

Quick Guide: Research on the Illinois Educator Preparation Profiles



A visual summary of the following report:

Barragan Torres, M., Bates, M., & Beilstein, S. (2022). *A descriptive analysis of the Illinois Educator Preparation Profiles (IEPP): 2020 Release*. Chicago, IL: Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative (IWERC), Discovery Partners Institute, University of Illinois. <https://dpi.uillinois.edu/applied-research/iwerc/current-projects/iepp-analysis/>

What is this study about?

This study examined the IEPP (Illinois Educator Preparation Profiles), the system the state of Illinois uses to provide public information about and accountability for teacher preparation programs. The state launched the IEPP in 2020, allowing us to take a first look at it from a research perspective.

This study explores:

- how programs are performing overall,
- factors that relate to performance, and
- the technical quality of the IEPP indicators.

This study contributes to a broader conversation about how to consider and measure the role of teacher preparation in teacher and student success.

Why does it matter?

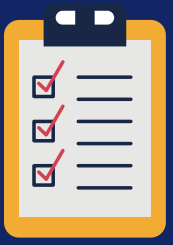
An effective, diverse teacher workforce is critical to the success of Illinois students. Teacher preparation programs have a key role—along with school leaders and broader political and economic forces—in creating that workforce.

A good system for reporting on programs can:

- identify important statewide strengths and weaknesses,
- support program improvement, and
- help prospective teachers find a good match.

Making the IEPP fair, accurate, and useful matters.

What did this study find about the overall performance of teacher preparation programs?



With few exceptions, Illinois programs **perform well** on producing candidates with:

- the **knowledge and skills for teaching** (as measured by passing content area exams and the edTPA, as well as by self-reported readiness for teaching)
- high **performance as classroom teachers** (as measured by classroom teaching evaluations)



Within the domain of candidate selection and completion, the state's programs:

- do a solid job recruiting candidates with a **GPA above 3.0**
- have **vast room for growth** in **recruiting and completing racially diverse, low-income, and first-generation candidates**.



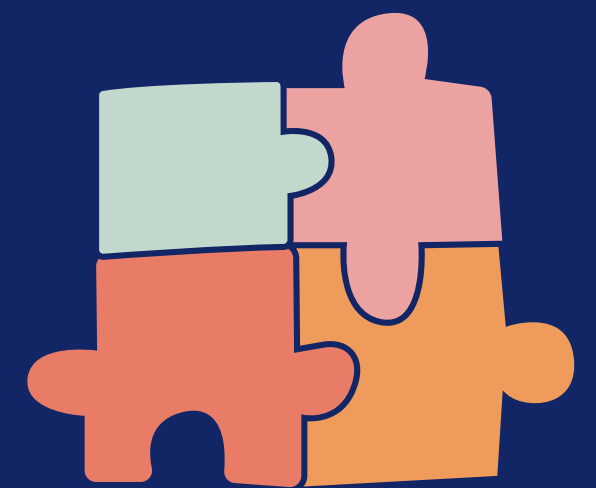
Within the domain of contribution to state needs, programs **vary widely** in their performance related to **candidate placement and persistence in teaching**, including in high needs schools.

What did this study find about the factors that relate to program performance?

Institutional and program features related to performance on various indicators.

Examples:

- Math programs tend to recruit candidates with higher entry GPAs and have lower passing rates on the content area exam and edTPA.
- Larger, more selective, and more generally diverse institutions, as well as foreign language programs, tend to recruit more diverse candidates.
- Smaller programs and General/Elementary Education programs tend to perform better at completing diverse candidates.
- Public universities and special education programs are associated with higher placement and persistence rates, including in high needs schools, but public universities have smaller proportions of candidates meeting the entry GPA threshold.



These findings suggest that **factors beyond program quality**, such as geographic draw of an institution or labor market for specific teaching areas, affect IEPP outcomes.

What did this study find about the IEPP itself?

Analysis of IEPP indicators revealed some potential issues in indicator quality that may require clarification or refinement.

For the three indicators entered by institutions, our findings suggest that:

- Institutions need clarification on when to consider a student a "teacher candidate" (i.e., after declaring the major or after formally applying to teacher candidacy).
- Institutions need heuristics for **which type of GPA** (i.e., high school or postsecondary) to report as entry GPA for specific candidate cases. It may also make sense to only use one type of GPA in the IEPP.
- The two indicators related to candidate diversity have **different criteria for which candidates qualify as diverse**. The indicators would be more comparable if these criteria were unified.

As noted above, programs perform well on knowledge and skills for teaching and performance as classroom teachers. Including **additional information about these indicators**, such as number of attempts needed to pass content area exams or performance on components of the classroom teaching evaluations, could help further distinguish programs.

How can these findings be used?

IWERC has been working with the Illinois State Board of Education to use these findings as part of its **ongoing improvement of the IEPP**, which involves multiple stakeholders and advisory groups.

In addition, findings may be used to:

- Allow teacher preparation programs to **examine and improve their performance** in light of statewide strengths and weaknesses.
- Consider what additional data are needed to best **measure the influence of teacher preparation programs** on teacher and student success.
- Determine whether, when, and how the IEPP (and similar systems) can serve dual roles of providing **transparency** and **accountability** regarding teacher preparation.

How should these findings NOT be used?

Given the idiosyncratic and aggregated nature of these data, IWERC cautions that these findings should **NOT** be used to:

- **Rank or compare Illinois teacher preparation programs.** The nature of the data, along with institutional differences, simply do not allow such comparisons.
- **Interpret what factors do and do not matter for teacher success.** These data allow us to examine aggregated program-level correlations between indicators, but they are not granular enough to allow interpretation about what factors lead to growth and effectiveness in teaching.

Who was involved in this study?

IWERC produced this report independently and is solely responsible for its findings.

IWERC worked closely with the **Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)** throughout this study.

- ISBE gave IWERC staff an introduction to the IEPP data and technical infrastructure at the outset of this project and answered clarifying questions from IWERC staff throughout the project.
- IWERC presented findings to ISBE on multiple occasions to gather feedback and clarify data issues.
- Finally, IWERC staff serve on ISBE's advisory group for IEPP improvement and provided summary materials to ISBE to support IEPP refinement.

IWERC also drew upon its **advisory group of teacher educators** from around the state.

- Teacher educators gave feedback on initial research questions and analytic plans for this work.
- Several teacher educators served as reviewers of the final report prior to publication.

Members of various **policy organizations** also reviewed this report.

Finally, this study was funded by **The Joyce Foundation**. We thank them for their support.

