

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 Grow Your Own Teacher Education Act is  
5 amended by changing Sections 10 and 20 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 48/10)

7 Sec. 10. Definitions. In this Act:

8 "Accredited teacher preparation program" means a  
9 regionally accredited, Illinois approved teacher education  
10 program authorized to prepare individuals to fulfill all of the  
11 requirements to receive an Illinois initial teaching  
12 certificate.

13 "Cohort" means a group of teacher education candidates who  
14 are enrolled in and share experiences in the same program and  
15 are linked by their desire to become Illinois teachers in  
16 hard-to-staff schools and by their need for the services and  
17 supports offered by the Initiative. A cohort may include a high  
18 school student enrolled in a dual credit course offered by a  
19 participating institution of higher education.

20 "Community organization" means a nonprofit organization  
21 that has a demonstrated capacity to train, develop, and  
22 organize parents and community leaders into a constituency that  
23 will hold the school and the school district accountable for

1 achieving high academic standards; in addition to  
2 organizations with a geographic focus, "community  
3 organization" includes general parent organizations,  
4 organizations of special education or bilingual education  
5 parents, and school employee unions.

6 "Developmental classes" means classes in basic skill  
7 areas, such as mathematics and language arts that are  
8 prerequisite to, but not counted towards, degree requirements  
9 of a teacher preparation program.

10 "Dual credit course" has the meaning given to that term  
11 under the Dual Credit Quality Act.

12 "Eligible school" means an early childhood program in which  
13 no less than 60% of the children it serves are receiving  
14 subsidized care under the Department of Human Services' Child  
15 Care Assistance Program or a public elementary, middle, or  
16 secondary school in this State that serves a substantial  
17 percentage of low-income students and that is either hard to  
18 staff or has hard-to-staff teaching positions.

19 "Hard-to-staff school" means an early childhood program in  
20 which no less than 60% of the children it serves are receiving  
21 subsidized care under the Department of Human Services' Child  
22 Care Assistance Program or a public elementary, middle, or  
23 secondary school in this State that, based on data compiled by  
24 the State Board of Education in conjunction with the Board of  
25 Higher Education, serves a substantial percentage of  
26 low-income students, as defined by the Board of Higher

1 Education.

2 "Hard-to-staff teaching position" means a teaching  
3 category (such as special education, bilingual education,  
4 mathematics, or science) in which statewide data compiled by  
5 the State Board of Education in conjunction with the Board of  
6 Higher Education indicates a multi-year pattern of substantial  
7 teacher shortage or that has been identified as a critical need  
8 by the local school board.

9 "Initiative" means the Grow Your Own Teacher Education  
10 Initiative created under this Act.

11 "Para educator" means an individual with a history of  
12 demonstrated accomplishments in school staff positions (such  
13 as teacher assistants, school-community liaisons, school  
14 clerks, and security aides) in schools that meet the definition  
15 of a hard-to-staff school under this Section.

16 "Parent and community leader" means an individual who has  
17 or had a child enrolled in a school or schools that meet the  
18 definition of a hard-to-staff school under this Section and who  
19 has a history of active involvement in the school or who has a  
20 history of working to improve schools serving a substantial  
21 percentage of low-income students, including membership in a  
22 community organization.

23 "Program" means a Grow Your Own Teacher preparation program  
24 established by a consortium under this Act.

25 "Schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income  
26 students" means schools that maintain any of grades

1 pre-kindergarten through 8, in which at least 35% of the  
2 students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches  
3 and schools that maintain any of grades 9 through 12, in which  
4 at least 25% of the students are eligible to receive free or  
5 reduced price lunches.

6 (Source: P.A. 98-1036, eff. 1-1-15.)

7 (110 ILCS 48/20)

8 Sec. 20. Selection of grantees. The Board of Higher  
9 Education shall award grants to qualified consortia that  
10 reflect the distribution and diversity of hard-to-staff  
11 schools and hard-to-staff positions across this State. In  
12 awarding grants, the Board of Higher Education shall select  
13 programs that successfully address Initiative criteria and  
14 that reflect a diversity of strategies in terms of serving  
15 urban areas, serving rural areas, the nature of the  
16 participating institutions of higher education, and the nature  
17 of hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff teaching positions  
18 on which a program is focused.

19 The Board of Higher Education shall select consortia that  
20 meet the following requirements:

21 (1) A consortium shall be composed of at least one  
22 4-year institution of higher education with an Illinois  
23 approved teacher preparation program, at least one school  
24 district or group of schools, and one or more community  
25 organizations. The consortium membership may also include

1 a 2-year institution of higher education, a school employee  
2 union, or a regional office of education.

3 (2) The 4-year institution of higher education  
4 participating in the consortium shall have past,  
5 demonstrated success in preparing teachers for elementary  
6 or secondary schools serving a substantial percentage of  
7 low-income students.

8 (3) The consortium shall focus on a clearly defined set  
9 of eligible schools that will participate in the program.  
10 The consortium shall articulate the steps that it will  
11 carry out in preparing teachers for its participating  
12 schools and in preparing teachers for one or more  
13 hard-to-staff teaching positions in those schools.

