

Overview of the Recommendations from the Commission on Equitable Public University Funding

Illinois has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to fix funding for its public universities. With no model for distributing state appropriations, funding has been cut 46% since 2000 (even considering recent increases), shifting costs to students, particularly those who can least afford it. Enrollment has decreased by 15,000 students from 2012 to 2022, disproportionately impacting students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.¹

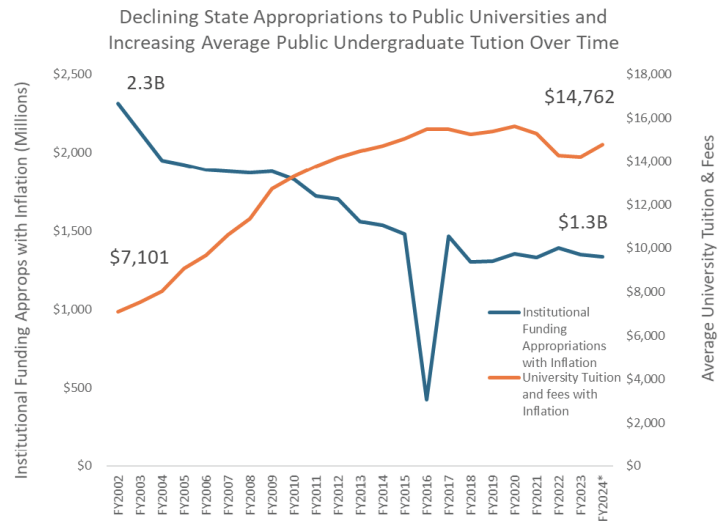
By implementing the recommendations from the Illinois Commission on Equitable Public University Funding, lawmakers have an opportunity to make Illinois universities equitable, accessible, and affordable, ensuring all institutions and their students can thrive. The Commission has developed a funding formula that centers on the following principles:

- **Adequacy:** Funding allocation is calculated based on the needs of the students that each university enrolls, grounded in costs of additional academic and non-academic supports.
- **Equity:** More funding is driven to support historically underrepresented students and the universities that disproportionately enroll them. Universities that are farthest from adequate funding are prioritized in new state spending.
- **Stability:** Institutional success in the long run is maintained with a hold-harmless provision and mechanisms to address rising costs for universities. The Commission’s equitable funding formula gets all universities to adequate funding within 10-15 years.
- **Accountability:** The model will bring a new paradigm of accountability that aligns funding to improvements in spending, affordability, enrollment, outcomes, and state and institutional goals.

Once implemented and funded, the Commission’s equitable funding formula will result in tens of thousands more Illinoisans with life-changing degrees, who will contribute billions more in state taxes. All universities will receive resources that will help them to thrive, with the bulk of new funds targeted to improve equity.

The status quo of higher education funding in Illinois is failing our most marginalized students, and they’re responding by opting out. With a nation-leading funding model, annual increases to restore investment in higher education, and an ongoing commitment to state aid, Illinois will rebuild university enrollment, educate residents across our state, and ultimately grow our economy to support families and communities into the future.

Read the full report at transformhigheredil.org.



¹ For example, Black student enrollment has dropped 22% and low-income student enrollment has dropped 19%.