

# SB3787



## 103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

SB3787

Introduced 2/9/2024, by Sen. Michael W. Halpin

### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

110 ILCS 805/3-29.26 new

Amends the Public Community College Act. Allows the board of trustees of a community college district to establish and offer a baccalaureate degree program and confer a bachelor's degree if the board of trustees and the program meet specified conditions. Provides for an application for approval from the Illinois Community College Board. Sets forth community college requirements and prohibitions for establishing a baccalaureate degree program. Provides that a community college district that offers a baccalaureate degree program shall submit an annual report to the Illinois Community College Board. Sets forth what that report shall include. Provides for a statewide evaluation of a baccalaureate degree program.

LRB103 37518 RJT 67641 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 1. Findings. The General Assembly finds the  
5 following:

6 (1) Four-year degrees in applied fields of study are of  
7 increasing importance in enabling individuals to qualify for  
8 and obtain jobs.

9 (2) It is a priority in this State to promote equitable  
10 access and afford the citizens in this State, particularly  
11 underserved student populations and those in rural areas of  
12 this State, greater access to higher education.

13 (3) Research has shown the following:

14 (A) Most students attend college within 50 miles of  
15 their home, and many Illinois residents live outside of  
16 commuting distance to a public institution of higher  
17 education.

18 (B) In states where the community college  
19 baccalaureate has been implemented, typical graduates are  
20 older, are working, or have family responsibilities that  
21 preclude them from attending traditional baccalaureate  
22 programs.

23 (C) Community college baccalaureate graduates are  
24 often more racially diverse than counterparts in similar

1 programs of study.

2 (4) Community colleges can help fill the gaps in this  
3 State's higher education system by granting baccalaureate  
4 degrees to meet the growing demand for a skilled workforce by  
5 increasing access and reducing costs for students.

6 (5) It is in this State's interest to enable community  
7 colleges to seek authorization to offer baccalaureate degrees.

8 (6) Baccalaureate degree programs offered pursuant to this  
9 Act do not otherwise alter the role and mission of a public  
10 community college. Nothing in this Act is intended to reduce  
11 the State's commitment to improving associate to baccalaureate  
12 program transfer pathways for Illinois students.

13 Section 5. The Public Community College Act is amended by  
14 adding Section 3-29.26 as follows:

15 (110 ILCS 805/3-29.26 new)

16 Sec. 3-29.26. Baccalaureate degree program.

17 (a) A board of trustees may establish and offer a  
18 baccalaureate degree program and confer a bachelor's degree if  
19 all the following conditions are met:

20 (1) The board of trustees meets all of the  
21 requirements as set forth in subsection (b) of this  
22 Section and has been approved by the State Board to offer a  
23 bachelor's degree.

24 (2) After the program has been approved by the State

1 Board, the Board of Higher Education shall consider the  
2 program for approval in a manner consistent with new  
3 bachelor's degree programs at public and private  
4 universities in this State.

5 (3) The board of trustees has identified and  
6 documented, in writing, unmet workforce needs in the  
7 region served by the community college in the subject area  
8 of the baccalaureate degree program to be offered. The  
9 board of trustees shall publish the documentation on the  
10 community college district's website, make the  
11 documentation publicly available, and shall present the  
12 documentation to the State Board.

13 (4) The community college shall hold an applicable  
14 accreditation for the baccalaureate degree program or have  
15 applied for the accreditation.

16 (5) The board of trustees must demonstrate, in the  
17 board of trustee's equity plans, how the baccalaureate  
18 degree program will demonstrate improved racial and  
19 socioeconomic equity in student access, enrollment, and  
20 completion by focusing outreach efforts on and giving  
21 preference to those students to meet workforce needs.

22 (6) Tuition per credit hour for the third and fourth  
23 years of a 4-year baccalaureate program may not exceed  
24 150% of the tuition per credit hour of related  
25 lower-division course tuition.

26 (b) The board of trustees shall demonstrate the district

1 has the expertise, resources, and student interest to offer a  
2 baccalaureate degree. An application for approval from the  
3 State Board shall include, but is not limited to, all of the  
4 following:

5 (1) The board of trustees shall describe the labor  
6 market need as specified in paragraph (3) of subsection  
7 (a).

