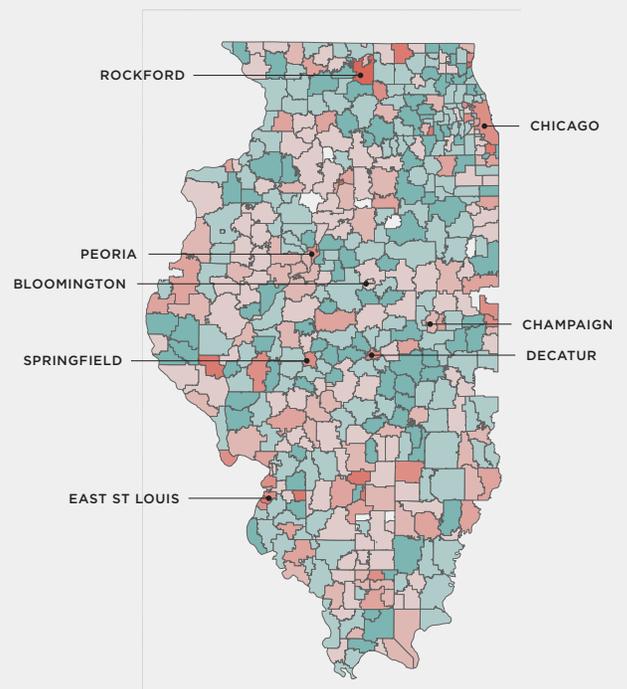
## High school graduation rates

In general, high school graduation rates are relatively high across the state, and a majority of districts exceed the state average of 85 percent. That said, numerous districts throughout the state have a ways to go to reach the goal of a 90 percent graduation rate.

### 2018 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES, BY DISTRICT



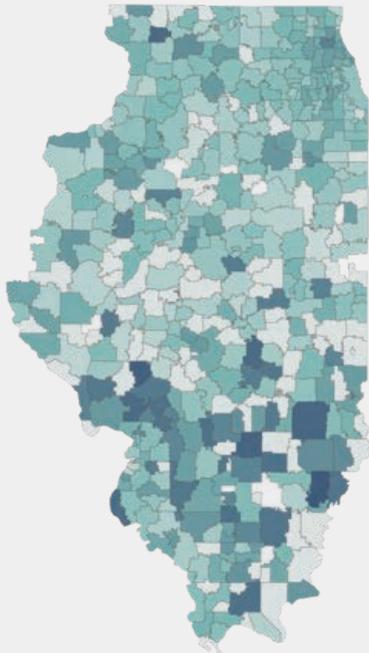
SOURCE: ISBE ILLINOIS STATE REPORT CARD, 2018.



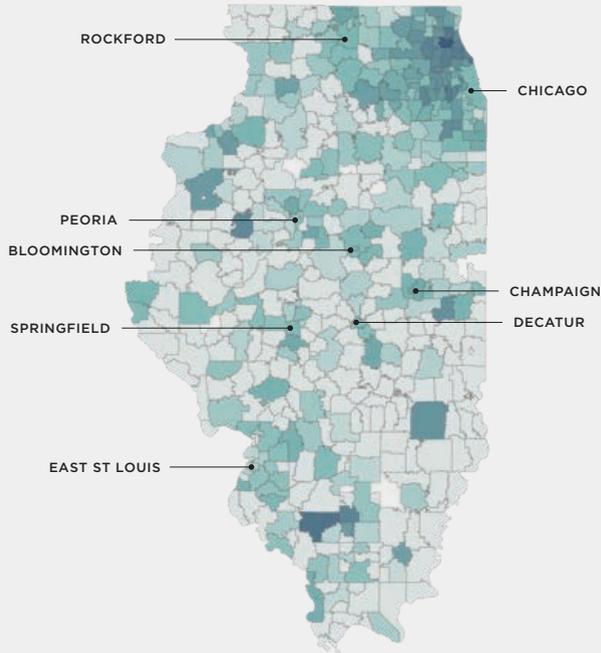
## Early college access

Access to early college classes leads to higher postsecondary success. In an encouraging development, more schools are offering, and more students are taking, challenging coursework. Enrollment in Advance Placement (AP) and dual credit courses has risen statewide. But the maps show a distinct difference between the metro Chicago area's focus on AP course offerings and the focus on dual credit offerings in southern Illinois.

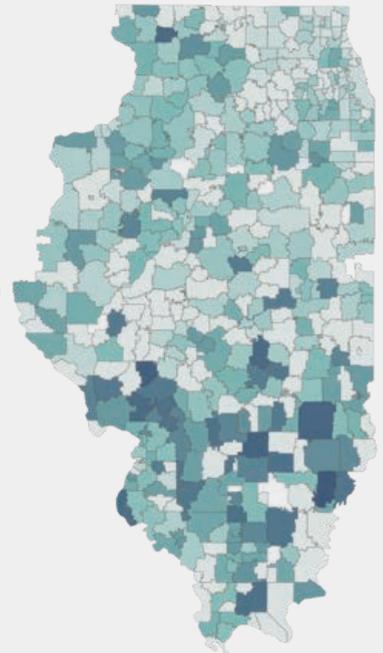
**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING ANY ADVANCED COURSES**



**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES**



**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING DUAL CREDIT COURSES**



SOURCE: ISBE, ILLINOIS STATE REPORT CARD.

# Conclusion

The educational challenges and opportunities we are faced with transcend race, income and geography. The work to prepare every child for kindergarten, to build strong reading, math, science and critical thinking skills, and to inspire and support children to succeed and persist is not unique to any demographic or region. But demographic and regional data clearly show that context and strategies may vary. If we want to support every student, then we need to pay attention not just to global and shared objectives and trends, but to the variations and differences that necessarily inform and enrich this work.

## About Advance Illinois

Advance Illinois is an independent policy and advocacy organization working toward a healthy public education system that enables all students to achieve success in college, career, and civic life. Since its founding in 2008, Advance Illinois has become a nationally recognized thought leader in education policy advocacy.

At Advance Illinois, we develop data-informed policies to support student success; build leadership and community partnerships and coalitions; and elevate the education narrative with the goal of furthering equity and pushing the state to achieve its 60 percent by 2025 goal.

Among other significant accomplishments, Advance Illinois was the architect of a five-year campaign that resulted in the enactment of a new, more equitable school funding formula. Along with our partners in this effort—including Funding Illinois' Future, a coalition of more than 200 school districts, school superintendents, and community and faith-based organizations—we helped fix Illinois' worst-in-the-nation school funding formula in 2017.

### Notes

- 1 Visit [advanceillinois.org](http://advanceillinois.org) to read the full *The State We're In 2019* report.
- 2 Certain districts have insufficient information to report data. This may be due to low participation rates or the difference between elementary and high school districts (e.g., high school districts do not report KIDS data).
- 3 The accuracy of KIDS results for English Learners may be impacted if the administrator of the assessment did not speak the home language of the child.



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