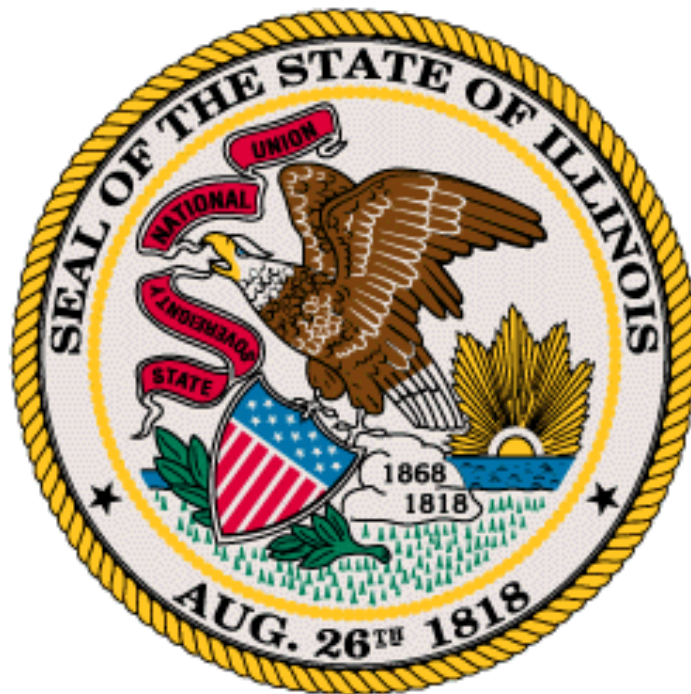


Survey Evaluation Committee

Annual Report

On the Services Provided by the Illinois State Board of Education
and Regional Offices of Education



December 2014

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OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

SHEILA SIMON – LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Dear Friends,

The Illinois School Code requires the Office of the Lieutenant Governor to convene the Service Evaluation Committee composed of stakeholders representing the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Regional Offices of Education (ROEs), parents, teachers, school boards and school administrators. The committee has developed a survey to annually evaluate the nature and quality of the services furnished to school districts ISBE and ROEs. Though it is not a scientific survey, the goal is for policymakers and practitioners to use the survey results to inform state and local educational improvements.

Similar to last year, respondents gave ISBE and ROEs high marks in areas including leadership, communication, and responsiveness to requests for assistance. However, participants indicated that more support continues to be needed for Common Core implementation, professional development and testing technology. State funding shortfalls, pension cost-shifts and unfunded mandates continue to be cause for concern.

I would like to thank all the districts that participated, giving us their vital insights. I would also like to thank the Illinois Association of School Boards for their assistance in notifying districts about the survey and encouraging their participation.

The evaluation results are due to the Governor, General Assembly, members of the State Board of Education and Regional Superintendents by December 15th of each year. Please accept this submission as fulfillment of 105 ILCS 5/2-3.112.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Sheila Simon".

Sheila Simon

Introduction

The Office of the Lieutenant Governor is required by state law (105 ILCS 5/2-3.112) to direct the efforts of the Service Evaluation Committee—a committee which approves a survey format at least every three years—by which school districts can provide anonymous feedback on the quality and importance of services provided by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Regional Offices of Education (ROEs).

The education agencies can use the results to identify areas where they excel, as well as to identify programs and services that are important to districts and where services may need to be improved.

The 2014 survey was originally compiled and approved in 2013 by members of the Service Evaluation Committee:

- Chair: Susan Hilton, Illinois Association of School Boards
- Dr. Darlene Ruscitti, Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools
- Susie Morrison, Illinois State Board of Education
- Bruce Bohren, Illinois PTA
- Vickie Mahrt, Illinois Education Association
- Ava Harston, Illinois Federation of Teachers
- Superintendent Jeff Fritchtnitch, Illinois Association of School Administrators
- Staff: Dr. Lynne Haefele, Office of the Lieutenant Governor

The survey consisted of two parts, results of which are presented in this report:

- Service evaluation of the Illinois State Board of Education
- Service evaluation of the Regional Offices of Education

The survey was disseminated by the Illinois Association of School Boards on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor's office. School board chairpersons could complete the survey themselves or could designate their district superintendents to do so. Responses were collected online between September 1 and October 24, 2014.

Survey Representation and Demographics

A total of 352 districts participated in the survey, with 302 completing most or all survey questions. In total, 338 districts answered the demographic questions.

Counties

Districts from 82 counties participated in the survey (shown in gray at right). Some districts did not identify their counties.

District Type

Answer Choices	Responses	
▼ Unit	47.63%	161
▼ Elementary	41.12%	139
▼ High School	11.24%	38
Total		338

District Size

Answer Choices	Responses	
▼ Under 750 students	38.46%	130
▼ 751-2499 students	36.09%	122
▼ Over 2500 students	25.44%	86
Total		338

Low-Income Student Population

Answer Choices	Responses	
▼ 0-20%	16.86%	57
▼ 21-40%	27.81%	94
▼ 41-60%	33.43%	113
▼ 61-80%	15.68%	53
▼ 81-100%	6.21%	21
Total		338



Illinois State Board of Education Service Evaluation Results


The Service Evaluation Committee identified the primary services the Illinois State Board of Education provides to local school districts and created a survey with a five-tier rating scale for quality and importance. Under ideal conditions, quality and importance ratings would be similar, with all services rated as important to critically important receiving a corresponding adequate to excellent grade.

In many areas, ISBE's quality and importance ratings tracked well. These include: communication, external assurance, nutrition programs, school business services, and special education. However, there continue to be severe misalignments in areas that are largely outside ISBE's control: state funding, state mandates and pensions, which are long-standing and well-documented challenges in the Illinois education system. Concerns were also expressed over the quality of support for emerging accountability reforms including Common Core Standards implementation and adequate technology to administer new computer-based assessments.

The Survey results and a summary of areas of excellence, improvement and need are detailed below. *[Note: Percentages shown below the graphs exclude the N/A responses to those questions.]*

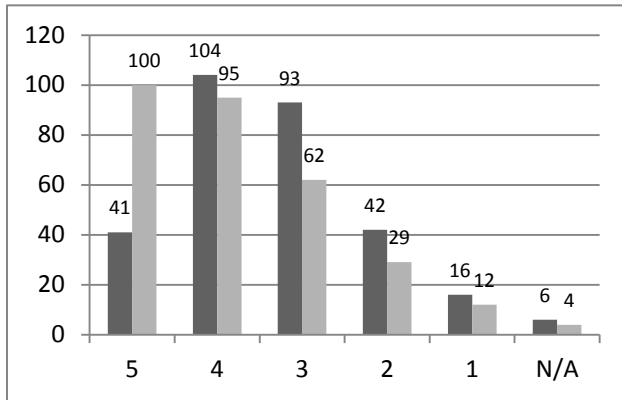
Districts rated the quality and importance of each ISBE service area using the scales shown here:

Quality	Importance
5 = Excellent	5 = Critically important
4 = Good	4 = Very important
3 = Adequate	3 = Important
2 = Needs Improvement	2 = Somewhat important
1 = Poor	1 = Not important
N/A = Does not apply	N/A = Does not apply

