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*For Immediate Release*

### **State Funding Transforming Harvard District 50**

HARVARD, Ill. — The State of Illinois' evidence-based funding model for schools sends more resources to under-resourced districts, including Harvard District 50.

Superintendent Dr. Corey Tafoya sees the funding as transformational for the community. "The funding has had an incredible impact on our students and families," Tafoya said. "Last year the district added teachers to lower class sizes, social workers, counselors, an elementary art program, a junior high activities facilitator, and a district behavioral specialist to address the needs of our kids."

For 2019, Harvard hired six instructional coaches to improve classroom learning and support teacher development.

The funding goes beyond the regular school day. During the summer, Harvard offered a summer education program with a camp-like culture. Later this fall, Harvard will debut an after-school enrichment program to provide families with expanded learning activities and recreation.

"The state recognizes Harvard's adequacy-level for funding at 57%. When it comes to proper resources for our students, we are the eighth-lowest district, and the lowest unit district," Tafoya said.

But even with additional funding needs, Tafoya is thrilled with the increased opportunities for students. "We've expanded our AVID program, AP classes, and are committed to growing our trades classes," Tafoya said. "Whether students graduate wanting to work immediately, pursue college, military, or a vocational school, we're focused on ensuring every student is prepared for life after high school."

Funding has also been used to make building improvements. The district completed a much-needed new junior high parking lot over the summer. With a growing population, Harvard performed a Kasarda demographic study last fall to understand spacing requirements. A facility planning report will be presented to the board in December.

For the 2020 fiscal year, Harvard is expected to receive an additional \$1.6 million from the state. Mike Prombo, the district's chief financial officer, presented a tentative budget at the board's August public meeting. "The fixed funding formula means more resources for students without increasing the burden on local taxpayers," Prombo said.

Learn more about evidence-based funding at the [Illinois State Board of Education's website](https://www.isbe.net/).

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