14 (4) The consortium shall recruit potential candidates  
15 for the program and shall take into consideration when  
16 selecting a candidate whether the candidate:

17 (A) holds a high school diploma or its equivalent  
18 or is a high school student enrolled in a dual credit  
19 course offered by a participating institution of  
20 higher education;

21 (B) meets either the definition of "parent and  
22 community leader" or the definition of "para educator"  
23 contained in Section 10 of this Act;

24 (C) (blank); ~~has experienced an interruption in~~  
25 ~~his or her college education;~~

26 (D) exhibits a willingness to be a teacher in a

1 hard-to-staff school with the goal of maintaining  
2 academic excellence;

3 (E) shows an interest in postsecondary education  
4 and may hold an associate's degree, a bachelor's  
5 degree, or another postsecondary degree, but a  
6 postsecondary education is not required;

7 (F) is a parent, a para educator, a community  
8 leader, or any other individual from a community with a  
9 hard-to-staff school;

10 (G) commits to completing and passing all State  
11 standards, including the licensure test to obtain an  
12 educator license;

13 (H) shows a willingness to set high standards of  
14 performance for himself or herself and students; and

15 (I) demonstrates commitment to the program by:

16 (i) maintaining a cumulative grade point  
17 average of at least a 2.5 on a 4.0 scale (or the  
18 equivalent as determined by the Board of Higher  
19 Education);

20 (ii) attending monthly cohort meetings; and

21 (iii) applying for financial aid from all  
22 other financial aid resources before applying for  
23 assistance from the program.

24 (5) The consortium shall employ effective procedures  
25 for teaching the skills and knowledge needed to prepare  
26 highly competent teachers. Professional preparation shall

1 include on-going direct experience in target schools and  
2 evaluation of this experience.

3 (6) The consortium shall offer the program to cohorts  
4 of candidates, as defined in Section 10 of this Act, on a  
5 schedule that enables candidates to work full time while  
6 participating in the program and allows para educators to  
7 continue in their current positions. In any fiscal year in  
8 which an appropriation for the Initiative is made, the  
9 consortium shall guarantee that support will be available  
10 to an admitted cohort for the cohort's education for that  
11 fiscal year. At the beginning of the Initiative, programs  
12 that are already operating and existing cohorts of  
13 candidates under this model shall be eligible for funding.

14 (7) The institutions of higher education participating  
15 in the consortium shall document and agree to expend the  
16 same amount of funds in implementing the program that these  
17 institutions spend per student on similar educational  
18 programs. Grants received by the consortium shall  
19 supplement and not supplant these amounts.

20 (8) The Board of Higher Education shall establish  
21 additional criteria for review of proposals, including  
22 criteria that address the following issues:

23 (A) Previous experience of the institutions of  
24 higher education in preparing candidates for  
25 hard-to-staff schools and positions and in working  
26 with students with non-traditional backgrounds.

1           (B) The quality of the implementation plan,  
2           including strategies for overcoming institutional  
3           barriers to the progress of non-traditional  
4           candidates.

5           (C) If a community college is a participant, the  
6           nature and extent of existing articulation agreements  
7           and guarantees between the community college and the  
8           4-year institution of higher education.

9           (D) The number of candidates to be educated in the  
10          planned cohort or cohorts and the capacity of the  
11          consortium for adding cohorts in future cycles.

12          (E) Experience of the community organization or  
13          organizations in organizing parents and community  
14          leaders to achieve school improvement and a strong  
15          relational school culture.

16          (F) The qualifications of the person or persons  
17          designated by the 4-year institution of higher  
18          education to be responsible for cohort support and the  
19          development of a shared learning and social  
20          environment among candidates.

21          (G) The consortium's plan for collective  
22          consortium decision-making, involving all consortium  
23          members, including mechanisms for candidate input.

24          (H) The consortium's plan for direct impact of the  
25          program on the quality of education in the eligible  
26          schools.



1 (I) The relevance of the curriculum to the needs of  
2 the eligible schools and positions, and the use in  
3 curriculum and instructional planning of principles  
4 for effective education for adults.

5 (J) The availability of classes under the program  
6 in places and times accessible to the candidates.

7 (K) Provision of a level of performance to be  
8 maintained by candidates as a condition of continuing  
9 in the program.

10 (L) The plan of the 4-year institution of higher  
11 education to ensure that candidates take advantage of  
12 existing financial aid resources before using the loan  
13 funds described in Section 25 of this Act.

14 (M) The availability of supportive services,  
15 including, but not limited to, counseling, tutoring,  
16 transportation, technology and technology support, and  
17 child care.

18 (N) A plan for continued participation of  
19 graduates of the program in a program of support for at  
20 least 2 years, including mentoring and group meetings.

21 (O) A plan for testing and qualitative evaluation  
22 of candidates' teaching skills that ensures that  
23 graduates of the program are as prepared for teaching  
24 as other individuals completing the institution of  
25 higher education's preparation program for the  
26 certificate sought.

1 (P) A plan for internal evaluation that provides  
2 reports at least yearly on the progress of candidates  
3 towards graduation and the impact of the program on the  
4 target schools and their communities.

5 (Q) Contributions from schools, school districts,  
6 and other consortia members to the program, including  
7 stipends for candidates during their student teaching.

8 (R) Consortium commitment for sustaining the  
9 program over time, as evidenced by plans for reduced  
10 requirements for external funding, in subsequent  
11 cycles.

12 (S) The inclusion in the planned program of  
13 strategies derived from community organizing that will  
14 help candidates develop tools for working with parents  
15 and other community members.

16 Subject to the requirements under the Dual Credit Quality  
17 Act, a participating institution of higher education may offer  
18 a high school student a dual credit course under the program.

19 The Board of Higher Education may not adopt rules regarding  
20 candidate eligibility that are more restrictive than this  
21 Section.

22 (Source: P.A. 98-1036, eff. 1-1-15.)

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