

SB2776



103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

SB2776

Introduced 1/17/2024, by Sen. Natalie Toro

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

110 ILCS 947/50

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act with respect to the Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship program. Requires the Illinois Student Assistance Commission to establish and administer a student teaching stipend program. Subject to appropriation, requires the Commission to receive and consider applications for additional funds from recipients of scholarships who are student teaching. Provides that the Commission shall select stipend recipients from among applicants who are in financial need. Provides that certain recipients may receive an additional payment for other expenses during the year in which the recipient is engaged in student teaching. Provides for rulemaking.

LRB103 36974 RJT 67088 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 Higher Education Student Assistance Act is
5 amended by changing Section 50 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/50)

7 Sec. 50. Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship
8 program.

9 (a) As used in this Section:

10 "Eligible applicant" means a minority student who has
11 graduated from high school or has received a State of
12 Illinois High School Diploma and has maintained a
13 cumulative grade point average of no less than 2.5 on a 4.0
14 scale, and who by reason thereof is entitled to apply for
15 scholarships to be awarded under this Section.

16 "Minority student" means a student who is any of the
17 following:

18 (1) American Indian or Alaska Native (a person
19 having origins in any of the original peoples of North
20 and South America, including Central America, and who
21 maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment).

22 (2) Asian (a person having origins in any of the
23 original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or

1 the Indian subcontinent, including, but not limited
2 to, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia,
3 Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and
4 Vietnam).

5 (3) Black or African American (a person having
6 origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa).

7 (4) Hispanic or Latino (a person of Cuban,
8 Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or
9 other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race).

10 (5) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (a
11 person having origins in any of the original peoples
12 of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands).

13 "Qualified bilingual minority applicant" means a
14 qualified student who demonstrates proficiency in a
15 language other than English by (i) receiving a State Seal
16 of Biliteracy from the State Board of Education or (ii)
17 receiving a passing score on an educator licensure target
18 language proficiency test.

19 "Qualified student" means a person (i) who is a
20 resident of this State and a citizen or permanent resident
21 of the United States; (ii) who is a minority student, as
22 defined in this Section; (iii) who, as an eligible
23 applicant, has made a timely application for a minority
24 teaching scholarship under this Section; (iv) who is
25 enrolled on at least a half-time basis at a qualified
26 Illinois institution of higher learning; (v) who is

1 enrolled in a course of study leading to teacher
2 licensure, including alternative teacher licensure, or, if
3 the student is already licensed to teach, in a course of
4 study leading to an additional teaching endorsement or a
5 master's degree in an academic field in which he or she is
6 teaching or plans to teach or who has received one or more
7 College and Career Pathway Endorsements pursuant to
8 Section 80 of the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness
9 Act and commits to enrolling in a course of study leading
10 to teacher licensure, including alternative teacher
11 licensure; (vi) who maintains a grade point average of no
12 less than 2.5 on a 4.0 scale; and (vii) who continues to
13 advance satisfactorily toward the attainment of a degree.

14 (b) In order to encourage academically talented Illinois
15 minority students to pursue teaching careers at the preschool
16 or elementary or secondary school level and to address and
17 alleviate the teacher shortage crisis in this State described
18 under the provisions of the Transitions in Education Act, each
19 qualified student shall be awarded a minority teacher
20 scholarship to any qualified Illinois institution of higher
21 learning. However, preference may be given to qualified
22 applicants enrolled at or above the junior level.

