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Illinois' Children "Can't Afford To Wait" PEER IL Urges Governor To Invest In Equitable Education For All Illinois Children

Today, the Partnership for Equity and Education Rights Illinois ([PEER IL](#)) applauds Governor Pritzker's commitment to Illinois' youngest children. We congratulate the Governor on his pledge to expand state preschool and child care programs, with the caution that K-12 public school students cannot be overlooked. In the interest of ensuring all Illinois' children receive an adequately funded education, we urge Governor Pritzker to invest accordingly in the [Evidence Based Funding \(EBF\)](#) formula, well beyond the minimum amount he touted today, which is already mandated by Illinois state law. This is the only way Illinois will be able to meet the law's [2027 legislative](#) target. By doing so, the Governor will be able to ensure all Illinois' children receive the quality education they deserve. Because, as the Governor stated today, Illinois' children "can't afford to wait."

Right now, Illinois is ranked [46th out of 50 states](#) for equitable school funding. Currently, around [1.7 million Illinois public school students attend almost 600 school](#) districts that are underfunded according to the state's own EBF adequacy calculations. Too often, these are students from historically marginalized communities - students of color, students with disabilities, students who are multilingual learners, students in low property wealth districts, and students in rural communities - who continue to disproportionately bear the consequences of the state's unmet commitments to education. Fully funding the EBF formula is Illinois' most direct path to achieving statewide school funding equity. Just as expanding preschool and child care programs will require a significant budgetary increase, the PEER IL coalition understands that fully funding the EBF formula is complex but necessary to close the funding gap between Illinois school districts and provide all public school students with the baseline level of resources they need to succeed.

PEER IL urges Governor Pritzker and the State of Illinois to fulfill the promise of the EBF to deliver an adequate and equitably funded K-12 education to all Illinois students. To do less diminishes one of the state's most highly regarded tools for advancing equity while reducing Illinois' stated commitment to equity in funding K-12 education to rhetoric. At its current rate of EBF funding, nearly two more generations of Illinois children will receive an inadequately funded education. A fully-funded education is a fundamental right that every child in Illinois deserves, regardless of zip code. By taking this crucial step, Illinois can demonstrate a genuine commitment to ensuring that every child in the state has a real chance at achieving educational success.

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The [Partnership for Equity and Education Rights in Illinois](#) (PEER IL) is a state-wide advocacy network focused on collaboration between school community members, organizers, lawyers, academics, researchers and policy makers on campaigns that drive reinvestment in public education. PEER IL is part of a national effort, 10 partners across 7 states, tasked with building movements around innovative state and local solutions for education equity.