

SB1288



101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2019 and 2020

SB1288

Introduced 2/7/2019, by Sen. Chuck Weaver

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/3-15.12

from Ch. 122, par. 3-15.12

Amends the School Code. Provides that Peoria Public School District 150 may contract with a third party to provide high school equivalency testing programs. Effective immediately.

LRB101 09268 AXK 54362 b

A BILL FOR

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 changing Section
5 3-15.12 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/3-15.12) (from Ch. 122, par. 3-15.12)

7 Sec. 3-15.12. High school equivalency. The regional
8 superintendent of schools and the Illinois Community College
9 Board shall make available for qualified individuals residing
10 within the region a High School Equivalency Testing Program and
11 alternative methods of credentialing, as identified under this
12 Section. For that purpose the regional superintendent alone or
13 with other regional superintendents may establish and
14 supervise a testing center or centers to administer the secure
15 forms for high school equivalency testing to qualified persons.
16 Such centers shall be under the supervision of the regional
17 superintendent in whose region such centers are located,
18 subject to the approval of the Executive Director of the
19 Illinois Community College Board. The Illinois Community
20 College Board shall also establish criteria and make available
21 alternative methods of credentialing throughout the State.

22 An individual is eligible to apply to the regional
23 superintendent of schools for the region in which he or she

1 resides if he or she is: (a) a person who is 17 years of age or
2 older, has maintained residence in the State of Illinois, and
3 is not a high school graduate; (b) a person who is successfully
4 completing an alternative education program under Section
5 2-3.81, Article 13A, or Article 13B; or (c) a person who is
6 enrolled in a youth education program sponsored by the Illinois
7 National Guard. For purposes of this Section, residence is that
8 abode which the applicant considers his or her home. Applicants
9 may provide as sufficient proof of such residence and as an
10 acceptable form of identification a driver's license, valid
11 passport, military ID, or other form of government-issued
12 national or foreign identification that shows the applicant's
13 name, address, date of birth, signature, and photograph or
14 other acceptable identification as may be allowed by law or as
15 regulated by the Illinois Community College Board. Such
16 regional superintendent shall determine if the applicant meets
17 statutory and regulatory state standards.

18 If qualified the applicant shall at the time of such
19 application pay a fee established by the Illinois Community
20 College Board, which fee shall be paid into a special fund
21 under the control and supervision of the regional
22 superintendent. Such moneys received by the regional
23 superintendent shall be used, first, for the expenses incurred
24 in administering and scoring the examination, and next for
25 other educational programs that are developed and designed by
26 the regional superintendent of schools to assist those who

1 successfully complete high school equivalency testing or meet
2 the criteria for alternative methods of credentialing in
3 furthering their academic development or their ability to
4 secure and retain gainful employment, including programs for
5 the competitive award based on test scores of college or adult
6 education scholarship grants or similar educational
7 incentives. Any excess moneys shall be paid into the institute
8 fund.

9 Any applicant who has achieved the minimum passing
10 standards as established by the Illinois Community College
11 Board shall be notified in writing by the regional
12 superintendent and shall be issued a high school equivalency
13 certificate on the forms provided by the Illinois Community
14 College Board. The regional superintendent shall then certify
15 to the Illinois Community College Board the score of the
16 applicant and such other and additional information that may be
17 required by the Illinois Community College Board. The moneys
18 received therefrom shall be used in the same manner as provided
19 for in this Section.

20 The Illinois Community College Board shall establish
21 alternative methods of credentialing for the issuance of high
22 school equivalency certification. In addition to high school
23 equivalency testing, the following alternative methods of
24 receiving a high school equivalency credential shall be made
25 available to qualified individuals on or after January 1, 2018:

26 (A) High School Equivalency based on High School

1 Credit. A qualified candidate may petition to have his or
2 her high school transcripts evaluated to determine what the
3 candidate needs to meet criteria as established by the
4 Illinois Community College Board.

5 (B) High School Equivalency based on Post-Secondary
6 Credit. A qualified candidate may petition to have his or
7 her post-secondary transcripts evaluated to determine what
8 the candidate needs to meet criteria established by the
9 Illinois Community College Board.

10 (C) High School Equivalency based on a Foreign Diploma.
11 A qualified candidate may petition to have his or her
12 foreign high school or post-secondary transcripts
13 evaluated to determine what the candidate needs to meet
14 criteria established by the Illinois Community College
15 Board.