23 (c) Each minority teacher scholarship awarded under this
24 Section shall be in an amount sufficient to pay the tuition and
25 fees and room and board costs of the qualified Illinois
26 institution of higher learning at which the recipient is

1 enrolled, up to an annual maximum of \$5,000; except that in the
2 case of a recipient who does not reside on-campus at the
3 institution at which he or she is enrolled, the amount of the
4 scholarship shall be sufficient to pay tuition and fee
5 expenses and a commuter allowance, up to an annual maximum of
6 \$5,000. However, if at least \$2,850,000 is appropriated in a
7 given fiscal year for the Minority Teachers of Illinois
8 scholarship program, then, in each fiscal year thereafter,
9 each scholarship awarded under this Section shall be in an
10 amount sufficient to pay the tuition and fees and room and
11 board costs of the qualified Illinois institution of higher
12 learning at which the recipient is enrolled, up to an annual
13 maximum of \$7,500; except that in the case of a recipient who
14 does not reside on-campus at the institution at which he or she
15 is enrolled, the amount of the scholarship shall be sufficient
16 to pay tuition and fee expenses and a commuter allowance, up to
17 an annual maximum of \$7,500.

18 (d) The total amount of minority teacher scholarship
19 assistance awarded by the Commission under this Section to an
20 individual in any given fiscal year, when added to other
21 financial assistance awarded to that individual for that year,
22 shall not exceed the cost of attendance at the institution at
23 which the student is enrolled. If the amount of minority
24 teacher scholarship to be awarded to a qualified student as
25 provided in subsection (c) of this Section exceeds the cost of
26 attendance at the institution at which the student is

1 enrolled, the minority teacher scholarship shall be reduced by
2 an amount equal to the amount by which the combined financial
3 assistance available to the student exceeds the cost of
4 attendance.

5 (e) The maximum number of academic terms for which a
6 qualified student can receive minority teacher scholarship
7 assistance shall be 8 semesters or 12 quarters.

8 (f) In any academic year for which an eligible applicant
9 under this Section accepts financial assistance through the
10 Paul Douglas Teacher Scholarship Program, as authorized by
11 Section 551 et seq. of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the
12 applicant shall not be eligible for scholarship assistance
13 awarded under this Section.

14 (g) All applications for minority teacher scholarships to
15 be awarded under this Section shall be made to the Commission
16 on forms which the Commission shall provide for eligible
17 applicants. The form of applications and the information
18 required to be set forth therein shall be determined by the
19 Commission, and the Commission shall require eligible
20 applicants to submit with their applications such supporting
21 documents or recommendations as the Commission deems
22 necessary.

23 (h) Subject to a separate appropriation for such purposes,
24 payment of any minority teacher scholarship awarded under this
25 Section shall be determined by the Commission. All scholarship
26 funds distributed in accordance with this subsection shall be

1 paid to the institution and used only for payment of the
2 tuition and fee and room and board expenses incurred by the
3 student in connection with his or her attendance at a
4 qualified Illinois institution of higher learning. Any
5 minority teacher scholarship awarded under this Section shall
6 be applicable to 2 semesters or 3 quarters of enrollment. If a
7 qualified student withdraws from enrollment prior to
8 completion of the first semester or quarter for which the
9 minority teacher scholarship is applicable, the school shall
10 refund to the Commission the full amount of the minority
11 teacher scholarship.

12 (i) The Commission shall administer the minority teacher
13 scholarship aid program established by this Section and shall
14 make all necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this
15 Section for its effective implementation.

16 (j) When an appropriation to the Commission for a given
17 fiscal year is insufficient to provide scholarships to all
18 qualified students, the Commission shall allocate the
19 appropriation in accordance with this subsection. If funds are
20 insufficient to provide all qualified students with a
21 scholarship as authorized by this Section, the Commission
22 shall allocate the available scholarship funds for that fiscal
23 year to qualified students who submit a complete application
24 form on or before a date specified by the Commission based on
25 the following order of priority:

26 (1) To students who received a scholarship under this

1 Section in the prior academic year and who remain eligible
2 for a minority teacher scholarship under this Section.

3 (2) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (k), to
4 students who demonstrate financial need, as determined by
5 the Commission.