 = Quality

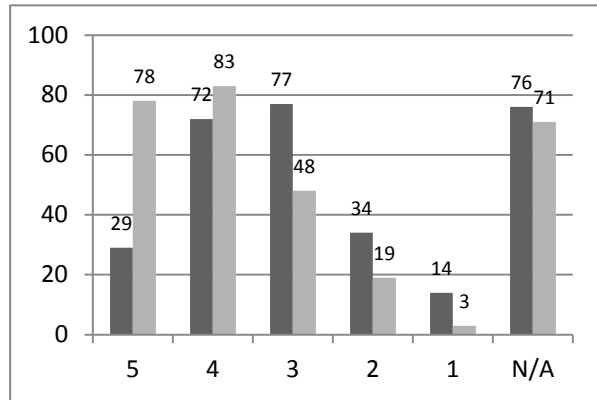
 = Importance

Assessment



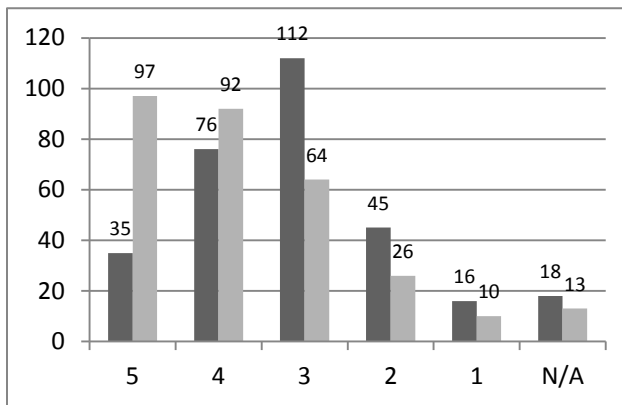
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 80.4%
Important or Above = 86.3%

Career & Technical Education



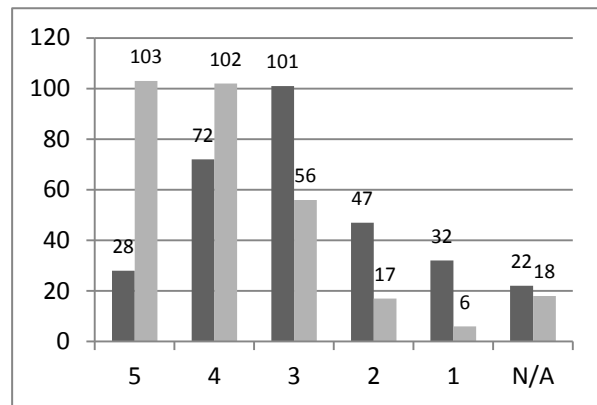
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 78.7%
Important or Above = 90.4%

Data Analysis & Progress Reporting



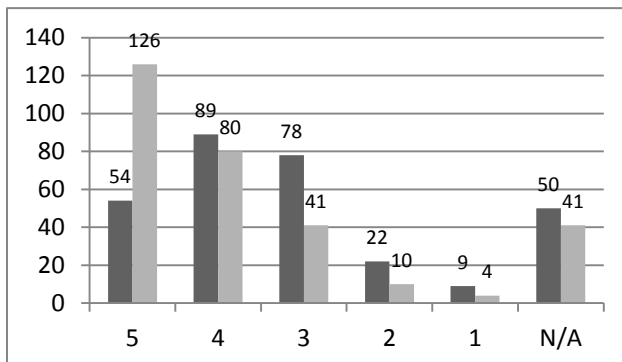
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 78.5%
Important or Above = 87.4%

Data Systems



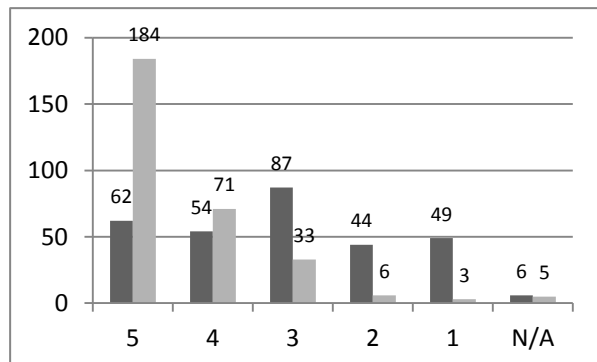
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 71.8%
Important or Above = 91.9%

Early Childhood Education



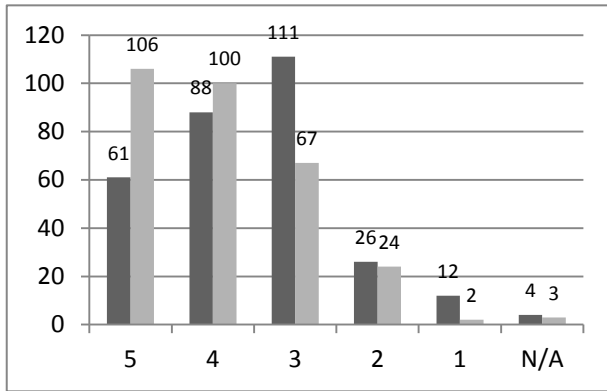
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 87.6%
Important or Above = 94.5%

Educator Licensure



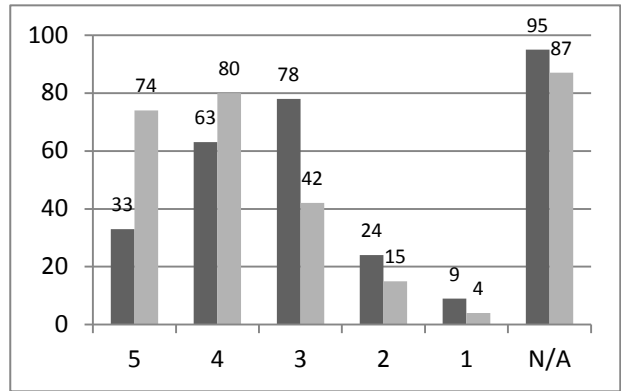
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 68.5%
Important or Above = 96.9%

Educator and School Development



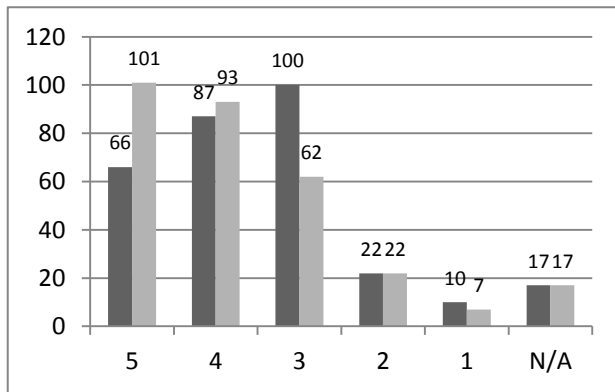
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 87.2%
Important or Above = 91.3%

English Language Learning



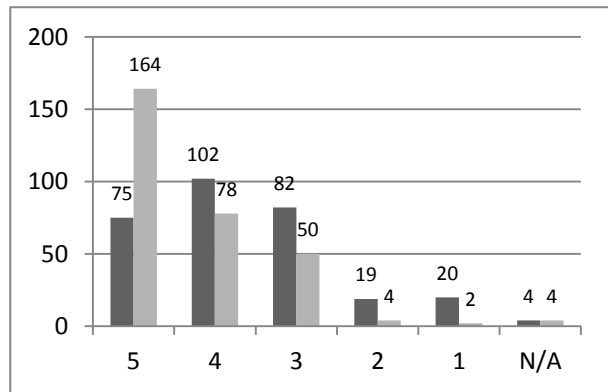
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 84.0%
Important or Above = 91.1%

