



LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT



December 3, 2025

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Dr. Karen Sullivan and Dr. Brian Harris, of Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in October of 2025 for the new superintendent of Quincy Public Schools. The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally, information was collected regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years and the immediate and future priorities that the new Superintendent will need to address.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

Located in west-central Illinois along the Mississippi River, Quincy Public Schools serves approximately 6,500 students in a district recognized for its tradition of academic excellence, robust extracurricular offerings, and strong community engagement. The district comprises one early childhood center, five elementary schools, one junior high school, and one comprehensive high school in one location. In addition, Quincy Public Schools offers an alternative education program, a special education center, and a strong career and technical education curriculum. With dedicated faculty and staff, a supportive Board of Education, and an engaged parent and community base, the district is well positioned to build on its proud history and advance its vision for the future.

Quincy, known as the “Gem City,” is a dynamic community of 40,000 residents that combines historic charm with modern opportunity. The city is distinguished by its vibrant arts and cultural scene, historic architecture, thriving business community, and affordable quality of life. Situated on the Mississippi River, Quincy offers exceptional recreational opportunities, highly regarded healthcare systems, and access to respected higher education institutions. A community that deeply values its public schools, Quincy provides an outstanding environment in which to live and work, offering the next superintendent both professional challenge and personal reward.

A data brief that includes an analysis of the 2023-24 and 2024-25 Illinois School Report Card Data for Quincy Public Schools is included as an appendix to this report. It provides detailed information on student achievement, district finances, student demographics, general district

characteristics, and 5Essentials survey data. Percentiles are used to indicate where Quincy School District 172 falls in the distribution of school districts across the state of Illinois on a wide variety of these metrics.

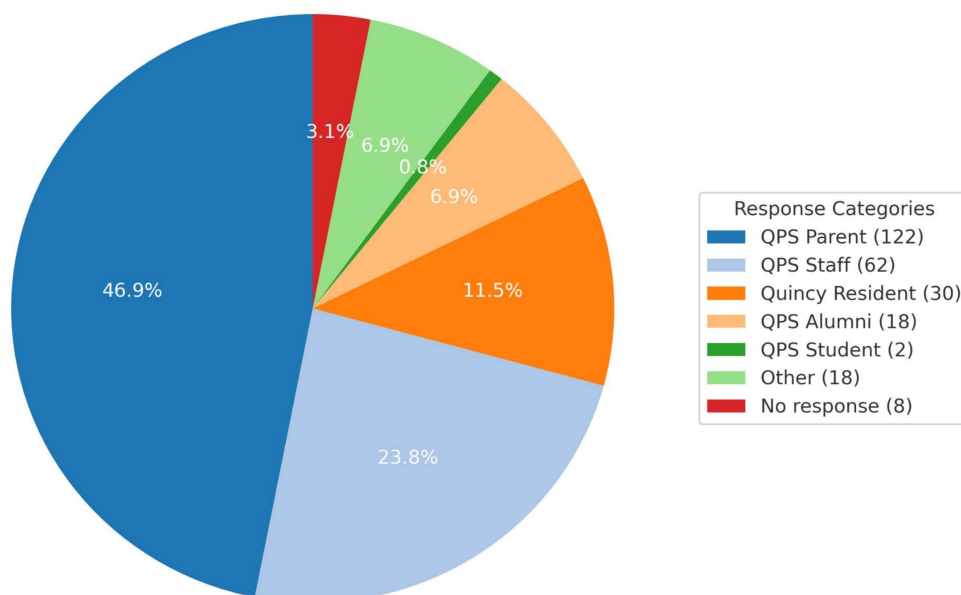
PROCESS

During October, the HYA Associates conducted focus groups and interviews. Three targeted focus groups were scheduled along with 8 individual interviews. In all, we had 36 stakeholders attend the focus group sessions and interviews. Additionally, 260 stakeholders responded to the district supported online survey which mirrored the questions asked during the forums and individual interviews. The online survey was available to stakeholders from October 14 - 28 and provided an additional avenue for stakeholders to participate in the process of determining key attributes of the district and the desired qualifications and characteristics for the next Superintendent.

ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Quincy Public Schools Superintendent Search Engagement Survey was completed by 260 stakeholders. The largest stakeholder group were parents who represented 46.9 percent of all respondents. Almost a quarter of the respondents were QPS staff members. They made up the second most populous stakeholder group at 23.8 percent of all respondents. The third largest participant group were residents at 11.5 percent of all respondents.

