

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 Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act is
5 amended by changing Sections 20 and 25 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 148/20)

7 Sec. 20. Competency-based, high school graduation
8 requirements pilot program. In consultation with ICCB and IBHE,
9 ISBE shall establish and administer a competency-based, high
10 school graduation requirements pilot program with school
11 districts selected pursuant to Section 25 of this Act. A school
12 district participating in the pilot program may select which of
13 the year and course graduation requirements set forth in
14 Section 27-22 of the School Code the school district wishes to
15 replace with a competency-based learning system. A school
16 district may participate in the pilot program for some or all
17 of its schools ~~serving grades 9 through 12~~. The pilot program
18 shall include the following components and requirements:

19 (1) The competency-based learning systems authorized
20 through the pilot program shall include all of the
21 following elements:

22 (A) Students shall demonstrate mastery of all
23 required competencies to earn credit.

1 (B) Students must demonstrate mastery of Adaptive
2 Competencies defined by the school district, in
3 addition to academic competencies.

4 (C) Students shall advance once they have
5 demonstrated mastery, and students shall receive more
6 time and personalized instruction to demonstrate
7 mastery, if needed.

8 (D) Students shall have the ability to attain
9 advanced postsecondary education and career-related
10 competencies beyond those needed for graduation.

11 (E) Students must be assessed using multiple
12 measures to determine mastery, usually requiring
13 application of knowledge.

14 (F) Students must be able to earn credit toward
15 graduation requirements in ways other than traditional
16 coursework, including learning opportunities outside
17 the traditional classroom setting, such as Supervised
18 Career Development Experiences.

19 (2) A school district participating in the pilot
20 program shall demonstrate that the proposed
21 competency-based learning system is a core strategy
22 supporting the community's efforts to better prepare high
23 school students for college, career, and life. The
24 application must identify the community partners that will
25 support the system's implementation.

26 (3) A school district participating in the pilot

1 program must have a plan for educator administrator and
2 educator professional development on the competency-based
3 learning system and must demonstrate prior successful
4 implementation of professional development systems for
5 major district instructional initiatives.

6 (4) A school district participating in the pilot
7 program that is replacing graduation requirements in the
8 core academic areas of mathematics, English language arts,
9 and science with a competency-based learning system shall
10 demonstrate how the competencies can be mastered through
11 Integrated Courses or career and technical education
12 courses.

13 (5) A school district participating in the pilot
14 program shall develop a plan for community engagement and
15 communications.

16 (6) A school district participating in the pilot
17 program shall develop a plan for assigning course grades
18 based on mastery of competencies within the
19 competency-based learning system.

20 (7) A school district participating in the pilot
21 program shall establish a plan and system for collecting
22 and assessing student progress on competency completion
23 and attainment, including for learning opportunities
24 outside of the traditional classroom setting.

25 (8) A school district participating in the pilot
26 program shall establish a system for data collection and

1 reporting and must provide ISBE with such reports and
2 information as may be required for administration and
3 evaluation of the program.

4 (9) A school district participating in the pilot
5 program shall partner with a community college and a higher
6 education institution other than a community college for
7 consultation on the development and administration of its
8 competency-based learning system. The plan shall address
9 how high school graduates of a competency-based learning
10 system will be able to provide information normally
11 expected of postsecondary institutions for admission and
12 financial aid.

13 (10) A school district participating in the pilot
14 program shall have a plan for engaging feeder elementary
15 schools with the participating high school or schools on
16 the establishment and administration of the
17 competency-based learning system.

18 (Source: P.A. 99-674, eff. 7-29-16.)

19 (110 ILCS 148/25)

20 Sec. 25. Competency-based, high school graduation
21 requirements pilot program eligibility and application
22 process.

23 (a) The pilot program established under Section 20 of this
24 Act shall be administered by the State Superintendent of
25 Education in 2 phases: (i) an initial application and selection

1 process phase, and (ii) a subsequent phase for full development
2 and implementation of a detailed plan for a competency-based
3 learning system for high school graduation requirements.

