

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Section
5 3-15.12a as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/3-15.12a new)

7 Sec. 3-15.12a. Alternate route to high school diploma for
8 adult learners.

9 (a) The purpose of this amendatory Act of the 100th General
10 Assembly is to provide eligible applicants that have been or
11 are unable to establish agreements with a secondary or unit
12 school district in the area in which the applicant is located
13 with a process for attaining the authority to award high school
14 diplomas to adult learners.

15 (a-5) In this Section:

16 "Adult learner" means a person ineligible for reenrollment
17 under subsection (b) of Section 26-2 of this Code and 34 CFR
18 300.102.

19 "Board" means the Illinois Community College Board.

20 "Eligible applicant" means a community college established
21 and operating under the authority of the Public Community
22 College Act; a non-profit entity in partnership with a regional
23 superintendent of schools; the chief administrator of an

1 intermediate service center that has the authority, under rules
2 adopted by the State Board of Education, to issue a high school
3 diploma; or a school district organized under Article 34 of
4 this Code. In order to be an eligible applicant, an entity
5 under this definition, other than a school district organized
6 under Article 34 of this Code, must provide evidence or other
7 documentation that it is or has been unable to establish an
8 agreement with a secondary or unit school district in which the
9 eligible applicant is located to provide a program in which
10 students who successfully complete the program can receive a
11 high school diploma from their school district of residence.

12 "Executive Director" means the Executive Director of the
13 Illinois Community College Board.

14 "High school diploma program for adult learners" means a
15 program approved to operate under this Section that provides a
16 program of alterative study to adult learners leading to the
17 issuance of a high school diploma.

18 (b) An eligible applicant is authorized to design a high
19 school diploma program for adult learners, to be approved by
20 the Board prior to implementation. A non-profit eligible
21 applicant shall operate this program only within the
22 jurisdictional authority of the regional superintendent of
23 schools, the chief administrator of an intermediate service
24 center, or a school district organized Article 34 of this Code
25 with whom the non-profit eligible applicant has entered into a
26 partnership. An approved program shall include, without

1 limitation, all of the following:

2 (1) An administrative structure, program activities,
3 program staff, a budget, and a specific curriculum that is
4 consistent with Illinois Learning Standards, as well as
5 Illinois content standards for adults, but may be different
6 from a regular school program in terms of location, length
7 of school day, program sequence, multidisciplinary
8 courses, pace, instructional activities, or any
9 combination of these.

10 (2) Issuance of a high school diploma only if an adult
11 learner meets all minimum requirements under this Code and
12 its implementing rules for receipt of a high school
13 diploma.

14 (3) Specific academic, behavioral, and emotional
15 support services to be offered to adult learners enrolled
16 in the program.

17 (4) Career and technical education courses that lead to
18 industry certifications in high growth and in-demand
19 industry sectors or dual credit courses from a regionally
20 accredited post-secondary educational institution
21 consistent with the Dual Credit Quality Act. The program
22 may include partnering with a community college district to
23 provide career and technical education courses that lead to
24 industry certifications.

25 (5) Specific program outcomes and goals and metrics to
26 be used by the program to determine success.

1 (6) The requirement that all instructional staff must
2 hold an educator license valid for the high school grades
3 issued under Article 21B of this Code.

4 (7) Any other requirements adopted by rule by the
5 Board.

6 (c) Eligible applicants shall apply for approval of a high
7 school diploma program for adult learners to the Board on forms
8 prescribed by the Board.

9 (1) Initial approval shall be for a period not to
10 exceed 2 school years.

11 (2) Renewal of approval shall be for a period not to
12 exceed 4 school years and shall be contingent upon at least
13 specific documented outcomes of student progression,
14 graduation rates, and earning of industry-recognized
15 credentials.

16 (3) Program approval may be given only if the Executive
17 Director determines that the eligible applicant has
18 provided assurance through evidence of other documentation
19 that it will meet the requirements of subsection (b) of
20 this Section and any rules adopted by the Board. The Board
21 shall make public any evaluation criteria it uses in making
22 a determination of program approval or denial.

23 (4) Notwithstanding anything in this Code to the
24 contrary, a non-profit eligible applicant shall provide
25 the following to the Board:

26 (A) documentation that the non-profit entity will

1 fulfill the requirements of subsection (b) of this
2 Section;

3 (B) evidence that the non-profit entity has the
4 capacity to fulfill the requirements of this Section;

5 (C) a description of the coordination and
6 oversight that the eligible entity will provide in the
7 administration of the program by the non-profit
8 entity;

9 (D) evidence that the non-profit entity has a
10 history of providing services to adults 18 years of age
11 or older whose educational and training opportunities
12 have been limited by educational disadvantages,
13 disabilities, and challenges.

14 (5) If an eligible applicant that has been approved
15 fails to meet any of the requirements of subsection (b) of
16 this Section and any rules adopted by the Board, the
17 Executive Director shall immediately initiate a process to
18 revoke the eligible applicant's approval to provide the
19 program, pursuant to rules adopted by the Board.

20 (d) The Board may adopt any rules necessary to implement
21 this Section.

22 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
23 becoming law.