Distribution of Responses by Category (Total: 260)



FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEW PARTICIPATION

The following key stakeholders participated in the focus groups/interviews:

- Board Members
- Interim Superintendent
- QPS Leadership Team (Administrators)
- QPS Parent Leaders (PTO)
- QPS Staff

The structure of the focus groups was open, allowing for participants to build upon each other's comments. All of the focus group sessions and individual interviews were conducted via Google Meets.

FOCUS GROUP/INTERVIEW/COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONS


Those involved in providing input into the selection of the Superintendent were asked to respond to the following questions:

- What are the strengths of the district and community?
- What are the challenges facing the district?
- What are the immediate and future priorities for the next Superintendent?
- What are the personal and professional qualifications and attributes that you desire in the next Superintendent?

It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if, in the consultants' judgment, they warranted the Board's attention.

STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

Quincy Public Schools is recognized for its deep community pride, long-standing traditions, and a strong sense of unity that centers around its schools. The district benefits from dedicated teachers, administrators, and support staff who consistently go above and beyond to support students' academic, social, and emotional needs. Programs in academics, athletics, fine arts, and career and technical education provide diverse pathways for student success, and strong partnerships with local organizations and higher education institutions enrich learning opportunities. The district has modernized some of its facilities, including newly constructed elementary buildings.



In addition to these structural and cultural assets, Quincy’s schools are supported by an active and engaged Board of Education, a strong Foundation, and booster organizations that contribute time, talent, and resources. The district is known for its collaborative spirit, exemplified by strong relationships between educators, parents, and community partners. Stakeholders describe a “Bleed Blue” culture that fosters loyalty, pride, and a collective commitment to excellence. Quincy’s small-city environment offers a safe, family-oriented setting where education is valued and where community members frequently rally to support students and school initiatives.

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES FACING THE DISTRICT

Despite its many strengths, the district faces significant challenges related to staffing, funding, and public perception. Teacher recruitment and retention remain urgent issues, as salaries lag behind comparable districts and workloads continue to increase. Staff morale has been affected by high turnover, limited compensation, and a sense of fatigue following recent leadership and disciplinary controversies. Persistent concerns about student behavior, attendance, and social-emotional needs have added pressure to teachers and administrators. At the same time, the community’s divisiveness—amplified by social media and misinformation—has eroded trust between stakeholders and district leadership, making communication and transparency top priorities moving forward.

Fiscal constraints continue to pose long-term risks to stability and growth. The district’s ability to maintain competitive salaries, address deferred maintenance, and sustain high-quality programs depends on creative financial strategies and renewed community support. Equity also remains a key concern—both in academic achievement and access to programs across schools. These challenges highlight the need for consistent, transparent leadership focused on rebuilding trust, engaging the community in problem-solving, and reestablishing a shared vision for the future of Quincy Public Schools.

FREQUENTLY NOTED THEMES

The data contained in this report were gathered from Board-identified or self-selected stakeholder respondents as outlined earlier in this report. Therefore, it should be emphasized that the data are not from a purely scientific sampling. However, in almost all cases the data were prioritized by the individuals and members of the groups from which they were gathered. Items are included from the interviews, focus groups, and/or survey, if, in the HYA Associates’ judgment, they were repeated with sufficient frequency thus indicating a pattern and/or warranting the Board’s attention. Those receiving multiple mentions are listed below and are not in priority order:

Strengths:

- Dedicated staff and educators committed to student well-being and success.
- Community pride and tradition—the “Bleed Blue” culture unites students, staff, and families.
- Diverse academic and extracurricular offerings in academics, athletics, music, arts, and career/technical education.
- Updated facilities, including new elementary schools.
- Supportive and active partnerships with local colleges, businesses, and civic organizations.
- Strong Board and Foundation supporting fiscal oversight and innovation.
- Safe and family-centered environment that values education and involvement.
- Small-city advantage—safe, affordable, and family-friendly.

Challenges/Concerns/Issues:

- Teacher retention and low pay—salaries not competitive with nearby districts.
- Staff shortages—especially in special education and hard-to-fill subjects.
- Declining trust and morale—following recent leadership and disciplinary issues.
- Behavioral and attendance concerns—affecting learning and safety.
- Fiscal challenges—need for long-term funding solutions.
- Community division and misinformation—especially on social media.
- Inconsistent leadership and communication, with transparency concerns.
- Equity gaps—academic, behavioral, and resource disparities across schools.