External Assurance



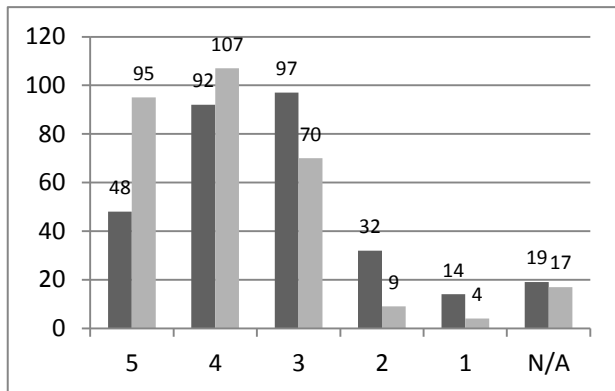
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 88.8%
Important or Above = 89.8%

Funding and Disbursements



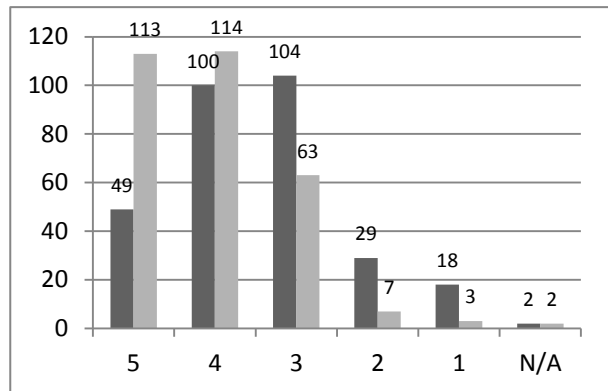
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 86.9%
Important or Above = 98.0%

General Counsel



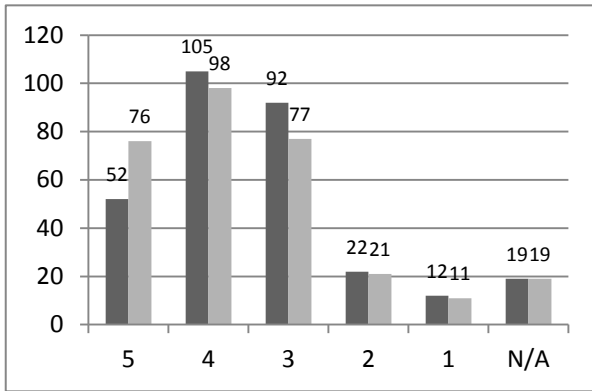
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 83.7%
Important or Above = 95.4%

Innovation & Improvement



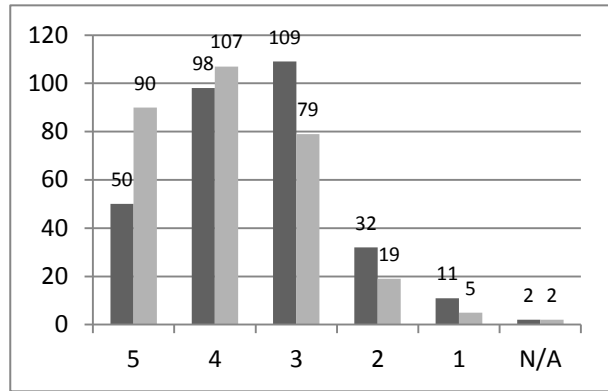
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 84.3%
Important or Above = 96.7%

Nutrition Programs



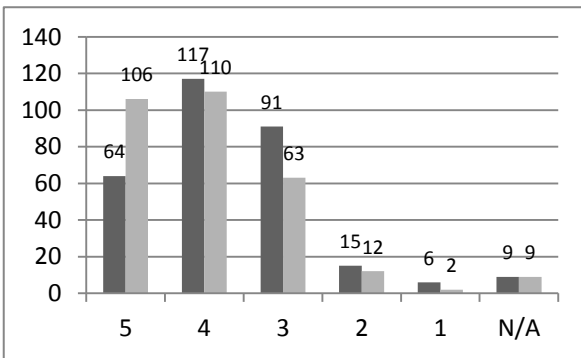
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 88.0%
Important or Above = 88.7%

Public Information



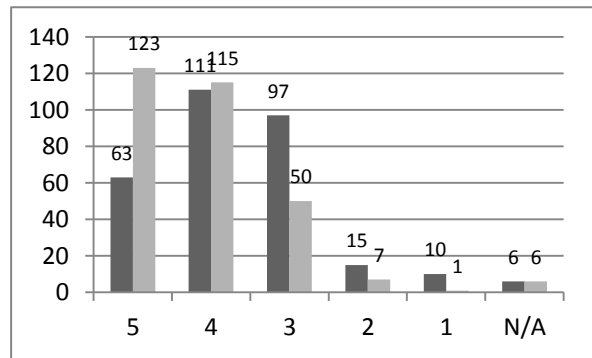
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 85.7%
Important or Above = 92.0%

School Business Services



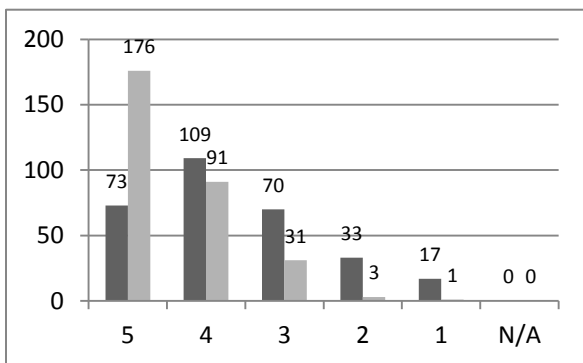
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 92.8%
Important or Above = 95.2%

Special Education



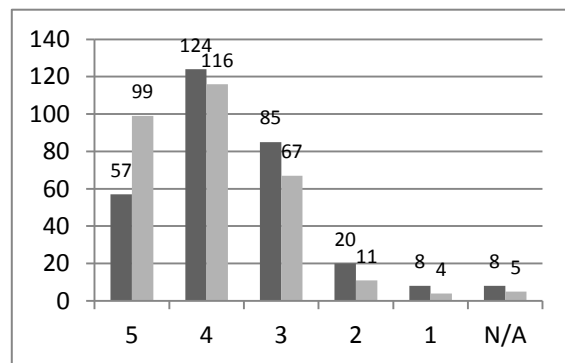
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 91.5%
Important or Above = 97.4%

Communications: Website



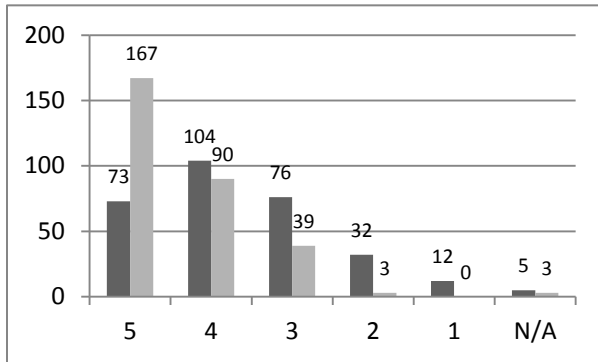
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 83.5%
Important or Above = 98.6%

Communications: Publications



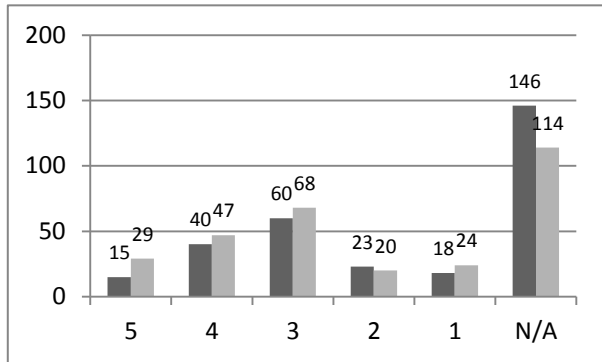
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 90.5%
Important or Above = 95.0%