4 (b) For the initial phase under clause (i) of subsection
5 (a) of this Section, the State Superintendent of Education
6 shall develop and issue a pilot program application that
7 requires:

8 (1) demonstration of commitment from the school
9 district superintendent; the president of the school board
10 of the district; teachers within the school district who
11 will be involved with the pilot program implementation; a
12 community college partner; and a higher education
13 institution other than a community college;

14 (2) an indication of which of the year and course
15 graduation requirements set forth in Section 27-22 of the
16 School Code the school district wishes to replace with a
17 competency-based learning system;

18 (3) a general description of the school district's plan
19 for implementing a competency-based learning system for
20 high school graduation requirements, including how the
21 plan addresses the requirements of Section 20 of this Act
22 and this Section;

23 (4) the school district's prior professional
24 development and stakeholder engagement efforts that will
25 support its successful development and implementation of a
26 competency-based learning system, including, without

1 limitation, prior implementation of professional
2 development systems for major district instructional
3 initiatives; and

4 (5) identification of any waivers or modifications of
5 State law or rules for implementation of the proposed plan.

6 The demonstration of commitment from teachers as required
7 by paragraph (1) of this subsection (b) must include a
8 description of how teachers have been engaged throughout the
9 application development process. If the school district has an
10 exclusive bargaining representative of its teachers and the
11 president of the exclusive bargaining representative does not
12 submit a statement of commitment for the application, the
13 school district must submit either a statement by the president
14 of the position of the exclusive bargaining representative on
15 the application or a description of the school district's good
16 faith efforts to obtain such a statement.

17 (c) Subject to subsection (g) of this Section, the State
18 Superintendent of Education shall select school districts
19 meeting the requirements set forth in this Section to
20 participate in the pilot program based on the quality of the
21 proposed plan, the strength of the local commitments,
22 including, without limitation, teachers within the school
23 district who will be involved in the program's implementation
24 and postsecondary institution partnerships, and demonstration
25 of prior professional development and stakeholder engagement
26 efforts that will support the proposed system's successful

1 implementation. The State Superintendent of Education, in
2 selecting the participating school districts, shall also
3 consider the diversity of school district types and sizes, the
4 diversity of geographic representation from across the State,
5 and the diversity of plan approaches (such as approaches that
6 involve one subject only, multiple subjects, and the types of
7 subjects).

8 (d) School districts selected to participate in the pilot
9 program shall receive technical assistance coordinated by the
10 State Superintendent of Education to develop a full pilot
11 program implementation plan. The State Superintendent of
12 Education shall have discretion to remove a school district
13 from the pilot program during this period if the school
14 district does not submit a full pilot program implementation
15 plan that meets the State Superintendent of Education's
16 specifications.

17 (e) School districts shall, as part of the development of
18 their application and participation in the competency-based
19 learning system pilot program, establish and maintain a
20 standing planning and implementation committee that includes
21 representation from administrators and teachers, including
22 teachers who will be involved in the competency-based learning
23 system's implementation. The teacher representatives shall be
24 selected by teachers or, where applicable, the exclusive
25 bargaining representative of its teachers, and the number of
26 teacher representatives shall be at least equal to

1 administrator representatives, unless otherwise agreed to by
2 the teachers or, where applicable, the exclusive bargaining
3 representative of its teachers. The standing planning and
4 implementation committee shall develop reports that shall be
5 included within the initial application, the full pilot program
6 plan, and any subsequent annual submissions to the State
7 Superintendent of Education as part of the assessment and
8 evaluation of the program. The reports shall describe the
9 members' assessment of the school district's plan or
10 implementation, as applicable, of the school district's
11 competency-based learning system and any recommendations for
12 modifications or improvements to the system. If the committee
13 does not reach consensus on the report, the administrator
14 members shall submit the report and the teacher members may
15 provide a position statement that must be included with the
16 report submitted to the State Superintendent of Education.

