



## **Illinois Community College Board Endorses IBHE Higher Education Plan**

*The plan contains 25 strategies to improve equity, sustainability, and economic growth for students*

SPRINGFIELD - (August 23, 2021) – The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), at its annual board retreat, officially endorsed the Illinois Higher Education Strategic plan for 2021. The plan, entitled *A THRIVING ILLINOIS: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth*, was developed by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) in partnership and collaboration with the ICCB and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC).

This strategic plan is the collaborative result of the best minds in Illinois higher education, including hundreds of higher education leaders and stakeholders from across Illinois, coming together to chart a course for all Illinoisans to have access to higher education and the resources they need to achieve economic mobility in their chosen career path,” said Dr. Lazaro Lopez, ICCB Board Chair.

ICCB board members and community college leaders were involved in many different aspects of the plan’s development, including as participants on the IBHE Strategic Plan Advisory Committee, focus groups, and Design Working Groups.

“I’m so proud of the work of more than 10,000 people who gave their time and effort over the past year to craft a plan that moves higher education forward in Illinois. I’m honored to have been a part of such a committed group of individuals and organizations. Starting the conversation with a hard look at the disparate outcomes for different students across the state was critically important. It helped focus our attention on those things that most need improvement,” said ICCB board member and Strategic Plan Advisory Committee participant Paige Ponder.

The plan contains 25 strategies designed around three goals: 1) Equity: Close the equity gaps for students who have historically been left behind; 2) Sustainability: Build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions; and, 3) Growth: Increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth. Community colleges and the students they serve figure prominently in the plan.

To see the complete report visit: <https://ibhestrategicplan.ibhe.org/>

**About the Illinois Community College Board**

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is the state coordinating organization for the Illinois Community College System - the third largest in the country and the leading public workforce development trainer in the state. The ICCB has statutory responsibility for administering state and federal grants to community college districts and adult education providers and managing high school equivalency testing for Illinois. Illinois community colleges serve over 600,000 residents each year in credit, noncredit, and continuing education courses. Illinois is home to 48 colleges in 39 community college districts which provide high quality, accessible, cost-effective educational opportunities to the entire state.

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