

Illinois Education Roundtable 2009 Policy Briefs

Special Education Funding

State of Illinois funding for Special Education Personnel should be established and sustained at 33% of the average Illinois teacher salary. In addition, non-certificated reimbursement should be linked to average teacher salary.

Statement of the Problem:

- Districts receive partial reimbursement for certified and non-certified staff that work with Special Education students.
- In 1977, districts received \$6,250 for each certified Special Ed staff member, which comprised 50% of the average teacher salary. In 1985, the rate increased to \$8,000 for certified personnel and \$2,800 for non-certified personnel. These rates contributed 35% of the average teacher salary. This appropriation did not increase for twenty two years.
- In 2007, the General Assembly increased the reimbursement to \$9,000/\$3,500 for certified/non-certified staff. This contributes approximately 16% of the average salary.

- Program costs continue to rise and reimbursement has failed to keep pace. If adjusted for inflation, districts should receive over \$17,000 per certified staff using the Employment Cost Index, based on the 1985 funding level.

Preferred Solution:

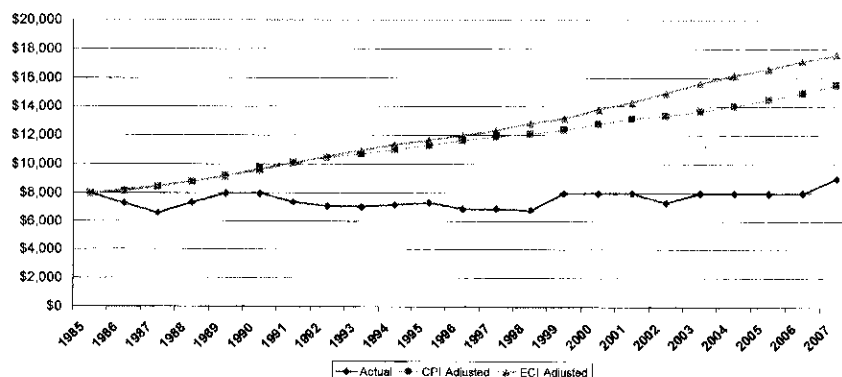
- Increase personnel reimbursement for certified/non-certified staff to \$19,765/\$6,918 (previously proposed in SB 2288), approximately 33% of the average teacher salary.

Resources Required:

- The increased funding would cost approximately \$500 million. (previously proposed in SB2288)

Additional Implications, Resources, or Issues:

- All school funding should increase by the Employment Cost Index (ECI) annually.
- Additional revenue may be phased in over several years.
- Legislation should allow districts to levy for the shortfall of Special Education costs outside of the tax cap and should allow non-PTELL districts to levy actual Special Education costs instead of being restricted by the limiting rate.

Special Ed Personnel Reimbursement Annual reimbursement compared to ECI/CPI

Illinois Education Roundtable Member Organizations:

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