Immediate and Future Priorities for the next Superintendent:

Stakeholders emphasized that the next superintendent must focus immediately on rebuilding trust, improving staff morale, and visibly engaging with schools and the community. Communication and transparency are essential for healing relationships. Long-term priorities include stabilizing finances, raising teacher pay, implementing a clear strategic plan for academic success, and ensuring equity and safety across all schools.

Immediate Priorities include:

- Be visible and approachable—attend school and community events.
- Rebuild trust with staff, parents, and community members.
- Address teacher compensation and retention.
- Improve communication and transparency at all levels.
- Restore morale and unity within the district.

- Develop clear plans to address student behavior and safety.

Future Priorities include:

- Develop a strategic plan for improvement in academics, equity, and innovation.
- Develop a sustainable financial strategy to address current and future financial needs, maintain fiscal health, and continue responsible budgeting.
- Community engagement around funding, attendance, and program access.
- Provide strong leadership development and rebuilding administrative capacity.
- Enhance special education services and program consistency.
- Continue facility and technology investments with responsible budgeting.
- Expand workforce development and college partnerships.


Desired Superintendent Qualifications and Attributes:

Stakeholders consistently expressed the need for a visible, approachable, ethical, and experienced superintendent who can communicate effectively and transparently, inspire trust, and make tough decisions with integrity. The ideal leader will balance compassion and empathy with decisiveness, possess strong fiscal and instructional understanding, and be deeply invested in the Quincy community for the long term.

Frequently Noted Qualifications/Attributes:

- Visible and engaged— in schools, classrooms, and community events.
- Proven leader— with experience as a superintendent or senior administrator.
- Strong communicator—transparent, approachable, and confident with the media.
- Integrity and honesty—models accountability, transparency, and ethical leadership.
- Visionary and strategic thinker—develops and implements a clear plan for growth that is student-centered
- Collaborative and relationship-driven—values input from staff, families, and community.
- Committed to Quincy—not a “stepping stone” leader; invested in long-term success.
- Instructional and fiscal competence—balances educational excellence with fiscal responsibility.
- Inclusive and equity-minded—ensures every student has access to opportunity.
- Resilient and thick-skinned—able to handle criticism and navigate controversy calmly.
- Resilient and decisive—able to handle controversy with integrity.

CONCLUSION



The HYA Associates would like to thank all the stakeholders, who participated in the interviews, focus groups or who completed the online survey, for their insights and candor. A note of thanks to all staff members who assisted in facilitating our work in gathering this data, and for their extra efforts in handling the necessary arrangements for our virtual meetings and follow-up on any issues of concern or clarification.

In closing, HYA is committed to recruiting and screening candidates who fit this leadership profile and will provide Quincy Public Schools the high quality of successful leadership it desires. The next Superintendent needs to sustain all that is special about the schools, programs, and personnel and provide the vision, hard work, commitment and collaboration that will engage all stakeholders in moving the District forward to meet the expectations of long term success.



Appendix

Data Brief 2024-25 Illinois State Report Card Analysis

State Percentile Analysis

Quincy School District 172



2024-2025

Illinois

State Report Card Analysis

State Percentile Analysis

Quincy SD 172

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to examine how Quincy SD 172 compared to other Illinois districts on a range of metrics for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years. Percentiles are reported for context and indicate where Quincy SD 172 falls in the distribution of school districts across the state of Illinois on various indicators.

Methods

Data were collected across the areas listed below from the Illinois Report Card website <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com> :

<u>Student Achievement</u>	<u>Financial Information</u>	<u>Student Demographics</u>	<u>District Characteristics</u>	<u>5Essentials</u>
Proficiency - ELA, Math & Science (IL State Tests)	Teacher and Admin Salary	Ethnicity	Enrollment	Effective Leaders
Student Growth Percentile	Local Property Tax Rates	English Learners (EL)	Attendance	Collaborative Teachers
Completion of Algebra in Grade 8	EAV Per Pupil	Individualized Education Plans (IEP)	Mobility	Involved Families
On Track in Grade 9	Instructional Spending	Low Income	Chronic Absenteeism	Supportive Environment
Graduation Rate	Operational Spending	Homelessness	Truancy	Ambitious Instruction
College Readiness			Class Size	Student Response Rate
Community College Remediation			Teacher retention, education	Teacher Response Rate

Percentiles were calculated by ranking all Illinois districts who had data for a particular metric appearing on the ISBE report card. A percentile of 60 means the district has an indicator value that was the same or higher than 60% of districts across Illinois.

Tables 1-5 display the indicator values corresponding to the state 50th percentile, the district values, and the district percentile rankings within the state of Illinois for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years. The change in the value and percentile between these two school years is also reported.

