

ED-RED MANDATES LEGISLATIVE AD HOC COMMITTEE

2020 Guiding Principles

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Opening Statement

The members of ED-RED's Mandates Legislative Ad Hoc Committee convened over the last three months to discuss and study the impact of unfunded mandates on suburban school districts. The committee worked to evaluate specifically burdensome mandates in a way that could be channeled through potential legislation different than in years past.

The belief statements below are a product of the work of the committee over the last three months. However, there are two overarching themes that need to be considered before introducing and passing new legislative mandates on schools:

1. Consider/quantify the specific impact of mandates on schools both before, during, and after implementation to ensure thoughtful implementation of programs and offerings.
2. Any legislation creating a new mandate should contain a provision with a review/renewal period to evaluate whether the mandate has had consistent and effective implementation.

The committee worked to find solutions around the two points above in addition to identifying unduly burdensome mandates. It is clear that some type of state body must exist to provide expert analysis and resources to legislators when a new mandate is being proposed to ensure that (1) evidence that the proposal is in fact in the best educational, social emotional and health/safety interest of children, (2) complete information regarding the costs (financial and others) for successful implementation and (3) sufficient resources to aid in and ensure consistent implementation of mandates for all Illinois schools. Ideally, this state body would also review past mandates to evaluate implementation and, when necessary, provide essential resources again to ensure consistent and successful implementation.

The report below contains both belief statements and specific mandates identified for potential removal. The committee will continue to work with members of the General Assembly to file legislation to address potential areas of mandate relief this spring session. The belief statements will guide ED-RED analysis of proposed legislation that creates new unfunded mandates for schools as we work to find opportunities for mandate relief.

Belief Statements:

- Mandates impact schools differently:
 - Some districts do not have the manpower for some mandates
 - There are staffing implications for some mandates which can put financial strain on districts
 - Quality of implementation can differ depending on school resources
- It is essential to provide a practitioner voice in all mandate discussions
- We must evaluate and reflect on mandates that need to be updated
- Before passing new mandates, there needs to be a strong understanding of the required time, resources, and level of care involved in implementation
- The committee should tier, value, and prioritize mandates list
 - Grades vs. tiers vs. dollar vs. personnel and opportunity costs
- Applicability of previous mandates should be considered
- Local control should be maintained in determining appropriate implementation

- There must be support for school on schools before/after implementation to ensure thoughtful implementation of programs and offerings
- Any legislation creating a new mandate should be connected with a review/renewal period to evaluate mandate implementation.
- Any new mandates being considered must include sufficient resources and support for successful implementation for all Illinois schools.
- Mandate implementation varies across Illinois schools regardless of region and district resources. The State should consider developing a localized process by which mandate relief would be evaluated and provided based on the local variables of each district (for example, the Regional Offices of Education could be used to oversee this process).
- The State should utilize the current Regional Office of Education Compliance Checks as a guide for mandate relief. Districts that obtain a sufficient score on a Compliance Check shall be awarded mandated relief in the following years. This mandate relief may be broad or narrow depending on the needs of and success of each district.

Mandates Identified as: Unduly Burdensome:

- Mandated trainings
 - Allow for tiered option of requirements: new employees vs. 5-year increments of employments (can even be further broken down by licensure type).
 - Limited number of contract/teacher institute days – there is time sacrificed that could use working with students in issues that really matter
 - Need to distinguish between initial vs. refresh of trainings
 - Is there a way to institute briefer “renewal” trainings vs the same every year (assuming resources outside of the school exist to accomplish this)?
 - While trainings may be short in length, the total number compose of a significant amount of time.
 - There is no standard of how long a training must take or defined options from the state to implement the video/lack of consistency.
 - Employment issues arise as to whether trainings should be completed inside vs. outside the classroom time
 - Access to a computer can be a barrier (must be completed within the workday)
 - ADHD training, teen violence trainings, sexual abuse trainings are particularly burdensome and required either annually or biannually.
 - Allow some trainings to count towards the 120 evidence hours – would need to update corresponding in Rule or Statute
 - Total number of hours that should be mandated outside of CPDU
 - Resources: the only trainings for which the State provides resources are DCFS trainings and concussion training
 - A great deal of staff training and acquisition of additional expertise is often needed for implementation when video trainings are not available
 - The cost and quality of the training resources across 850+ Illinois districts is a challenge regardless of whether they are done inside or outside the district
 - School district administrators are not necessarily the experts in targeted areas to ensure quality trainings
- Instructional mandates
 - Lack of resources and materials for specific age ranges
 - Civics, cursive writing, LGBTQ, Medal of Honor unit

- Facility and staffing mandates
 - Feminine products, signs for undesignated single use bathrooms, numerous reporting requirements (bullying, discipline, administrative costs, etc.)
- Assessments
 - Potential for competency-based assessments?
- FOIA
 - Should FOIA apply differently to different government entities?
 - Provide relief when commercial entities FOIA for information to assist bidding application
 - Timeline for response: require specific “causes” to make the request “urgent”?
 - Look at how other states handle FOIA?

Mandates overall: look at ways to adding reporting to compliance visits instead of creating separate reporting requirements – (i.e. duplicative reporting of bullying requirements)