8 (2) The board of trustees must demonstrate that the  
9 baccalaureate degree program will not unnecessarily  
10 duplicate the degree programs offered by other  
11 institutions of higher education in the community  
12 college's district.

13 (3) The board of trustees shall describe the program's  
14 purpose and its target population, related occupations,  
15 and career paths.

16 (4) The board of trustees may demonstrate that the  
17 baccalaureate degree program is built on existing  
18 associate degree programs and that the baccalaureate  
19 degree program prepares graduates for professional and  
20 technical employment and opportunity to matriculate to  
21 graduate degree programs, when applicable.

22 (5) The board of trustees shall demonstrate that the  
23 community college has developed quality curricula that  
24 align with federal, State, and local requirements and will  
25 prepare students with the appropriate level of skill to  
26 meet students' educational goals.

1           (6) The board of trustees shall demonstrate student  
2           demand for the baccalaureate program.

3           (7) The board of trustees shall verify the community  
4           college has the fiscal resources in place or has budgeted  
5           for financial support for the program in a cost-effective  
6           manner.

7           (8) The board of trustees shall identify and document  
8           the faculty available for teaching the program, including  
9           the number of full-time faculty anticipated to teach in  
10           the program, a description of the faculty's  
11           qualifications, including the highest degree earned,  
12           teaching experience, professional experience, and licenses  
13           held by the faculty. The board of trustees must also  
14           indicate how faculty are to be evaluated.

15           (c) A community college district is prohibited from using  
16           semester credit hours generated in a baccalaureate degree  
17           program for grants received pursuant to Section 2-16.02 of  
18           this Act.

19           (d) The board of trustees of a community college  
20           developing a baccalaureate degree program located in the same  
21           community college district as the main campus of any public  
22           institution of higher education shall notify that public  
23           institution of higher education at least 60 days before  
24           submitting the application under subsection (b) to the State  
25           Board. Within 30 days after the date the board of trustees  
26           submits the notice, the public institution of higher education

1 may provide a written response to the State Board for its  
2 review. A public institution of higher education may not  
3 prevent a community college from offering a baccalaureate  
4 degree program.

5 (e) A community college district that offers a  
6 baccalaureate degree program shall submit an annual report to  
7 the State Board, which shall include all of the following:

8 (1) The total number of students pursuing a bachelor's  
9 degree at the community college district pursuant to this  
10 Section.

11 (2) The total number of bachelor's degrees completed  
12 at the community college district.

13 (3) Workforce data showing demand for the  
14 baccalaureate degree programs offered at the community  
15 college district.

16 (4) The average cost of tuition per credit hour for  
17 the bachelor's degrees offered at the community college  
18 district.

19 (f) The State Board shall conduct a statewide evaluation  
20 of all baccalaureate degree programs established under this  
21 Section. The results of the evaluation shall be reported, in  
22 writing, on or before 5 years after the effective date of this  
23 amendatory Act of the 103rd General Assembly to all of the  
24 following:

25 (1) The Board of Higher Education.

26 (2) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

1           (3) The Minority Leader of the House of  
2           Representatives.

3           (4) The President of the Senate.

4           (5) The Minority Leader of the Senate.

5           (6) The Governor's Office of Management and Budget.

6           The evaluation shall include, but is not limited to, all  
7           of the following:

8           (A) All baccalaureate degree programs implemented.

9           (B) Information identifying applicants, admissions,  
10           enrollments, demographic characteristics of students, and  
11           degree recipients.

12           (C) The extent to which each baccalaureate degree  
13           program established under this Section fulfills identified  
14           workforce demands that require 4-year baccalaureate  
15           degrees.

16           (D) Information on the pace of employment of students  
17           and the subsequent job placement of graduates.

18           (E) The cost of each baccalaureate degree program and  
19           the funding sources used to finance each program.

20           (F) For each baccalaureate degree program, the costs  
21           to students, the amount of financial aid offered, and the  
22           student debt levels of graduates.

23           (G) Time-to-degree rates and completion rates for each  
24           new baccalaureate degree program established under this  
25           Section.

26           (H) The extent to which a baccalaureate degree program



1       established under this Section is in compliance with the  
2       requirements of this Section.

3       A board of trustees shall submit the information necessary  
4       to conduct the evaluation required under this subsection (f),  
5       as determined by the evaluators, to the State Board.