17 (f) Notwithstanding any other provisions of the School Code
18 or any other law of this State to the contrary, school
19 districts participating in the pilot program may petition the
20 State Superintendent of Education for a waiver or modification
21 of the mandates of the School Code or of the administrative
22 rules adopted by ISBE in order to support the implementation of
23 the school district's proposed competency-based learning
24 system. However, no waiver shall be granted under this
25 subsection (f) relating to State assessments, accountability
26 requirements, teacher tenure or seniority, teacher or

1 principal evaluations, or learning standards or that removes
2 legal protections or supports intended for the protection of
3 children or a particular category of students, such as students
4 with disabilities or English learners. Any waiver or
5 modification of teacher educator licensure requirements to
6 permit instruction by non-educators or educators without an
7 appropriate license must ensure that an appropriately licensed
8 teacher and the provider of instruction partner in order to
9 verify the method for assessing competency of mastery and
10 verify whether a student has demonstrated mastery. All requests
11 must be jointly signed by the school district superintendent
12 and the president of the school board and must describe the
13 position of teachers within the school district that will be
14 involved in the competency-based learning system's
15 implementation on the application. If the school district has
16 an exclusive bargaining representative of its teachers and the
17 president of the exclusive bargaining representative does not
18 submit a statement of support for the application, the school
19 district must submit either a statement by the president that
20 describes the position of the exclusive bargaining
21 representative on the application or a description of the
22 school district's good faith efforts to obtain such a
23 statement. The State Superintendent of Education shall approve
24 a waiver or modification request meeting the requirements of
25 this subsection (f) if the State Superintendent of Education
26 determines the request is reasonably necessary to support the

1 implementation of the school district's proposed
2 competency-based learning system, and the request shall not
3 diminish the overall support of teachers within the school
4 district involved with the system's implementation as
5 demonstrated in the school district's initial application to
6 participate in the pilot program. An approved request shall
7 take effect in accordance with the timeline set forth in the
8 school district's application, and an approved waiver or
9 modification shall remain in effect for so long as the school
10 district participates in the pilot program established by this
11 Act. The State Superintendent of Education's approval of a
12 school district plan for implementation of competency-based,
13 high school graduation requirements shall serve as a waiver or
14 modification of any conflicting requirements of Section 27-22
15 of the School Code. School districts participating in the pilot
16 program may additionally pursue waivers and modifications
17 pursuant to Section 2-3.25g of the School Code.

18 (g) For purposes of this subsection (g), "annual cohort"
19 means the group of school districts selected by the State
20 Superintendent of Education to participate in the pilot program
21 during an annual application and selection process. The State
22 Superintendent of Education shall limit each annual cohort of
23 the pilot program as follows: the first 2 annual cohorts shall
24 be limited to no more than 12 school districts, and any
25 subsequent annual cohort shall be limited to no more than 15
26 school districts. A school district may submit only one

1 application for each annual cohort of the pilot program. The
2 application of a school district having a population exceeding
3 500,000 inhabitants may not include more than 6 schools. The
4 expansion of a school district's competency-based learning
5 system to a new school or new subject area identified in
6 Section 27-22 of the School Code shall require a new
7 application by the school district.

8 School districts may collaboratively apply to participate
9 in the pilot program. Notwithstanding any other provision of
10 this subsection (g), the application of a collaborative of
11 districts shall be counted as one district application in the
12 annual cohort selection process. In the application of a
13 collaborative of districts, each district participating in the
14 collaborative shall comply with the requirements outlined in
15 subsection (b) of this Section as if applying as an individual
16 district. The districts participating in the collaborative may
17 establish and maintain a standing planning and implementation
18 committee individually or collaboratively. If a collaborative
19 of districts decides at a later date to participate as
20 individual districts in the pilot program, the districts shall
21 submit to the State Superintendent of Education a revised
22 implementation plan that outlines the changes to their original
23 plan, the individual district applications from these
24 districts shall be considered as separate district
25 applications, and none of these districts may be counted as one
26 of the districts that are already part of the cohort

1 limitation.

2 (Source: P.A. 99-674, eff. 7-29-16.)

3 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
4 becoming law.