Figures 1-3 visualize the shift in the state's distribution of proficiency from the Spring of 2024 to the Spring of 2025. Figures 4-6 show the percentage of students designated as low income against the percentage of all students meeting proficiency across the district in the spring of 2025.

An Important Note Related to Student Proficiency - Student proficiency rates on the 2025 state report card reflect the new ISBE standards for proficiency. This change will result in most districts showing an increase in proficiency rates from 2024 to 2025 that is unrelated to district performance. Furthermore, 2025 results for most districts will show large gaps in proficiency between ELA and Math as well as variation in proficiency across grade levels. Therefore, it is critical to interpret proficiency within the context of percentiles and to use percentiles when comparing proficiency across grades and subjects. For a detailed explanation of this issue, visit www.ecragroup.com/newbenchmarks.

Table 1. Student Achievement

* The state value columns report values at the 50th percentile across the state.

Indicator	State Value*	2024		State Value*	2025		Change 2024 to 2025	
		District Value	District Percentile		District Value	District Percentile	District Value	District Percentile
ELA Proficiency	39.8%	27.6%	25	54.4%	41.3%	21	13.7%	-4
Math Proficiency	25.7%	20.1%	35	36.8%	29.4%	31	9.3%	-4
Science Proficiency	56.9%	51.7%	36	45.6%	37.6%	30	-14.1%	-6
IAR ELA Growth Percentile	49.3	42.1	15	49.1	42.8	19	+0.7	+4
IAR Math Growth Percentile	49.0	43.1	18	49.0	42.0	14	-1.1	-4
HS Assessment ELA Growth Percentile	-	-	-	47.4	50.0	66	-	-
HS Assessment Math Growth Percentile	-	-	-	48.6	47.8	44	-	-
8th Grade Students Passing Algebra I	29.8%	22.6%	27	29.9%	23.7%	31	1.1%	+4
9th Grade on Track	91.6%	76.5%	6	93.0%	76.1%	5	-0.4%	-1
HS 4-Year Graduation Rate	89.6%	80.2%	14	91.1%	80.9%	9	0.7%	-5
Graduates Enrolled in College Within 12 Months	60.9%	57.0%	39	60.7%	55.6%	36	-1.4%	-3
Graduates Enrolled in College Within 16 Months	61.6%	57.5%	38	61.4%	56.1%	36	-1.4%	-2
Community College Remediation	19.7%	15.7%	39	28.9%	-	-	-	-

Table 2. Financial Information

* The state value columns report values at the 50th percentile across the state.

Indicator	State Value*	2024	District Percentile	State Value*	2025	District Percentile	Change 2024 to 2025	
		District Value			District Value		District Value	District Percentile
Average Teacher Salary	\$ 60,079	\$ 49,416	13	\$ 62,381	\$ 50,612	11	+\$ 1,196	-2
Average Administrator Salary	\$ 109,501	\$ 92,669	16	\$ 112,258	\$ 84,885	4	-\$ -7,784	-12
Local Property Tax	55.9%	55.1%	48	55.8%	55.1%	49	0.0%	+1
EAV Per Pupil	\$ 219.9 K	\$ 191.1 K	40	\$ 240.2 K	\$ 199.9 K	38	+\$ 8.8 K	-2
Instructional Spending Per Pupil	\$ 8,840	\$ 7,420	23	\$ 9,421	\$ 8,175	29	+\$ 755	+6
Operational Spending Per Pupil	\$ 15,463	\$ 13,404	28	\$ 16,576	\$ 14,234	28	+\$ 830	0



Table 3. Student Demographics

* The state value columns report values at the 50th percentile across the state.

Indicator	State Value*	2024		State Value*	2025		Change 2024 to 2025	
		District Value	District Percentile		District Value	District Percentile	District Value	District Percentile
White	81.1%	75.2%	42	79.5%	73.8%	42	-1.4%	0
Black	4.8%	7.3%	60	5.4%	7.5%	57	0.2%	-3
Hispanic	11.5%	4.3%	21	12.3%	5.0%	26	0.7%	+5
Asian	3.1%	0.8%	12	3.6%	0.9%	12	0.1%	0
English Learner (EL)	8.9%	0.8%	3	12.5%	-	-	-	-
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	15.7%	17.9%	71	15.9%	17.0%	61	-0.9%	-10
Low Income	47.0%	61.6%	79	46.4%	61.6%	80	0.0%	+1
Homelessness	2.7%	0.9%	15	2.7%	0.9%	14	0.0%	-1



Table 4. District Characteristics

* The state value columns report values at the 50th percentile across the state.

