



# EDUCATION / WORKFORCE TRAINING

APRIL 2008

## FACTS ABOUT THE ILLINOIS WORKFORCE:

- Nearly 1/2 of the over 6 million workers in Illinois are professionals, skilled technicians, craftspeople, or machine operators
- Over 12.9% are employed in manufacturing
- 17.1% of the state's workforce are employed in goods-producing industries.
- Illinois is ranked 5th in the nation and 2nd in the Great Lakes region in Value Added through manufacturing.
- 56.2% of the state's workforce have gained education beyond high school.
- Illinois worker productivity exceeds the U.S. average by \$0.35 per hour.
- 48 Community Colleges provide the state's current and future workers training in over 240 different occupations.

### ISSUES FOR 2008

ELECTIONS  
HEALTH CARE  
TAXES  
EDUCATION/  
WORKFORCE  
TRANSPORTATION  
TELECOM/  
TECHNOLOGY

### IMPORTANT DATES

#### APRIL 23

MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON  
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM  
BELVEDERE BANQUETS

#### APRIL 24

BUSINESS EXPO  
2:00 PM - 6:30 PM  
ELK GROVE PARK  
DISTRICT PAVILION

#### MAY 19

SPRING JOB FAIR  
AVALON BANQUETS

### GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS TEAM:

Greater O'Hare Association  
Governmental Affairs Team is  
focused on educating and  
activating the business  
community.

Through our dual mission of  
educating and activating we  
can unify our voice to be  
heard by legislators and  
community leaders.

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## ILLINOIS WORKS COALITION STATEWIDE TOUR

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod R. Blagojevich met with members of the Illinois Works Coalition, co-chaired by former U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert, and Southern Illinois University President Glenn Poshard, at the Executive Mansion in Springfield following the launch of the coalition's statewide listening tour. The Illinois Works Coalition is hosting informal discussions around the state to draw expertise from business, labor and local leaders in an effort to pass Illinois Works - Governor Blagojevich's \$25 billion capital program to build or rebuild critical infrastructure that would support 700,000 jobs statewide.

President Poshard led the first discussion in Decatur with families, business owners and labor leaders about how a comprehensive capital program would benefit their communities.

"This coalition will link families, businesses and labor leaders as we build support for a capital bill this spring," said Governor Blagojevich. "The nation's economy continues to struggle. We need to make sure

we're doing everything we can in Illinois to put people to work. A capital program is central in our efforts."

"It has been nine years too long and it's time for capital investment," said Co-Chair Hastert. "I am pleased to meet with the entire Coalition and continue to take further steps to get this bill passed."

"This bill means a great deal to the people of Illinois and would better improve our schools and transportation infrastructure," said Co-Chair Poshard. "Illinois Works is a wealth of opportunities in so many different ways and the fact that it would support so many jobs is key in this economy."

Illinois Works will support more than 700,000 jobs and fix the state's deteriorating roads and bridges, build and repair schools across the state, and provide resources for statewide economic development. The Governor's Illinois Works plan includes:

- \$14.4 billion, road and bridge programs
- \$3.8 billion, school construction

- \$2.7 billion, public transit
- \$1.1 billion, higher education
- \$1.1 billion, environment, energy and technology
- \$1.0 billion, economic development, including housing
- \$600 million, improved and expanded state facilities
- \$500 million, airports and rail

During the listening tour, members of the coalition travel to communities around the state to hear directly from residents about the depth of capital needs around the state. The objective of the visits is to document the extensive need for capital investment in Illinois and to build grassroots support by recruiting additional coalition members throughout the state. Coalition members will share their findings with lawmakers in Springfield in order to ensure a capital bill is passed by the General Assembly this legislative session.

For more information on the Illinois Works Coalition, visit [www.IllinoisWorksCoalition.com](http://www.IllinoisWorksCoalition.com).

## DID YOU KNOW...

- 90% of the fastest growing jobs will require some form of postsecondary education.
- Business is spending billions each year to train new employees and remediate the educational skill gaps of those already in the workforce.
- The American workforce is aging - 77 million baby boomers are set to retire over the next several decades.
- The current lack of U.S.-trained scientists and engineers is a direct threat to the leadership of U.S. innovation.