16 (D) High School Equivalency based on Completion of a
17 Competency-Based Program as approved by the Illinois
18 Community College Board. The Illinois Community College
19 Board shall establish guidelines for competency-based high
20 school equivalency programs.

21 Any applicant who has attained the age of 17 years and
22 maintained residence in the State of Illinois and is not a high
23 school graduate, any person who has enrolled in a youth
24 education program sponsored by the Illinois National Guard, or
25 any person who has successfully completed an alternative
26 education program under Section 2-3.81, Article 13A, or Article

1 13B is eligible to apply for a high school equivalency
2 certificate (if he or she meets the requirements prescribed by
3 the Illinois Community College Board) upon showing evidence
4 that he or she has completed, successfully, high school
5 equivalency testing, administered by the United States Armed
6 Forces Institute, official high school equivalency testing
7 centers established in other states, Veterans' Administration
8 Hospitals, or the office of the State Superintendent of
9 Education for the Illinois State Penitentiary System and the
10 Department of Corrections. Such applicant shall apply to the
11 regional superintendent of the region wherein he or she has
12 maintained residence, and, upon payment of a fee established by
13 the Illinois Community College Board, the regional
14 superintendent shall issue a high school equivalency
15 certificate and immediately thereafter certify to the Illinois
16 Community College Board the score of the applicant and such
17 other and additional information as may be required by the
18 Illinois Community College Board.

19 Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section, any
20 applicant who has been out of school for at least one year may
21 request the regional superintendent of schools to administer
22 restricted high school equivalency testing upon written
23 request of: the director of a program who certifies to the
24 Chief Examiner of an official high school equivalency testing
25 center that the applicant has completed a program of
26 instruction provided by such agencies as the Job Corps, the

1 Postal Service Academy, or an apprenticeship training program;
2 an employer or program director for purposes of entry into
3 apprenticeship programs; another state's department of
4 education in order to meet regulations established by that
5 department of education; or a post high school educational
6 institution for purposes of admission, the Department of
7 Financial and Professional Regulation for licensing purposes,
8 or the Armed Forces for induction purposes. The regional
9 superintendent shall administer such testing, and the
10 applicant shall be notified in writing that he or she is
11 eligible to receive a high school equivalency certificate upon
12 reaching age 17, provided he or she meets the standards
13 established by the Illinois Community College Board.

14 Any test administered under this Section to an applicant
15 who does not speak and understand English may at the discretion
16 of the administering agency be given and answered in any
17 language in which the test is printed. The regional
18 superintendent of schools may waive any fees required by this
19 Section in case of hardship. The regional superintendent of
20 schools and the Illinois Community College Board shall waive
21 any fees required by this Section for an applicant who meets
22 all of the following criteria:

23 (1) The applicant qualifies as a homeless person,
24 child, or youth as defined in the Education for Homeless
25 Children Act.

26 (2) The applicant has not attained 25 years of age as

1 of the date of the scheduled test.

2 (3) The applicant can verify his or her status as a
3 homeless person, child, or youth. A homeless services
4 provider that is qualified to verify an individual's
5 housing status, as determined by the Illinois Community
6 College Board, and that has knowledge of the applicant's
7 housing status may verify the applicant's status for
8 purposes of this subdivision (3).

9 (4) The applicant has completed a high school
10 equivalency preparation course through an Illinois
11 Community College Board-approved provider.

12 (5) The applicant is taking the test at a testing
13 center operated by a regional superintendent of schools or
14 the Cook County High School Equivalency Office.

15 In counties of over 3,000,000 population, a high school
16 equivalency certificate shall contain the signatures of the
17 Executive Director of the Illinois Community College Board and
18 the superintendent, president, or other chief executive
19 officer of the institution where high school equivalency
20 testing instruction occurred and any other signatures
21 authorized by the Illinois Community College Board.

22 Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary,
23 Peoria Public School District 150 may contract with a third
24 party to provide high school equivalency testing programs under
25 this Section.

26 The regional superintendent of schools shall furnish the

1 Illinois Community College Board with any information that the
2 Illinois Community College Board requests with regard to
3 testing and certificates under this Section.

4 (Source: P.A. 99-78, eff. 7-20-15; 99-742, eff. 1-1-17;
5 100-130, eff. 1-1-18.)

6 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
7 becoming law.