Communications: Interpersonal



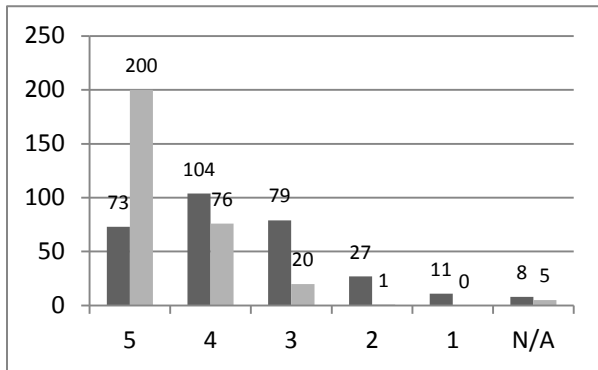
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 85.2%
Important or Above = 99.0%

Communications: Social Media



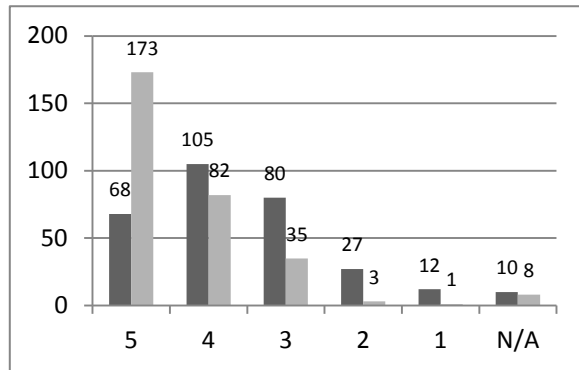
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 73.7%
Important or Above = 76.6%

District Requests: Responsiveness



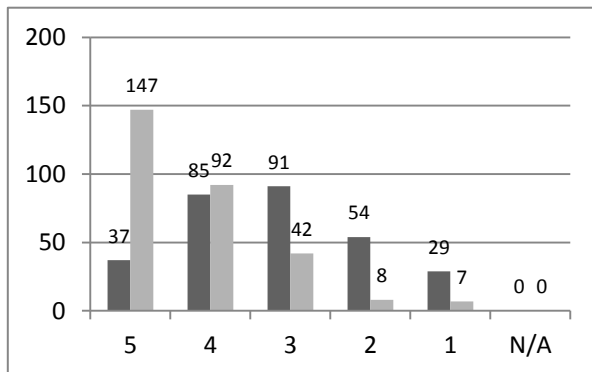
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 87.1%
Important or Above = 99.6%

District Requests: Satisfactory Resolution



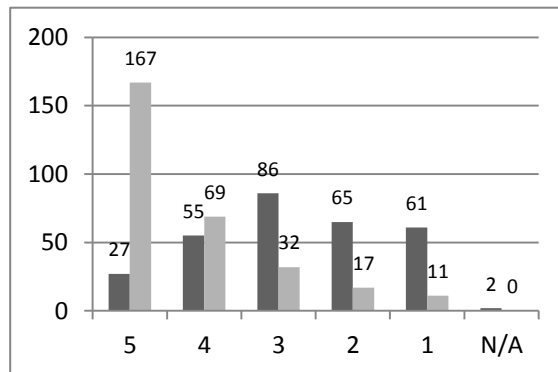
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 86.4%
Important or Above = 98.6%

Common Core Standards Implementation



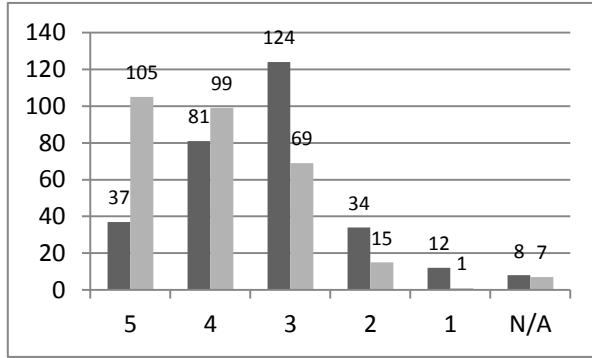
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 71.9%
Important or Above = 94.9%

New State Tests/Electronic Administration



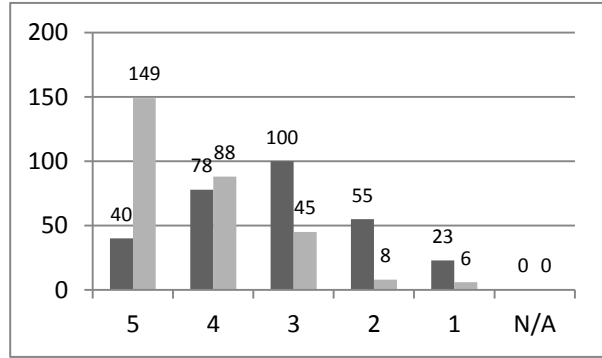
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 56.8%
Important or Above = 90.5%

Response to Intervention (RtI)



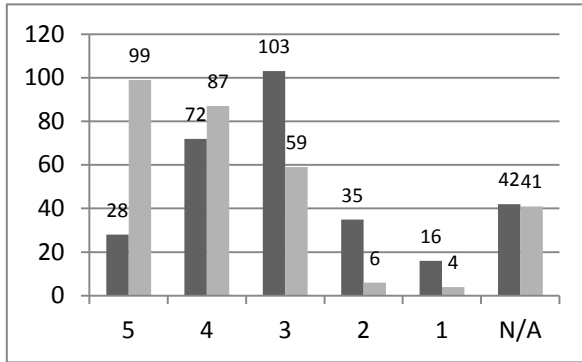
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 85.1%
Important or Above = 94.5%

Educator Evaluations/PERA



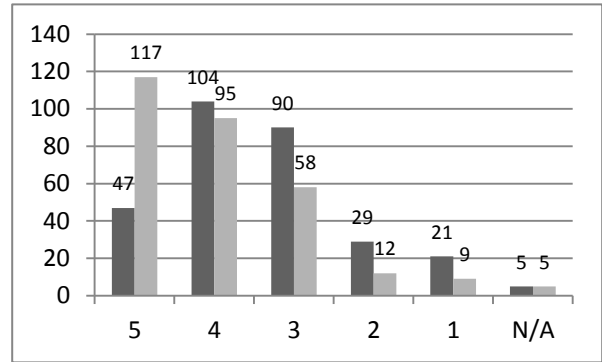
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 70.7%
Important or Above = 95.2%

College & Career Readiness



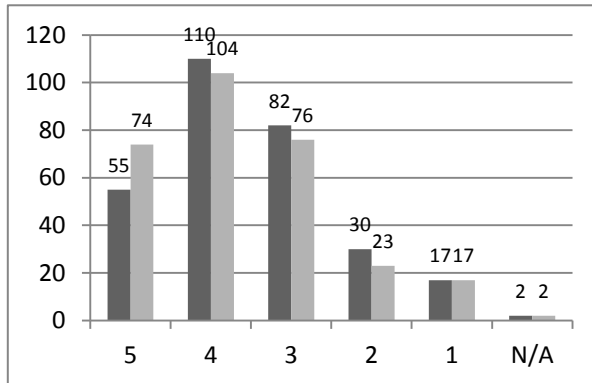
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 79.9%
Important or Above = 99.0%

