

Affordability



With the 5th highest average public university in-state tuition and fees in the country, Illinois' high tuition rates place college out of reach for many low-income students.¹ Historically, the Monetary Award Program (MAP), Illinois' need-based financial aid program, offset high tuition costs for all eligible students. Today, MAP grants cover only 32% of the cost of attending a public university. The consequences of this imbalance are particularly acute for first generation students and students of color who make up over half of all MAP grant recipients.

75% of higher income students graduate within 6 years, while only 37% of low-income students do.²

Only 42% of eligible students receive a MAP award each year. In 2016, nearly 100,000 students that were eligible did not receive a MAP grant.³

MAP recipients graduate at the same rate as non-MAP recipients at the same institution.⁴

Proposed solutions

Increased investment in our higher education system, including a fully-funded MAP program, is necessary to ensure our institutions can serve all students well. However, there are cost-neutral policies that the state can consider in the interim, to make college more affordable for Illinois students:

- + Adopt an equity-based funding formula that distributes resources equitably and predictably, and that ensures institutions serving our most vulnerable students are well-resourced.
- + Improve time-to-degree by limiting most associate and bachelor's degree programs to 60 and 120 credit hours, respectively.
- + Maximize the number of courses that are universally transferrable among Illinois colleges and universities, saving students time and money.

1. The College Board, "Trends in College Pricing," 2016.

2. National Student Clearinghouse, Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

3. ISAC, Monetary Award Program (MAP) Evaluation, 2017.

4. Ibid.