6 (k) Notwithstanding paragraph (2) of subsection (j), at
7 least 35% of the funds appropriated for scholarships awarded
8 under this Section in each fiscal year shall be reserved for
9 qualified male minority applicants, with priority being given
10 to qualified Black male applicants beginning with fiscal year
11 2023. If the Commission does not receive enough applications
12 from qualified male minorities on or before January 1 of each
13 fiscal year to award 35% of the funds appropriated for these
14 scholarships to qualified male minority applicants, then the
15 Commission may award a portion of the reserved funds to
16 qualified female minority applicants in accordance with
17 subsection (j).

18 Beginning with fiscal year 2023, if at least \$2,850,000
19 but less than \$4,200,000 is appropriated in a given fiscal
20 year for scholarships awarded under this Section, then at
21 least 10% of the funds appropriated shall be reserved for
22 qualified bilingual minority applicants, with priority being
23 given to qualified bilingual minority applicants who are
24 enrolled in an educator preparation program with a
25 concentration in bilingual, bicultural education. Beginning
26 with fiscal year 2023, if at least \$4,200,000 is appropriated

1 in a given fiscal year for the Minority Teachers of Illinois
2 scholarship program, then at least 30% of the funds
3 appropriated shall be reserved for qualified bilingual
4 minority applicants, with priority being given to qualified
5 bilingual minority applicants who are enrolled in an educator
6 preparation program with a concentration in bilingual,
7 bicultural education. Beginning with fiscal year 2023, if at
8 least \$2,850,000 is appropriated in a given fiscal year for
9 scholarships awarded under this Section but the Commission
10 does not receive enough applications from qualified bilingual
11 minority applicants on or before January 1 of that fiscal year
12 to award at least 10% of the funds appropriated to qualified
13 bilingual minority applicants, then the Commission may, in its
14 discretion, award a portion of the reserved funds to other
15 qualified students in accordance with subsection (j).

16 (1) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for any
17 academic year, each recipient of a minority teacher
18 scholarship awarded under this Section shall be required by
19 the Commission to sign an agreement under which the recipient
20 pledges that, within the one-year period following the
21 termination of the program for which the recipient was awarded
22 a minority teacher scholarship, the recipient (i) shall begin
23 teaching for a period of not less than one year for each year
24 of scholarship assistance he or she was awarded under this
25 Section; (ii) shall fulfill this teaching obligation at a
26 nonprofit Illinois public, private, or parochial preschool,

1 elementary school, or secondary school at which no less than
2 30% of the enrolled students are minority students in the year
3 during which the recipient begins teaching at the school or
4 may instead, if the recipient received a scholarship as a
5 qualified bilingual minority applicant, fulfill this teaching
6 obligation in a program in transitional bilingual education
7 pursuant to Article 14C of the School Code or in a school in
8 which 20 or more English learner students in the same language
9 classification are enrolled; and (iii) shall, upon request by
10 the Commission, provide the Commission with evidence that he
11 or she is fulfilling or has fulfilled the terms of the teaching
12 agreement provided for in this subsection.

13 (m) If a recipient of a minority teacher scholarship
14 awarded under this Section fails to fulfill the teaching
15 obligation set forth in subsection (l) of this Section, the
16 Commission shall require the recipient to repay the amount of
17 the scholarships received, prorated according to the fraction
18 of the teaching obligation not completed, at a rate of
19 interest equal to 5%, and, if applicable, reasonable
20 collection fees. If a recipient who enters into repayment
21 under this subsection (m) subsequently, within 5 years of
22 entering repayment, begins to teach at a school meeting the
23 description under subsection (l) of this Section, the
24 Commission may reduce the amount owed by the recipient in
25 proportion to the amount of the teaching obligation completed.
26 The Commission is authorized to establish rules relating to

1 its collection activities for repayment of scholarships under
2 this Section. All repayments collected under this Section
3 shall be forwarded to the State Comptroller for deposit into
4 the State's General Revenue Fund.

