

Parent’s Guide to College and Career-Readiness

What is “COLLEGE” ready?

College today means much more than just pursuing a four- year degree at a university. Being “college ready” means being prepared for any postsecondary education or training experience, including study at two- and four- year institutions leading to a postsecondary credential (i.e. a certificate, license, Associates or Bachelor’s degree). Being ready for college means that a high school graduate has the English and mathematics knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for and succeed in entry- level, credit-bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework.

What is “CAREER” ready?

In today’s economy, a “career” is not just a job. A career provides a family-sustaining wage and pathways to advancement and requires postsecondary training or education. A job may be obtained with only a high school diploma, but offers no guarantee of advancement or mobility. Being ready for a career means that a high school graduate has the English, and mathematics knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in the postsecondary job training and/or education necessary for their chosen career (i.e. technical/vocational program, community college, apprenticeship or significant on-the-job training).

“Reading, math and science are the foundations of student achievement. But to compete and win in the global economy, today’s students and tomorrow’s leaders need another set of knowledge and skills. These 21st century skills include the development of global awareness and the ability to collaborate and communicate and analyze and address problems. And they need to rely on critical thinking and problem solving to create innovative solutions to the issues facing our world. Every child should have the opportunity to acquire and master these skills and our schools play a vital role in making this happen.”

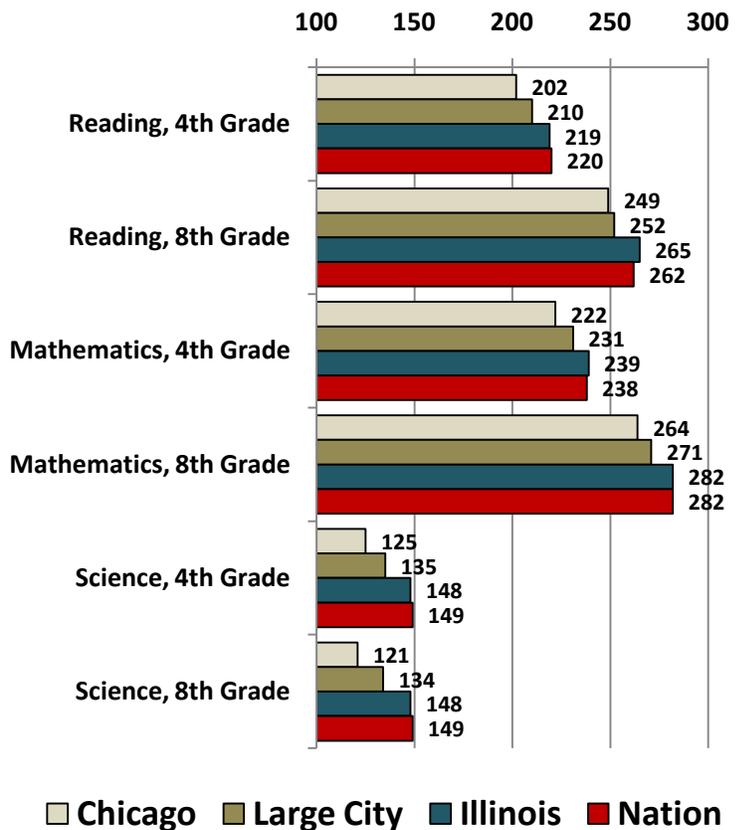
MICHAEL DELL, CEO, Dell, Inc.

Where does Illinois and Chicago stand statistically in the College and Career ready picture?

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America’s students know and can do in various subject areas. Uniform assessments are conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history. NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states and selected urban districts. The assessment stays essentially the same from year to year, with only carefully documented changes. This permits NAEP to provide a clear picture of student academic progress over time.

In the last year that reading, math and science were assessed, Chicago was behind the average for all large cities and the average Illinois scores.

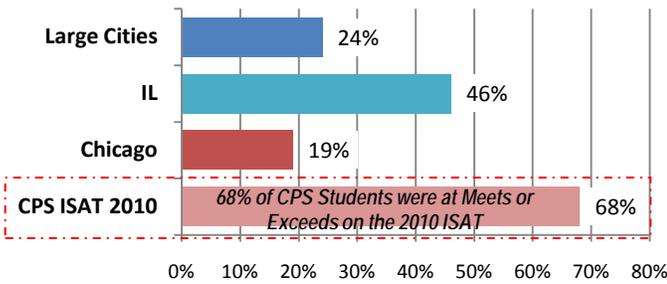
NAEP Average Scaled Scores 2009



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009.

Furthermore, while student achievement has seen some gains in CPS over the last several years, too many students are either not graduating from high school or not graduating college and career ready. Although Illinois students annually participate in the Illinois Student Achievement Test (ISAT) the reality is that the standards and the results have not accurately represented how prepared our students are for college and careers.

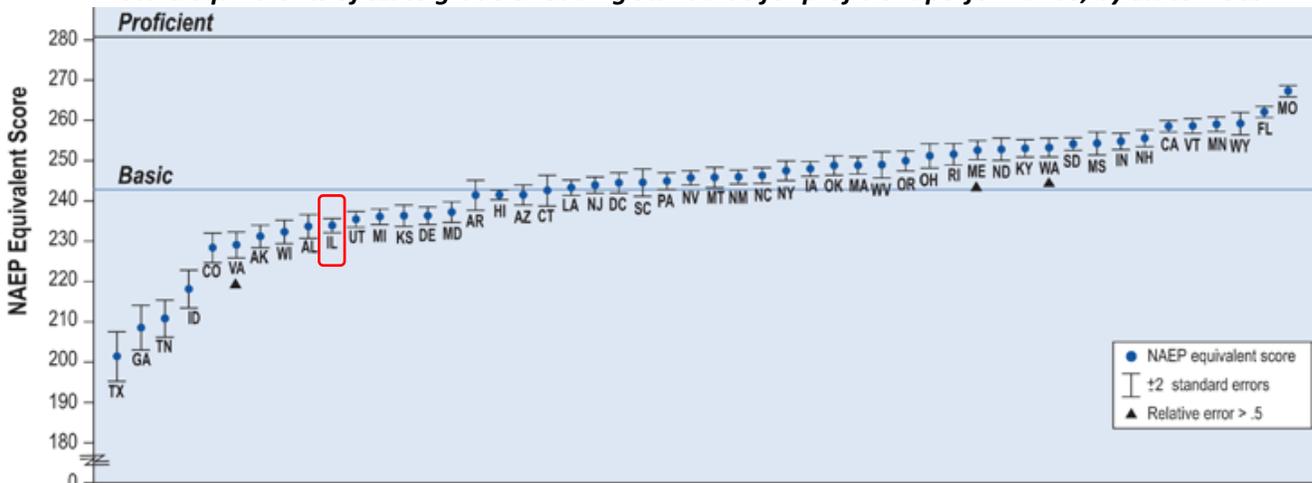
Predicted Reading Mastery Based on College Ready Standards



- Only 31% of our 8th graders tested on the path for college readiness
- Only 17.1% of elementary students exceeding state standards on the ISAT
- Only 7.9% of high school juniors met all four college readiness benchmarks on the ACT
- Only 57.5% of high school students graduate

The average Illinois student falls below the basic proficiency level required for success in college or a career.

NAEP scale equivalents of state grade 8 reading standards for proficient performance, by state: 2009



NAEP scale equivalents of state grade 8 mathematics standards for proficient performance, by state: 2009