Indicator	State Value*	2024		State Value*	2025		Change 2024 to 2025	
		District Value	District Percentile		District Value	District Percentile	District Value	District Percentile
Enrollment	844	6,211	95	837	6,169	95	-42	0
Attendance	93.4%	90.6%	8	93.6%	90.0%	5	-0.6%	-3
Mobility	7.5%	9.9%	71	7.2%	9.6%	70	-0.3%	-1
Chronic Absenteeism	19.5%	28.9%	83	18.8%	29.7%	87	0.8%	+4
Truancy	8.4%	20.6%	85	8.3%	19.5%	85	-1.1%	0
Average Class Size	18.4	22.0	84	18.3	22.2	87	+0.2	+3
Teachers with Advanced Degrees	46.5%	39.0%	35	46.1%	37.3%	32	-1.7%	-3
Teacher Retention	89.3%	88.8%	47	89.1%	88.2%	41	-0.6%	-6

Table 5. Five Essentials Survey

* The state value columns report values at the 50th percentile across the state.

Indicator	State Value*	2024		State Value*	2025		Change 2024 to 2025	
		District Value	District Percentile		District Value	District Percentile	District Value	District Percentile
Effective Leaders	47.0	46.1	48	50.8	-	-	-	-
Collaborative Teachers	43.0	40.9	43	49.1	-	-	-	-
Involved Families	49.0	50.4	55	48.0	-	-	-	-
Supportive Environment	52.0	49.0	41	51.0	-	-	-	-
Ambitious Instruction	53.0	51.9	44	48.0	-	-	-	-
Student Response Rate %	93.4%	91.2%	40	94.7%	82.3%	16	-8.8%	-24
Teacher Response Rate %	78.6%	70.7%	30	77.5%	86.8%	77	16.1%	+47



The graphs below illustrate the percentage of students meeting proficiency standards for all subjects in each school district across Illinois. The distributions of these percentages in 2024 and 2025 are captured under the grey and purple curves respectively. The state median is noted for each year as well. The vertical lines illustrate the percentage of students meeting proficiency each year in your district.

