

THE POTENTIAL HARM TO DOWNSTATE SCHOOLS IF THE GOVERNOR VETOES SB1

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Late on Sunday, June 11, 2017, the State Journal-Register reported that Governor Rauner would veto the Evidence-Based Funding for Student Success Act, commonly known as SB1.¹ According to the State Journal-Register, “Gov. Bruce Rauner’s education adviser, Beth Purvis, said the governor supports 90 percent of the education funding reform bill that was passed by the legislature this spring, but would still veto it...”² If the Governor carries through on this veto threat, downstate schools will be among the biggest casualties in Illinois. The reason for this is simple, as will be explained below—the gap in having adequate resources to educate students is greater downstate than it is overall state-wide.

SB1 would change how K-12 public education is funded in the state of Illinois. Instead of using the current, outdated funding formula, the new formula ties school funding to the evidence-based best practices which research shows enhance student achievement in the classroom. The new law would calculate a unique adequacy funding target for each school district by identifying the cost of implementing these research based practices, based on the needs of the students attending that district. The greater the student need in a district, the higher its adequacy target. Under SB1, as new funding for K-12 education is invested, that funding goes first to those districts which are the furthest from their adequacy targets.

Figure 1 shows the total and per pupil adequacy funding gap for all downstate school districts, districts in some select downstate counties, and the state as a whole.³ In the aggregate, downstate schools have an adequacy funding gap of **-\$2.617 billion**, or **-\$3,937** per pupil. That means 40 percent of the state’s adequacy funding gap is downstate, even though only 34 percent of all students attend schools downstate.

Figure 1
Adequacy Funding Gap for Downstate and Select Downstate Counties

County	Adequacy Funding Gap	Adequacy Gap Per Pupil	% State Enrollment	% of Adequacy Funding Gap
Downstate	\$2,617,420,690	\$3,937	33.9%	40.0%
Winnebago	\$189,969,089	\$4,410	2.2%	2.9%
St. Clair	\$174,275,440	\$4,352	2.0%	2.7%
Madison	\$151,602,530	\$3,818	2.0%	2.3%
Peoria	\$105,230,192	\$3,744	1.4%	1.6%
Rock Island	\$102,786,879	\$4,534	1.2%	1.6%
Vermilion	\$63,118,085	\$4,950	0.7%	1.0%
Williamson	\$47,631,483	\$4,745	0.5%	0.7%
Adams	\$34,438,204	\$3,871	0.5%	0.5%
Jackson	\$30,248,035	\$4,393	0.4%	0.5%
Johnson	\$8,363,528	\$4,914	0.1%	0.1%

Source: CTBA analysis of ISBE’s full model of House Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 1 (Manar/Davis)

Hence, on a per pupil basis, the adequacy funding gap is larger downstate (\$3,937) than it is for Illinois (\$3,345), and downstate schools would therefore be disproportionately harmed if the Governor vetoes SB1.⁴

While the amount of new funding for K-12 education will ultimately be decided by the General Assembly, modeling done by the Illinois State Board of Education assumed that \$350 million in new dollars would be put into the evidence based funding formula in the first year SB1 is implemented.⁵ Figure 2 shows that downstate districts would receive over \$120 million—or 34.5 percent—of this new funding.⁶

Figure 2
Percentage of State Enrollment and New Funding from SB1
in Downstate and Selected Downstate Counties

County	Adequacy Funding Gap	Total New Funding	% State Enrollment	% of New Funding
Downstate	\$2,617,420,690	\$120,582,450	33.9%	34.5%
Winnebago	\$189,969,089	\$6,603,345	2.2%	1.9%
St. Clair	\$174,275,440	\$8,809,770	2.0%	2.5%
Madison	\$151,602,530	\$6,805,205	2.0%	1.9%
Peoria	\$105,230,192	\$3,425,058	1.4%	1.0%
Rock Island	\$102,786,879	\$5,391,603	1.2%	1.5%
Vermilion	\$63,118,085	\$4,324,193	0.7%	1.2%
Williamson	\$47,631,483	\$2,949,253	0.5%	0.8%
Adams	\$34,438,204	\$1,006,793	0.5%	0.3%
Jackson	\$30,248,035	\$1,611,576	0.4%	0.5%
Johnson	\$8,363,528	\$603,429	0.1%	0.2%

Source: CTBA analysis of ISBE’s full model of House Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 1 (Manar/Davis)

Some counties, like Vermilion and St. Clair, would see a fairly significant increase in funding in respect to their enrollment. As Figure 2 shows, the state still has a long way to go to fund K-12 public education to an adequate level. If Governor Rauner were to veto SB1, downstate districts would suffer, as they would lose equity focused school funding approach taken under the evidence based model that directs most of the new state funding invested in K-12 education to districts farthest away from their adequacy targets. Given that, overall, downstate school districts are farther from adequacy than the state average, a veto of SB1 disproportionately hurts downstate schools.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Jason Nevel, "Purvis: Rauner likes 90% of school funding reform bill but will veto", The State Journal-Register, June 11, 2017. <http://www.sj-r.com/news/20170611/purvis-rauner-likes-90-of-school-funding-reform-bill-but-will-veto>

² Jason Nevel, "Purvis: Rauner likes 90% of school funding reform bill but will veto", The State Journal-Register, June 11, 2017. <http://www.sj-r.com/news/20170611/purvis-rauner-likes-90-of-school-funding-reform-bill-but-will-veto>

³ Downstate encompasses all school districts which are not in either Cook, DuPage, Lake, Will, Kane, or McHenry Counties.

⁴ CTBA analysis of Illinois State Board of Education, "Full model of House Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 1 (Manar/Davis)", <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Education-Funding-Proposals.aspx>

⁵ Illinois State Board of Education, "Full model of House Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 1 (Manar/Davis)", <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Education-Funding-Proposals.aspx>

⁶ CTBA analysis of Illinois State Board of Education, "Full model of House Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 1 (Manar/Davis)", <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Education-Funding-Proposals.aspx>