Longitudinal Student Information System (SIS)



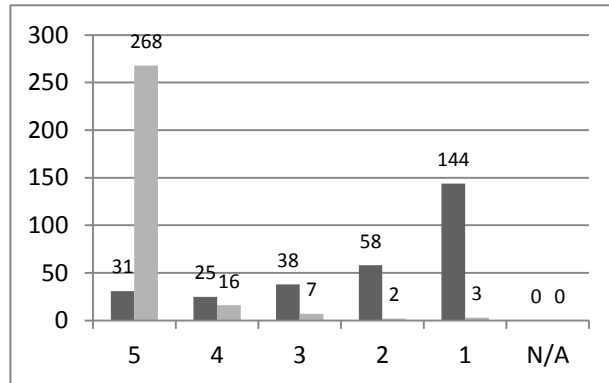
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 82.8%
Important or Above = 92.7%

School/District Report Cards (New Format)



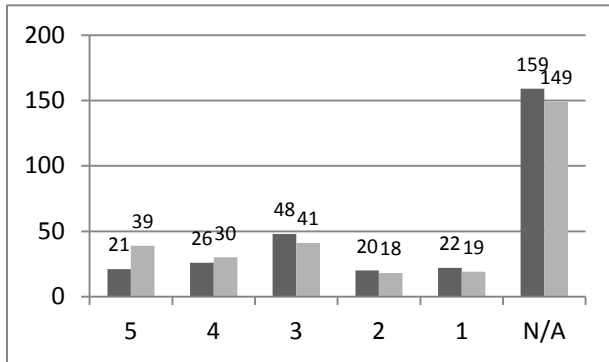
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 84.0%
Important or Above = 86.5%

State Funding



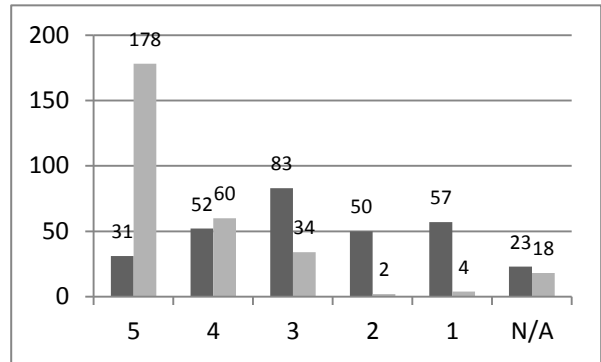
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 31.6%
Important or Above = 90.5%

District Reorganization



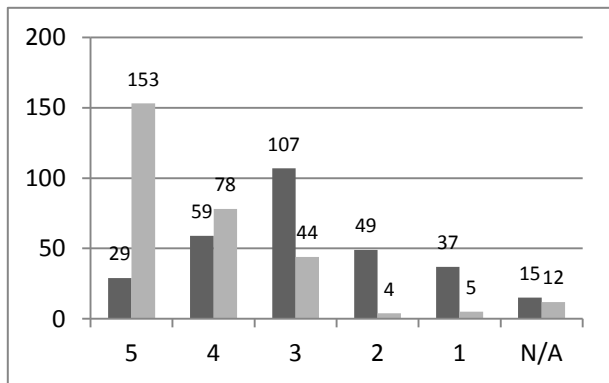
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 69.2%
Important or Above = 74.8%

Pensions



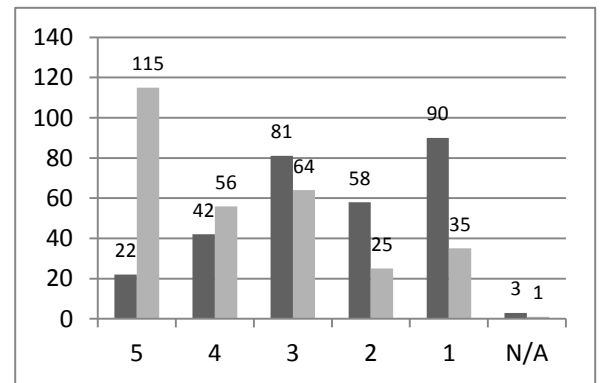
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 60.7%
Important or Above = 97.8%

Technology Capacity



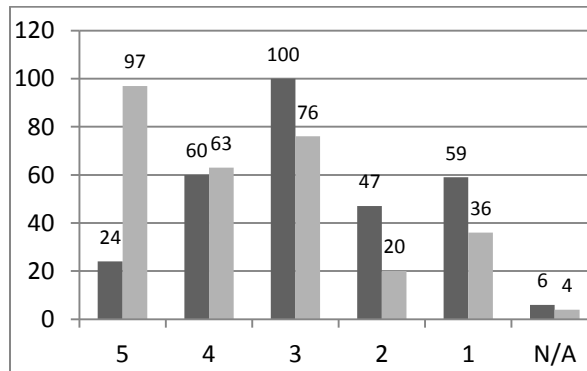
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 68.7%
Important or Above = 95.8%

State Mandates



Adequate to Excellent Quality = 49%
Important or Above = 79.9%

Federal Mandates



Adequate to Excellent Quality = 63.4%
Important or Above = 80.8%

Below are summaries of written comments submitted in response to three open-ended questions regarding Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) services.

What is working well at ISBE?

- Experienced leadership and useful communications (both written and in person) provided by State Superintendent, Dr. Christopher Koch
- Generally good communications channels with districts, especially regarding new mandates and their implications
- Staff professionalism: generally pleasant, knowledgeable, helpful, responsive – although understaffed
- Fiscal and grant services provided to districts
- Technical assistance (including webinars) provided to districts
- Informational website and weekly newsletters

What can ISBE improve?

- Demonstrate aggressive leadership/advocacy for education funding adequacy and equity; districts cannot be expected to effectively implement reforms when they do not receive even the basic funding amount owed to them by law
- Agency is severely understaffed for the high volume of work
- Reduce bureaucracy, paperwork, and redundant reporting requirements
- Provide strong advocacy for reducing/eliminating unfunded mandates
- Increase technology capacity and support
- Provide more samples of new assessment items; reconsider timing of new testing implementation

Are there additional issues or services for which you anticipate needing ISBE support in the next three years?

- School funding adequacy and equity
- Increased implementation support for Common Core Standards and PARCC assessments
- Technology infrastructure
- Flexibility with mandates, regulations

Regional Offices of Education Service Evaluation Results


The Service Evaluation Committee identified the primary services provided by the Regional Offices of Education to local school districts and created a survey with a five-tier rating scale for quality and importance. Under ideal conditions, quality and importance ratings would be similar, with all services rated as important to critically important receiving a corresponding adequate to excellent grade.

The ROE rankings tracked quite closely, with generally strong matches between quality and importance, and with many quality ratings of adequate/good/excellent at the 90th percentile or above.

The Survey results and a summary of areas of excellence, improvement and need are detailed below. [Note: Percentages shown below the graphs exclude the N/A responses to those questions.]

