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### **IPA State Superintendent Advisory Council Meets**

Members of the Illinois Principals Association (IPA) State Superintendent Advisory Council recently met with the new State Superintendent, Dr. Tony Sanders, and other members of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) team to discuss important education-related initiatives and programs. Dr. Sanders opened the meeting by expressing his appreciation for the school leaders present and their colleagues across the state. He shared how he will be spending much of his first 90 days on the job listening and learning from agency staff and educators. Overall, his hopes for ISBE are to go beyond compliance and work to be a servant and support to Illinois' teachers and school leaders as they work to do what is best for young people.

After Dr. Sanders' opening comments, the group dug into the top item on the agenda – the educator pipeline. While ISBE has 18 teacher pipeline initiatives underway, one of the key programs discussed was the continued support of career and technical education (CTE) pathways. These pathways provide students with the opportunity to gain practical, hands-on experience in various career fields, including education. By offering CTE programs in teaching, ISBE hopes to attract more students to the teaching profession and help them develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

Another pipeline initiative reviewed was the need to support alternative preparation programs for teachers. In particular, the council discussed Senate Bill 2390, which is designed to make these programs more affordable and cost-effective. By providing financial assistance and other resources to individuals pursuing alternative teacher certification, ISBE hopes to attract more high-quality candidates to the teaching profession and address the ongoing teacher shortage.

ISBE also provided updates on several other important education-related initiatives and programs. The council received an update on ISBE's literacy plan, which is in the initial stages of being developed. Obviously, the plan will focus on improving reading proficiency levels among students in Illinois. To formulate the plan, the latest reading research, providing professional

development opportunities for teachers, support for struggling readers, and partnering with families and communities to support literacy development will all be considered.

PEAC's study of teacher and principal evaluation was also discussed during the meeting. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has been contracted by ISBE to work with stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the state's current teacher and principal evaluation system and make recommendations for improvements. Members of the IPA State Superintendent Advisory Council emphasized the importance of having a fair and effective evaluation system that accurately measures teacher and principal performance.

The ISBE team shared about the current status of IAR and SAT. ISBE reported that preliminary test results for these assessments are expected to be available to school leaders by mid-May. Members of the IPA State Superintendent Advisory Council expressed their hope that these results will provide valuable insights into student learning and help guide instructional decision-making in Illinois schools.

Before the meeting wrapped-up, school leaders raised concerns about the number of state-mandated trainings required and the 5 Essentials Survey. Members of the IPA State Superintendent Advisory Council expressed their frustration with the amount of time and resources required to complete the trainings. With the 5 Essentials Survey, school leaders shared difficulties they had with getting parents to take the survey and inconsistencies between raw data and ratings generated for reporting. ISBE acknowledged these concerns and committed to working with school leaders to explore what could be done to improve these processes.

Overall, the meeting between the IPA State Superintendent Advisory Council and ISBE provided valuable updates on a range of important education-related topics. By working together and sharing information, school leaders and state officials hope to do everything possible to improve education outcomes for students in Illinois.

### **About Illinois Principals Association**

The Illinois Principals Association is a professional association serving more than 6,000 school leaders throughout Illinois. IPA seeks to ensure that every Illinois school community has an effective and sustained school leader by working to develop, support, and advocate for innovative educational leaders across the State. Learn more about the IPA at [ilprincipals.org](http://ilprincipals.org).