

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 21-2.1 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/21-2.1) (from Ch. 122, par. 21-2.1)

7 Sec. 21-2.1. Early childhood certificate.

8 (a) An early childhood certificate shall be valid for 4  
9 years for teaching children up to 6 years of age, exclusive of  
10 children enrolled in kindergarten, in facilities approved by  
11 the State Superintendent of Education. Beginning July 1, 1988,  
12 such certificate shall be valid for 4 years for Teaching  
13 children through grade 3 in facilities approved by the State  
14 Superintendent of Education. Subject to the provisions of  
15 Section 21-1a, it shall be issued to persons who have graduated  
16 from a recognized institution of higher learning with a  
17 bachelor's degree and with not fewer than 120 semester hours  
18 including professional education or human development or,  
19 until July 1, 1992, to persons who have early childhood  
20 education instruction and practical experience involving  
21 supervised work with children under 6 years of age or with  
22 children through grade 3. Such persons shall be recommended for  
23 the early childhood certificate by a recognized institution as  
24 having completed an approved program of preparation which  
25 includes the requisite hours and academic and professional  
26 courses and practical experience approved by the State  
27 Superintendent of Education in consultation with the State  
28 Teacher Certification Board. The student teaching portion of  
29 such practical experience may be satisfied through placement in  
30 any of grades pre-kindergarten (which consists of children from  
31 3 years through 5 years of age) through 3, provided that the  
32 student is under the active supervision of a cooperating

1 teacher who is certified and qualified in early childhood  
2 education. Paraprofessionals with at least one year of  
3 experience in a school or community-based early childhood  
4 setting who are enrolled in early-childhood teacher  
5 preparation programs may be paid and receive credit while  
6 student teaching with their current employer, provided that  
7 their student teaching experience meets the requirements of  
8 their early-childhood teacher preparation program.

9 (b) Beginning February 15, 2000, Initial and Standard Early  
10 Childhood Education Certificates shall be issued to persons who  
11 meet the criteria established by the State Board of Education.

12 (Source: P.A. 90-548, eff. 1-1-98; 90-811, eff. 1-26-99;  
13 91-102, eff. 7-12-99.)