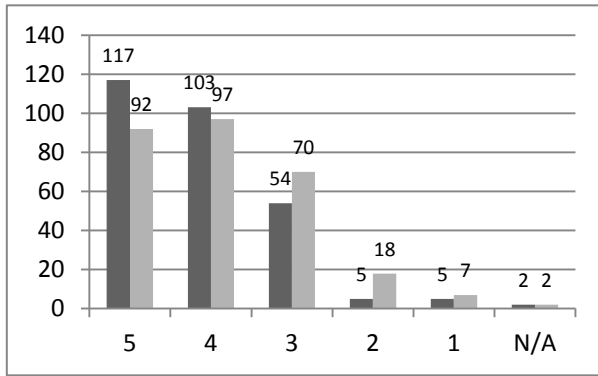
Districts rated the quality and importance of each ROE service area using the scales shown here:

Quality	Importance
5 = Excellent	5 = Critically important
4 = Good	4 = Very important
3 = Adequate	3 = Important
2 = Needs Improvement	2 = Somewhat important
1 = Poor	1 = Not important
N/A = Does not apply	N/A = Does not apply

 = Quality

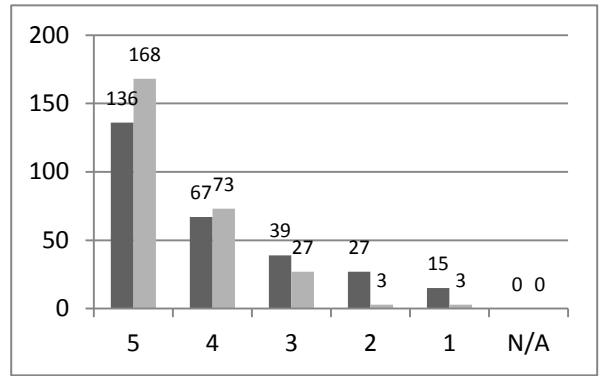
 = Importance

Recognition & Compliance Monitoring



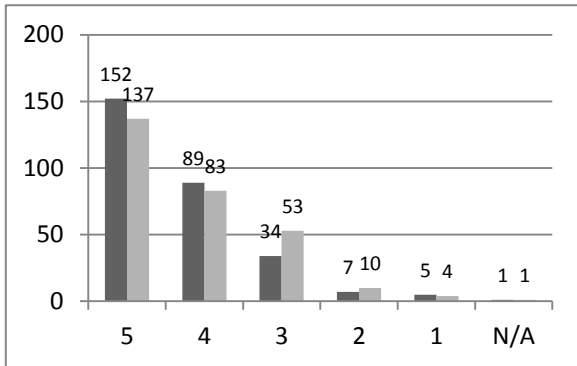
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 97.1%
Important or Above = 91.2%

Educator Licensure/License Renewal



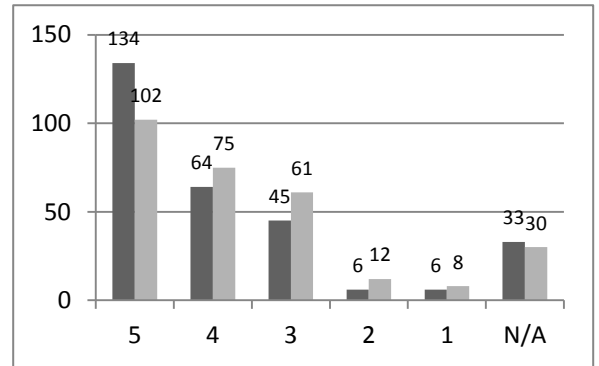
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 85.2%
Important or Above = 94.4%

Health/Life Safety



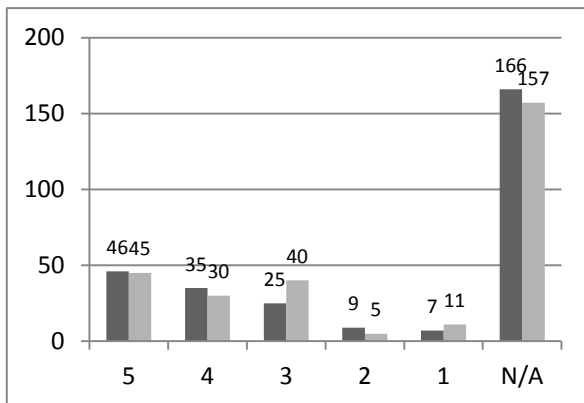
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 95.7%
Important or Above = 95.1%

Building Permits



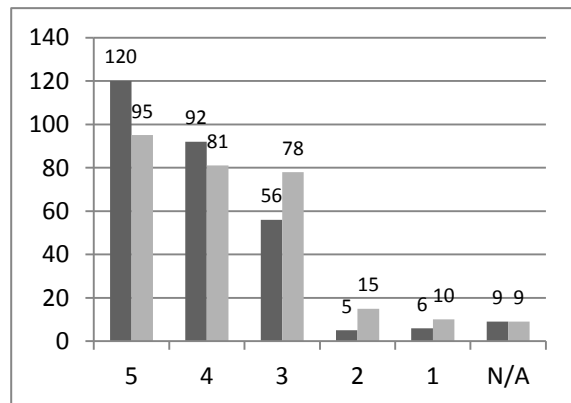
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 95.2%
Important or Above = 92.2%

District Reorganizations



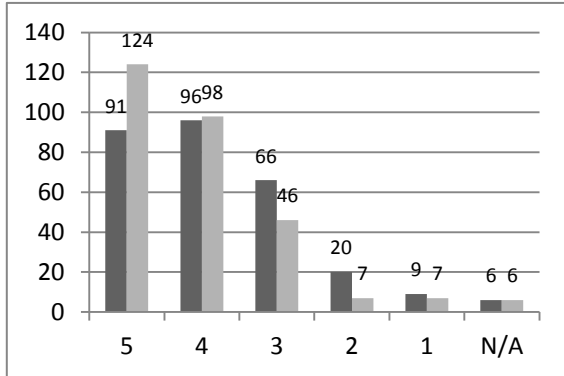
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 86.9%
Important or Above = 87.8%

Required Reporting



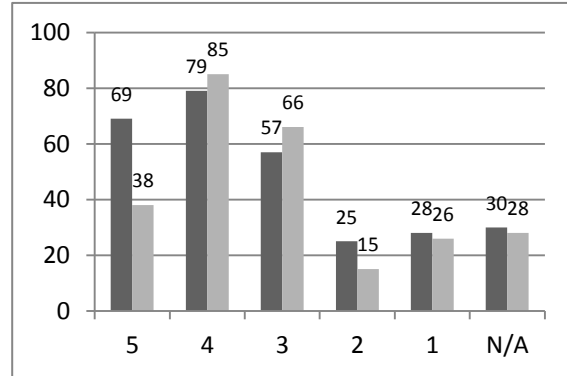
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 96.1%
Important or Above = 91.0%

Learning Standards/Assessments



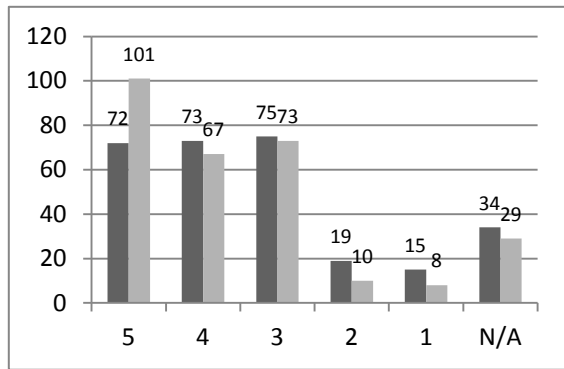
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 88.6%
Important or Above = 94.9%

