



## Press Release

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### **IBHE approves fiscal year 2024 budget recommendations**

*Budget recommendations will help ensure a strong and equitable higher education ecosystem*

**SPRINGFIELD** – The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) approved a fiscal year 2024 budget recommendation that increases funding to support the equity-driven higher education strategic plan adopted in June 2021. The budget proposal is \$2.5 billion and would reflect a 7.7 percent (\$180million) increase for general funds, excluding the State University Retirement System (SURS).

The IBHE budget invests in achieving the three goals of the higher education strategic plan, [A Thriving Illinois](#): Equity, Sustainability and Growth. Since he took office, Governor JB Pritzker has demonstrated a clear commitment to funding our system of higher education following years of crippling disinvestment. Continuing to build on higher education investments from the last several years and the recent historic investments in MAP is key to removing barriers and ensuring every student in every corner of the state has equitable access to a higher education.

“I am proud of the recommendations set forth in IBHE’s proposed fiscal year 2024 budget as they build on the historic investments of the last fiscal year and reflect the Board’s commitment to meeting the goals of the strategic plan to close equity gaps,” said IBHE Chair John Atkinson. “We are already seeing increases in freshmen enrollment in our public university system from this past fall that reflect the increased investments we have already made. The recommended budget recognizes that investing in an equitable higher education system is key in fostering an inclusive and thriving Illinois economy.”

With the goal of increasing funding for the Monetary Award Program (MAP) to \$1 billion within 10 years as set out in the strategic plan for higher education in 2021, the budget recommends an increase of \$50 million to a total of \$651.6 million for MAP grants - a program that provides meaningful access to higher education for students from low-income households statewide. Additional funding for MAP will help ensure obtaining a higher education in Illinois is affordable by increasing the size of grants while ensuring access for eligible students.

IBHE is recommending a \$86.3 million (7.5 percent) increase in general operating funding for public universities to continue closing equity gaps in access, persistence, and completion. 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 students from low-income households and students of color. The state’s public institutions of higher education must receive adequate and sustainable funding to provide the high-quality education that prepares our students for the jobs of the future.

IBHE’s budget also recommends a \$24.9 million (7.5 percent) increase in funding for 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 the future of our state.

As part of the increase in funding for community colleges, IBHE is recommending \$3.2 million be allocated to a new community college dual credit grant program, one of two new ICCB grants. These funds will enable the community college system to enhance and expand dual credit opportunities with a focus on students from low-income households and students of color. IBHE recommends \$5.2 million to establish a new community college non-credit workforce training grant program. These funds will enable the community college system to increase their investment in immediate, short-term workforce solutions that position individuals for career growth without having to invest the time commitment required to get a credit bearing degree or credential.

IBHE's budget recommends continuing funding the AIM HIGH program beyond its pilot phase and maintaining funding at \$35 million. Universities have consistently reported that the AIM HIGH program has been instrumental in attracting Illinois students to Illinois universities, which was one of the goals of the pilot program when it was created and part of the growth goal in the state's higher education strategic plan.

Institutions of higher education play a pivotal role in ensuring we have a highly qualified and diverse teacher workforce. The budget proposes an increase of \$2.8 million to the Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship to encourage more students of color to enter the teaching profession. The additional funding will increase the number of eligible scholarship recipients. The program will overall serve an estimated 930 students with the recommended increase in funding.

IBHE's budget recommendations also include an increase of \$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.

"These fiscal year 2024 budget recommendations build on the incredible investments in higher education from last year's budget, which included historic investments to close equity gaps," said IBHE Executive Director Ginger Ostro. "Equity and achieving the goals in the higher education strategic plan are at the forefront of each of these budget recommendations."

Highlights include:

- \$50 million increase for MAP
- \$86.3 million (7.5 percent) increase for public universities – distributed through an equity lens
- \$24.9 million (7.5 percent) increase for community colleges
- \$4.1 million (7.5 percent) increase for adult education and career and technical education
- \$2.8 million increase to MTI to recruit and retain minority teachers
- \$1.5 million (7.5 percent) increase for the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy
- \$0.53 million for the Illinois Teachers Loan Repayment Program
- \$3.2 million for the new Dual Credit Grants
- \$5.2 million for the new Non-Credit Workforce Training Grants

The full recommended budget can be accessed [here](#).

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

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