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March 27, 2019

Center for Tax and Budget Accountability Releases New Report: To Fund EBF Fully in 10 Years, Illinois Would Need to Invest More Than Double Statutory Minimum

SPRINGFIELD – Today, the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability (CTBA) released a report, *Fully Funding the Evidence-Based Formula: Four Scenarios*, which shows that, even if Illinois annually increases school funding up to the full \$350 million minimum established under the Evidence-Based Funding for Student Success Act, or EBF, it would take over 30 years to fund all schools to the levels which the evidence indicates is needed, on a fully inflation-adjusted basis.

After decades of failing its children, particularly children of color and children in low-income communities, Illinois finally has a school funding formula designed both to close the state's historic income- and race-based funding gaps, and ultimately to provide every school district the resources which the evidence shows is required for all students to succeed academically. The EBF accomplishes this by:

- **first identifying an unique “Adequacy Target” of funding for each school district—which represents the amount the research indicates that school district needs to provide an adequate level of education to the students it serves; and then**
- **distributing most of the new funding Illinois invests in education to those districts furthest from their respective Adequacy Targets.**

Unfortunately, according to the Illinois State Board of Education, the state’s FY 2019 appropriation for K-12 education is \$7.35 billion short of what the evidence shows is needed to fund every school district in the state up to its full Adequacy Target.

“The report illustrates that an extraordinary funding effort is necessary to move Illinois’ children to adequacy,” State Representative Will Davis said. *“If we believe in what we seek to accomplish, additional resources are necessary.”*

As it stands now, the EBF only requires the state to increase funding for K-12 education by a minimum amount which ranges from \$300 million to \$350 million annually. The EBF also commits the state to funding the formula fully by June 30, 2027. However, if the annual, year-to-year increase in school funding is capped at \$350 million, it would take 31 years, or until 2051, to cover the current \$7.35 billion shortfall on a fully inflation-adjusted basis.

CTBA's report details the following different funding scenarios for the EBF, which vary by timeline:

- **If Illinois were to increase K-12 appropriations by a flat \$350 million each year, it would take approximately 31 years to fund the EBF fully after adjusting for inflation.**

- **To fund the EBF on a fully inflation-adjusted basis in 10 years as required by statute, Illinois would have to increase K-12 funding by \$779 million annually, or slightly more than double the minimum currently established by law.**
- **To fund the EBF fully in 5 years, Illinois would have to increase K-12 funding by \$1.58 billion each year.**

“When the evidence-based model got off the ground in 2017, we knew it could not be the end of our conversation about how to fairly and adequately fund public education,” said State Senator Andy Manar. *“While the numbers outlined in CTBA’s report are sobering, they should serve as a jumping-off point for further discussions about our priorities and what we’re willing to invest in current and future generations of Illinois children.”*

Making the investment required to fund the EBF fully in a reasonable period of time is crucial, because it represents the only way to prevent generations of students from continuing to attend schools that lack the capacity to provide the level of education the evidence indicates is needed for academic success. At the current pace of investment it will take 31 years to fund the EBF fully—and our students shouldn't have to wait that long to get the level of education the evidence shows they need to succeed academically.

The full report can be found online at CTBA’s website: www.ctbaonline.org.

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The Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, established in 2000, is a bi-partisan 501(c)(3) research and advocacy think tank that promotes fair, efficient and progressive tax, spending and economic policies.