School/District Improvement & Rising Star



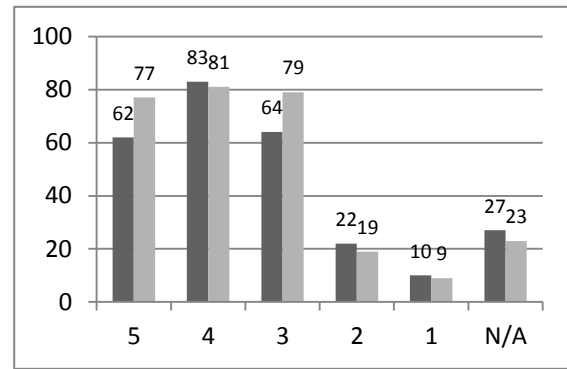
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 79.4%
Important or Above = 80.9%

Legal Issues



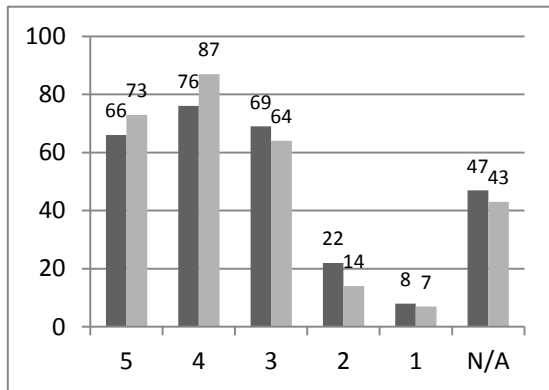
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 86.5%
Important or Above = 93.1%

Data Analysis



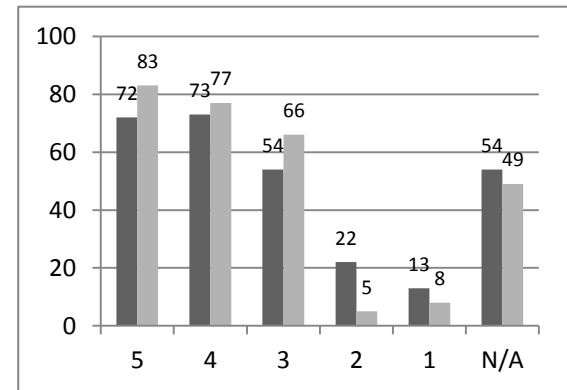
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 87.8%
Important or Above = 89.5%

Cooperative Purchasing & Programs



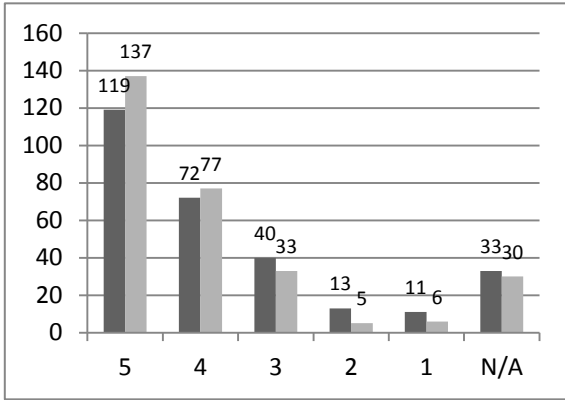
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 87.5%
Important or Above = 91.4%

Grant Partnerships/Support



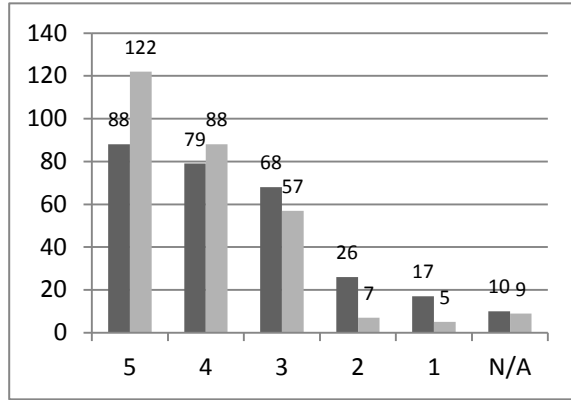
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 84.9%
Important or Above = 94.5%

Regional Safe Schools Program



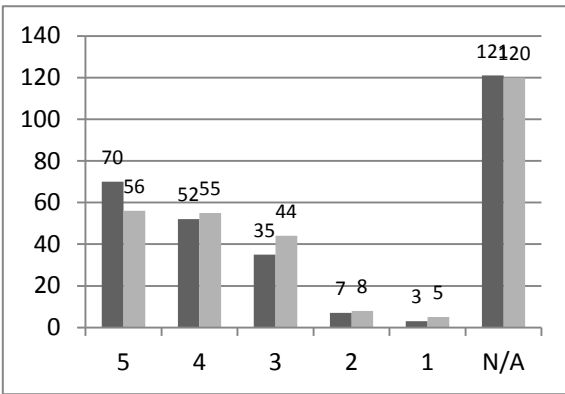
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 90.6%
Important or Above = 95.7%

Truants/Dropouts/Homeless



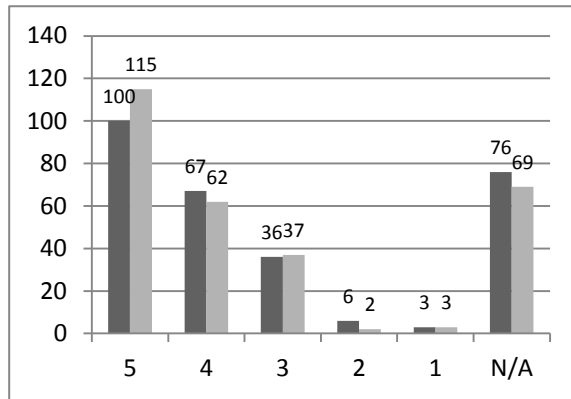
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 84.6%
Important or Above = 95.6%

GED



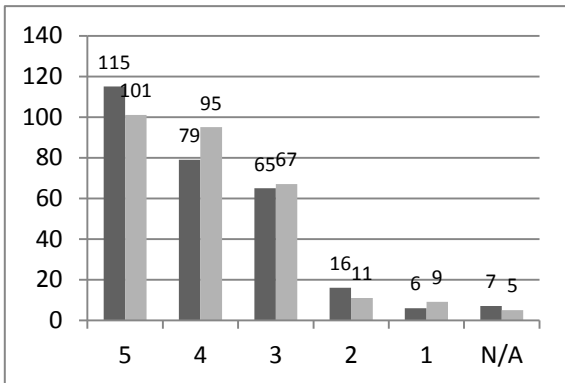
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 94.0%
Important or Above = 92.2%

Bus Driver Training



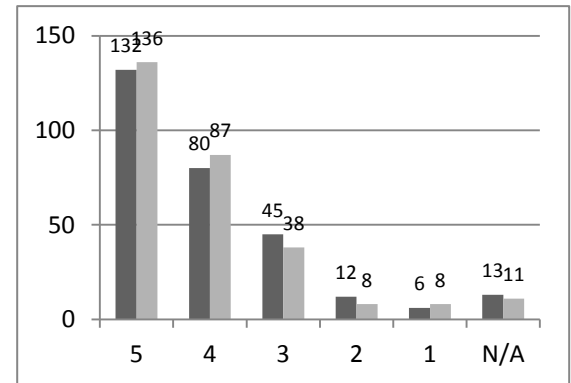
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 95.8%
Important or Above = 97.7%