Figure 1. Proficiency Distribution of Illinois Districts - ELA

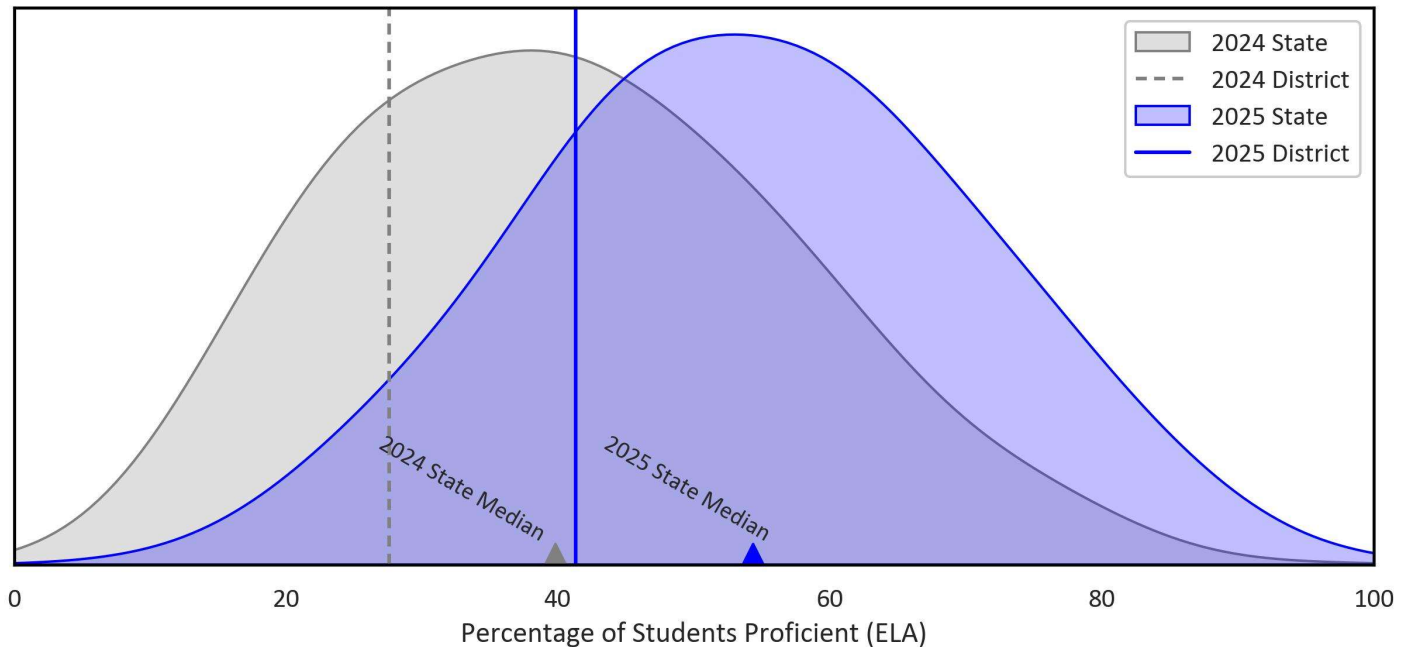


Figure 2. Proficiency