5 (n) A recipient of minority teacher scholarship shall not
6 be considered in violation of the agreement entered into
7 pursuant to subsection (l) if the recipient (i) enrolls on a
8 full time basis as a graduate student in a course of study
9 related to the field of teaching at a qualified Illinois
10 institution of higher learning; (ii) is serving, not in excess
11 of 3 years, as a member of the armed services of the United
12 States; (iii) is a person with a temporary total disability
13 for a period of time not to exceed 3 years as established by
14 sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; (iv) is seeking and
15 unable to find full time employment as a teacher at an Illinois
16 public, private, or parochial preschool or elementary or
17 secondary school that satisfies the criteria set forth in
18 subsection (l) of this Section and is able to provide evidence
19 of that fact; (v) becomes a person with a permanent total
20 disability as established by sworn affidavit of a qualified
21 physician; (vi) is taking additional courses, on at least a
22 half-time basis, needed to obtain licensure as a teacher in
23 Illinois; or (vii) is fulfilling teaching requirements
24 associated with other programs administered by the Commission
25 and cannot concurrently fulfill them under this Section in a
26 period of time equal to the length of the teaching obligation.

1 (o) Scholarship recipients under this Section who withdraw
2 from a program of teacher education but remain enrolled in
3 school to continue their postsecondary studies in another
4 academic discipline shall not be required to commence
5 repayment of their Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship
6 so long as they remain enrolled in school on a full-time basis
7 or if they can document for the Commission special
8 circumstances that warrant extension of repayment.

9 (p) If the Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship
10 program does not expend at least 90% of the amount
11 appropriated for the program in a given fiscal year for 3
12 consecutive fiscal years and the Commission does not receive
13 enough applications from the groups identified in subsection
14 (k) on or before January 1 in each of those fiscal years to
15 meet the percentage reserved for those groups under subsection
16 (k), then up to 3% of amount appropriated for the program for
17 each of next 3 fiscal years shall be allocated to increasing
18 awareness of the program and for the recruitment of Black male
19 applicants. The Commission shall make a recommendation to the
20 General Assembly by January 1 of the year immediately
21 following the end of that third fiscal year regarding whether
22 the amount allocated to increasing awareness and recruitment
23 should continue.

24 (q) Each qualified Illinois institution of higher learning
25 that receives funds from the Minority Teachers of Illinois
26 scholarship program shall host an annual information session

1 at the institution about the program for teacher candidates of
2 color in accordance with rules adopted by the Commission.
3 Additionally, the institution shall ensure that each
4 scholarship recipient enrolled at the institution meets with
5 an academic advisor at least once per academic year to
6 facilitate on-time completion of the recipient's educator
7 preparation program.

8 (r) The changes made to this Section by Public Act 101-654
9 will first take effect with awards made for the 2022-2023
10 academic year.

11 (s) The Commission shall establish and administer a
12 student teaching stipend program. Under the program, subject
13 to a specific and distinct appropriation for those express
14 purposes, the Commission shall receive and consider
15 applications for additional funds from recipients of
16 scholarships under this Section who are student teaching. The
17 Commission shall select stipend recipients from among
18 applicants who are in financial need. All applications for
19 stipends under this subsection (s) shall be made to the
20 Commission in a form as set forth by the Commission. The form
21 of application and the information required shall be
22 determined by the Commission, and the Commission shall require
23 applicants to submit with their applications such supporting
24 documents as the Commission deems necessary.

25 Beginning with grants for the 2025-2026 academic year,
26 notwithstanding the maximum award amounts listed in subsection

1 (c), certain recipients may receive an additional payment to
2 assist in paying other expenses during the year in which the
3 recipient is engaged in student teaching. The amount of the
4 payment shall be uniform and determined yearly by the
5 Commission based on available funds. Regardless of the total
6 scholarship amount received, no more than \$7,500 attributable
7 to this single year payment shall be subject to the repayment
8 provisions of subsection (m).

9 The Commission shall make all necessary and proper rules
10 not inconsistent with this subsection (s) for its effective
11 implementation.

12 (Source: P.A. 102-465, eff. 1-1-22; 102-813, eff. 5-13-22;
13 102-1100, eff. 1-1-23; 103-448, eff. 8-4-23.)