Conferences/Networks/Roundtables



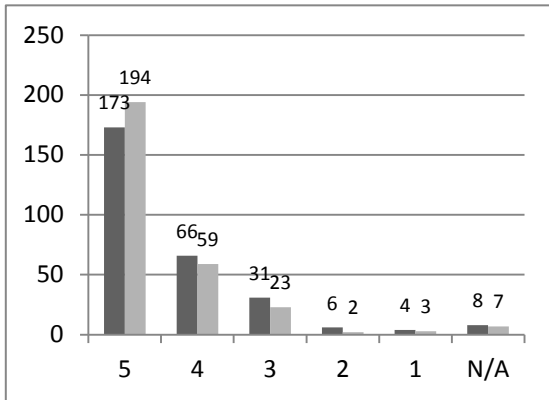
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 92.1%
Important or Above = 91.8%

Administrators Academy



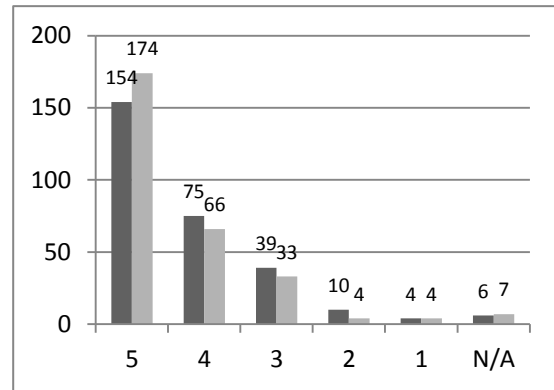
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 94.2%
Important or Above = 94.2%

Requests for Assistance: Responsiveness



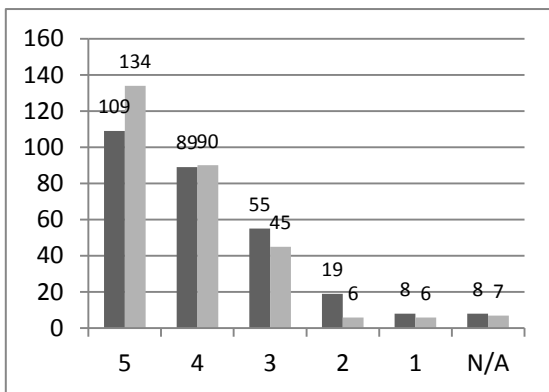
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 96.5%
Important or Above = 98.1%

Requests for Assistance: Satisfactory Resolution



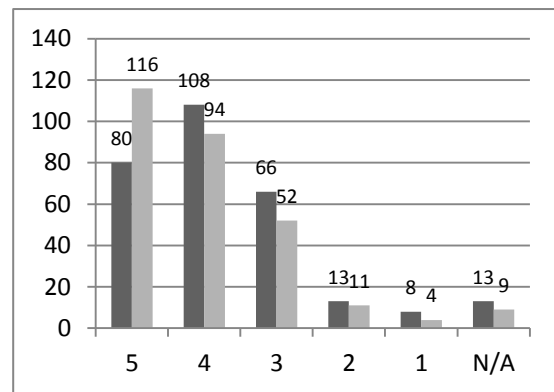
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 95.0%
Important or Above = 97.1%

Professional Development Support



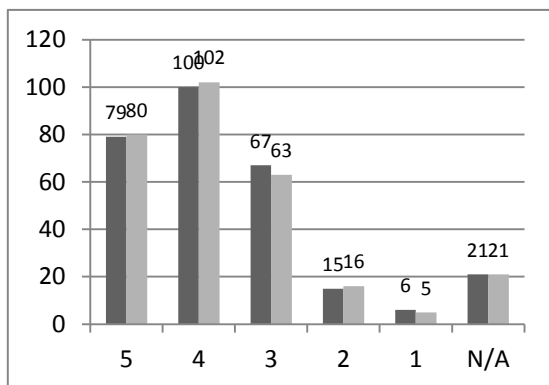
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 90.3%
Important or Above = 95.7%

Communications: Website



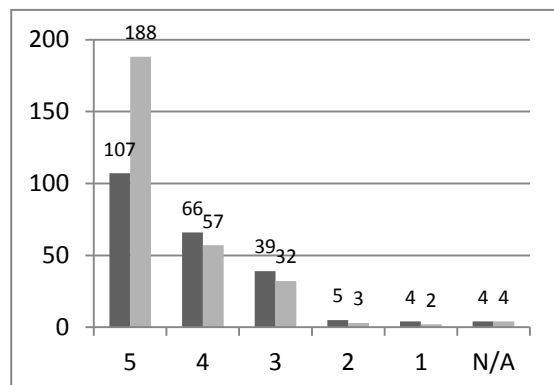
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 92.4%
Important or Above = 94.6%

Communications: Publications



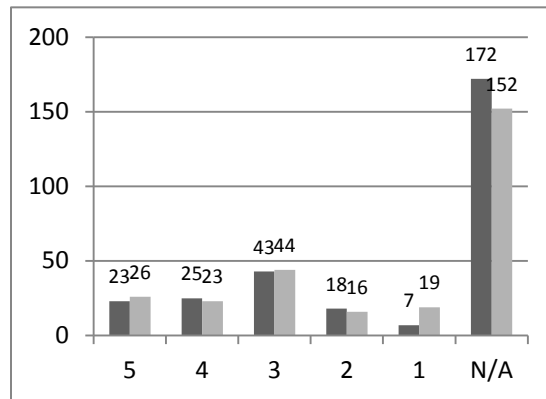
Adequate to Excellent Quality = 92.2%
Important or Above = 92.1%

Communications: Interpersonal



Adequate to Excellent Quality = 96.8%
Important or Above = 98.2%

Communications: Social Media



Adequate to Excellent Quality = 78.6%
Important or Above = 68.4%

Below are summaries of written comments submitted in response to three open-ended questions regarding Regional Office of Education (ROE) services. [Note: The law prohibits publishing information that can be associated with specific ROEs.]

What is working well in your ROE?

- Responsible, cooperative and helpful staff
- Providing timely information regarding mandates, pending legislation, interpretations of rules
- Effective contact point for answering questions and problem-solving
- Professional development offerings
- Support and advocacy for school districts
- Especially helpful to small districts

What would you like to see your ROE improve?

- Offer comparable services/resources across all ROEs
- Increase cross-district collaboration and networking
- Improve on-line resources, including making more on-line professional development available
- Expand professional development offerings, especially related to the Common Core Standards and assessments
- Improve communications channels with the State Board of Education

Are there additional issues or services for which you anticipate needing ROE support in the next three years?

- Technology support and data analysis
- Professional development for standards and testing
- Teacher development, recruitment and retention

Conclusion

The 2014 Service Evaluation Survey illustrates that participating districts recognize value in their relationships with the Illinois State Board of Education and the Regional Offices of Education. While districts generally gave ISBE and ROEs high marks in multiple areas, including leadership, communication, and responsiveness to requests for assistance, they also identified areas that need improvement. These include financial support for ROEs to continue to improve services, especially for smaller districts. With the implementation of new state learning standards and new tests, the need for professional development assistance and inter-district networking will continue to grow. Going forward, districts indicated that the State Board and the ROEs need to direct more attention and resources into Common Core implementation, testing technology and professional development, and need to advocate for basic issues such as adequate funding.

This report of survey results fulfills the Illinois School Code mandate (105 ILCS 5/2-3.112). We encourage policymakers, practitioners and researchers to use the evaluation results as a resource when planning for state and local educational improvements.