Distribution of Illinois Districts - Math

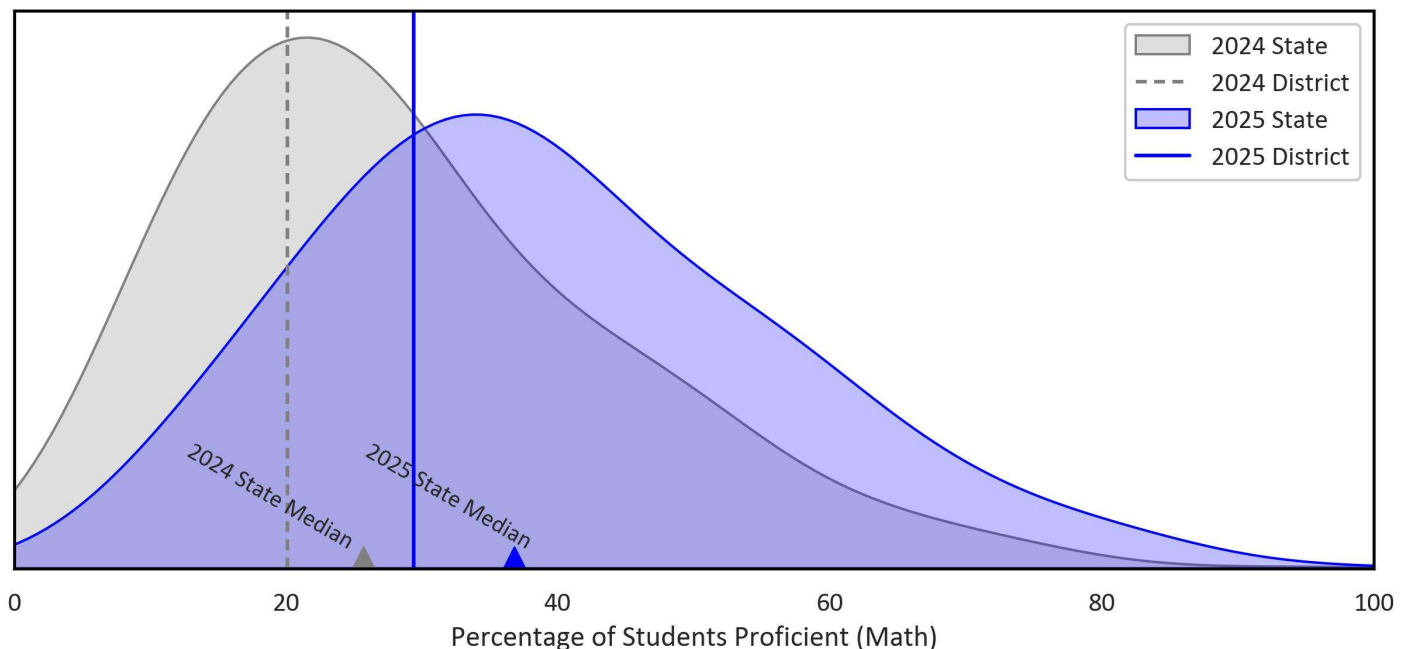
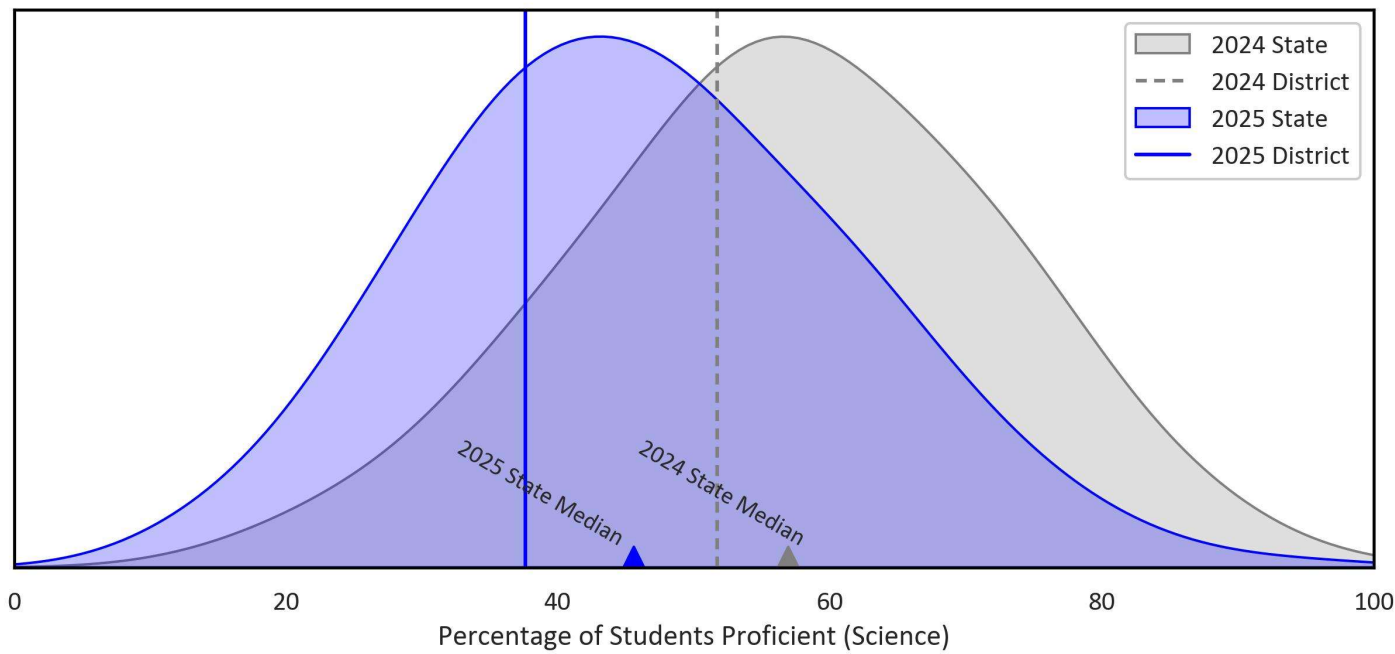