## EDUCATION / WORKFORCE TRAINING

### INNOVATION GRANTS FOR DEVELOPING THE MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is working with state agency partners in conducting pilot projects to explore different strategies for implementing the recommendations of the Manufacturing Task Force of the Illinois Workforce Investment Board. As part of this effort, DCEO will be launching a series of pilot projects to explore new models for preparing the manufacturing workforce in critical shortage specialty areas identified by the task force including metalworking and welding. DCEO will be fund-

ing pilot projects with industry organizations, local workforce investment areas (LWIAs), community colleges, and community-based non-profit organizations that address how to train and place more skilled workers in these targeted specialty areas in regions with documented shortages. Priority will be given to those organizations that have strong employer partnerships with immediate hiring needs in the targeted skill areas. Priority also will be given to those organizations that are committed to expanding training capacity and

are proposing proven or innovative approaches to training and employing skilled workers in these targeted specialty areas.

Industry organizations, local workforce investment areas, community colleges, and community-based non-profit organizations interested in participating in this project should contact Michael Baker at 217-588-6423 or michael.baker@illinois.gov. For more information, visit [www.illinoisbiz.biz/dceo/Bureaus/Workforce\\_Development](http://www.illinoisbiz.biz/dceo/Bureaus/Workforce_Development)

### EXPANDING THE ROLE AND SCOPE OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is launching a pilot project to explore how to expand the role and scale of social enterprises in increasing employment opportunities for low-income, disadvantaged populations in Illinois, especially in depressed economic areas and communities. As part of this effort, DCEO will be awarding planning grants to local government entities and non-profit organizations to develop social enterprises that can provide training and employment opportunities. To demonstrate the feasibility of social enterprise development, DCEO will be awarding planning grants for developing or expanding social enterprises in the following targeted industries:

- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Information Technology Services
- Administrative Support/Building/Waste Management Services
- Hospitality/Food Services
- Wholesale/Retail Trade
- Human Services (including Workforce/Employment Services)

Priority will be given to organizations that have the leadership and organizational capac-

ity to launch social enterprises. Priority also will be given to organizations with strong business connections and partnerships and strong commitments from their boards to pursue social enterprises. All grantees will be required to participate in at least four regular project meetings per year to explore how to further assist the development of social enterprises in Illinois.

Local government entities or non-profit organizations interested in participating in the project should contact Michael Baker at 217-588-6423 or michael.baker@illinois.gov. For more information, visit [www.illinoisbiz.biz/dceo/Bureaus/Workforce\\_Development](http://www.illinoisbiz.biz/dceo/Bureaus/Workforce_Development)

### REPORT CARD: ILLINOIS EDUCATION

Academic Achievement	C	
Academic Achievement of Low-Income and Minority Students	D	
Return on Investment	B	
Truth in Advertising About Student Proficiency	C	
Rigor of Standards	C	
Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness	A	
21st Century Teaching Force	A	
Flexibility in Management and Policy	B	
Data Quality	F	

**Academic Achievement:** Student performance in Illinois is middling. Fourth graders stand just below the national average in the percentage at or above the proficient level on NAEP reading and math exams, while 8th grade students score just above the national average.

**Academic Achievement of Low-Income and Minority Students:** Illinois posts low marks in this category. Only 14% of Hispanic 4th grade students score at or above the proficient level on the NAEP math exam. The national average for Hispanic 4th graders is 19%.

**Return on Investment:** Student achievement in Illinois is solid relative to state spending (after controlling for student poverty, the percentage of students with special needs, and cost of living). This strong return on investment earns the state a B in our ranking.

**Truth in Advertising About Student Proficiency:**

Illinois gets modest marks on the credibility of its student proficiency scores. The grade is based on the difference between the percentage of students identified as proficient in reading and math on 2005 state exams and the percentage identified as proficient on the NAEP in 2005.

**Rigor of Standards:** Illinois receives a mediocre grade for the rigor of its standards. While its English and science standards receive solid marks, the state has yet to align high school graduation requirements with college and workplace expectations or to enact a rigorous graduation exit exam.

**Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness:** Illinois earns a high grade in this category. Seventy-six percent of the state's 9th grade students receive a diploma within four years. The state's 11th and 12th graders perform very well on core Advanced Placement exams.

**21st Century Teaching Force:** Illinois earns high marks for its teacher workforce policies. The state tests incoming teachers on their basic skills, requires high school teachers to pass subject knowledge tests, and requires alternative route participants to demonstrate subject matter expertise.

**Flexibility in Management and Policy:** The state receives a solid grade on how much freedom and flexibility it gives its schools and principals. The state has established a virtual school, and 91% of principals report a major degree of influence over new teacher hiring.

**Data Quality:** Illinois gets very low marks for its efforts to collect and report high-quality education data. The state does not have the ability to match individual students' test records from year to year to measure academic growth, and it does not collect student-level graduation and dropout data.