Figure 3. Proficiency Distribution of Illinois Districts - Science



The graphs below depict the percentage of students designated as Low Income against the percentage of all students meeting proficiency in the Spring of 2025 across the district. The proficiency grey dots represent all other school districts in the state, with a trend line included through the center of the distribution meeting proficiency.

Figure 4: Low Income vs. ELA Proficiency 2025

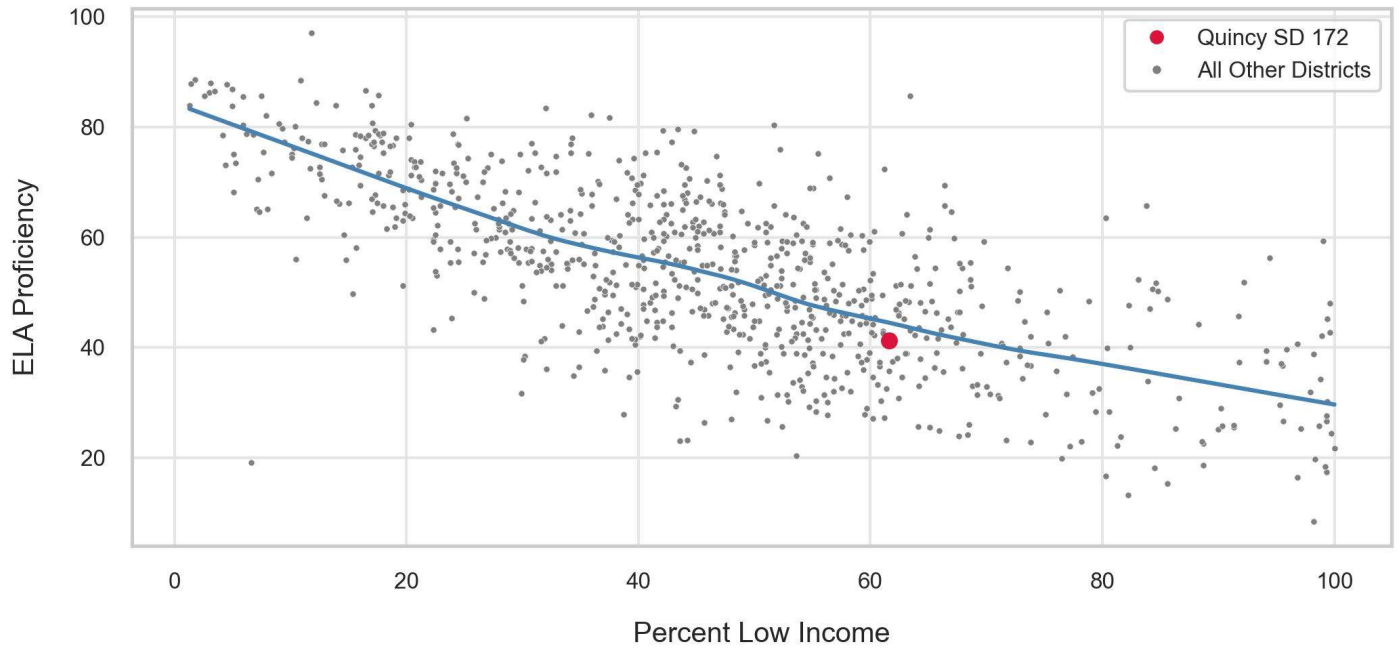


Figure 5: Low Income vs. Math Proficiency 2025

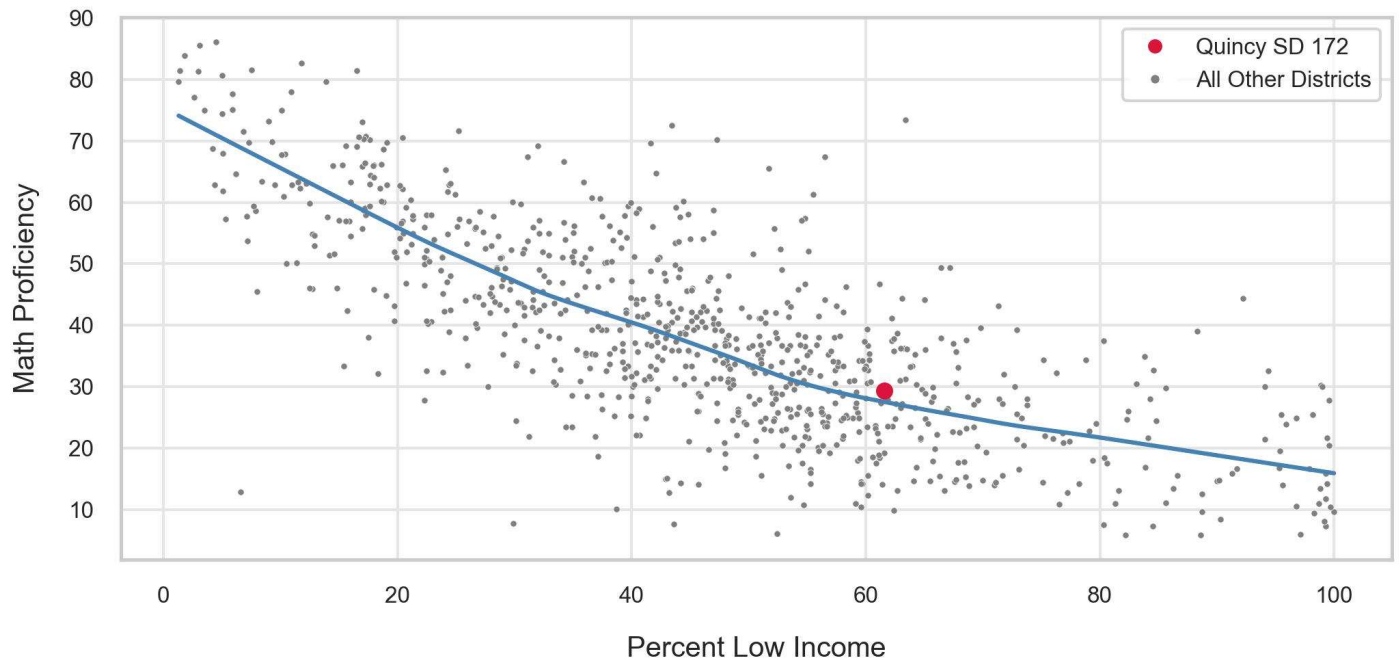


Figure 6: Low Income vs. Science Proficiency 2025

