

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 adding Section
5 2-3.66b as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/2-3.66b new)

7 Sec. 2-3.66b. IHOPE Program.

8 (a) There is established the Illinois Hope and Opportunity
9 Pathways through Education (IHOPE) Program. The State Board of
10 Education shall implement and administer the IHOPE Program. The
11 goal of the IHOPE Program is to develop a comprehensive system
12 in this State to re-enroll significant numbers of high school
13 dropouts in programs that will enable them to earn their high
14 school diploma.

15 (b) The IHOPE Program shall award grants, subject to
16 appropriation for this purpose, to educational service regions
17 and a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code
18 from appropriated funds to assist in establishing
19 instructional programs and other services designed to
20 re-enroll high school dropouts. From any funds appropriated for
21 the IHOPE Program, the State Board of Education may use up to
22 5% for administrative costs, including the performance of a
23 program evaluation and the hiring of staff to implement and

1 administer the program.

2 The IHOPE Program shall provide incentive grant funds for
3 regional offices of education and a school district organized
4 under Article 34 of this Code to develop partnerships with
5 school districts, public community colleges, and community
6 groups to build comprehensive plans to re-enroll high school
7 dropouts in their regions or districts.

8 Programs funded through the IHOPE Program shall allow high
9 school dropouts, up to and including age 21 notwithstanding
10 Section 26-2 of this Code, to re-enroll in an educational
11 program in conformance with rules adopted by the State Board of
12 Education. Programs may include without limitation
13 comprehensive year-round programming, evening school, summer
14 school, community college courses, adult education, vocational
15 training, work experience, programs to enhance self-concept,
16 and parenting courses. Any student in the IHOPE Program who
17 wishes to earn a high school diploma must meet the
18 prerequisites to receiving a high school diploma specified in
19 Section 27-22 of this Code and any other graduation
20 requirements of the student's district of residence. Any
21 student who successfully completes the requirements for his or
22 her graduation shall receive a diploma identifying the student
23 as graduating from his or her district of residence.

24 (c) In order to be eligible for funding under the IHOPE
25 Program, an interested regional office of education or a school
26 district organized under Article 34 of this Code shall develop

1 an IHOPE Plan to be approved by the State Board of Education.
2 The State Board of Education shall develop rules for the IHOPE
3 Program that shall set forth the requirements for the
4 development of the IHOPE Plan. Each Plan shall involve school
5 districts, public community colleges, and key community
6 programs that work with high school dropouts located in an
7 educational service region or the City of Chicago before the
8 Plan is sent to the State Board for approval. No funds may be
9 distributed to a regional office of education or a school
10 district organized under Article 34 of this Code until the
11 State Board has approved the Plan.

12 (d) A regional office of education or a school district
13 organized under Article 34 of this Code may operate its own
14 program funded by the IHOPE Program or enter into a contract
15 with other not-for-profit entities, including school
16 districts, public community colleges, and not-for-profit
17 community-based organizations, to operate a program.

18 A regional office of education or a school district
19 organized under Article 34 of this Code that receives an IHOPE
20 grant from the State Board of Education may provide funds under
21 a sub-grant, as specified in the IHOPE Plan, to other
22 not-for-profit entities to provide services according to the
23 IHOPE Plan that was developed. These other entities may include
24 school districts, public community colleges, or not-for-profit
25 community-based organizations or a cooperative partnership
26 among these entities.

1 (e) In order to distribute funding based upon the need to
2 ensure delivery of programs that will have the greatest impact,
3 IHOPE Program funding must be distributed based upon the
4 proportion of dropouts in the educational service region or
5 school district, in the case of a school district organized
6 under Article 34 of this Code, to the total number of dropouts
7 in this State. This formula shall employ the dropout data
8 provided by school districts to the State Board of Education.

9 A regional office of education or a school district
10 organized under Article 34 of this Code may claim State aid
11 under Section 18-8.05 of this Code for students enrolled in a
12 program funded by the IHOPE Program, provided that the State
13 Board of Education has approved the IHOPE Plan and that these
14 students are receiving services that are meeting the
15 requirements of Section 27-22 of this Code for receipt of a
16 high school diploma and are otherwise eligible to be claimed
17 for general State aid under Section 18-8.05 of this Code,
18 including provisions related to the minimum number of days of
19 pupil attendance pursuant to Section 10-19 of this Code and the
20 minimum number of daily hours of school work and any exceptions
21 thereto as defined by the State Board of Education in rules.

22 (f) IHOPE categories of programming may include the
23 following:

24 (1) Full-time programs that are comprehensive,
25 year-round programs.

26 (2) Part-time programs combining work and study

1 scheduled at various times that are flexible to the needs
2 of students.

3 (3) Online programs and courses in which students take
4 courses and complete on-site, supervised tests that
5 measure the student's mastery of a specific course needed
6 for graduation. Students may take courses online and earn
7 credit or students may prepare to take supervised tests for
8 specific courses for credit leading to receipt of a high
9 school diploma.

10 (4) Dual enrollment in which students attend high
11 school classes in combination with community college
12 classes or students attend community college classes while
13 simultaneously earning high school credit and eventually a
14 high school diploma.

15 (g) In order to have successful comprehensive programs
16 re-enrolling and graduating low-skilled high school dropouts,
17 programs funded through the IHOPE Program shall include all of
18 the following components:

19 (1) Small programs (70 to 100 students) at a separate
20 school site with a distinct identity. Programs may be
21 larger with specific need and justification, keeping in
22 mind that it is crucial to keep programs small to be
23 effective.

24 (2) Specific performance-based goals and outcomes and
25 measures of enrollment, attendance, skills, credits,
26 graduation, and the transition to college, training, and

1 employment.

2 (3) Strong, experienced leadership and teaching staff
3 who are provided with ongoing professional development.

4 (4) Voluntary enrollment.

5 (5) High standards for student learning, integrating
6 work experience, and education, including during the
7 school year and after school, and summer school programs
8 that link internships, work, and learning.

9 (6) Comprehensive programs providing extensive support
10 services.

11 (7) Small teams of students supported by full-time paid
12 mentors who work to retain and help those students
13 graduate.

14 (8) A comprehensive technology learning center with
15 Internet access and broad-based curriculum focusing on
16 academic and career subject areas.

17 (9) Learning opportunities that incorporate action
18 into study.

19 (h) Programs funded through the IHOPE Program must report
20 data to the State Board of Education as requested. This
21 information shall include, but is not limited to, student
22 enrollment figures, attendance information, course completion
23 data, graduation information, and post-graduation information,
24 as available.

25 (i) Rules must be developed by the State Board of Education
26 to set forth the fund distribution process to regional offices

1 of education and a school district organized under Article 34
2 of this Code, the planning and the conditions upon which an
3 IHOPE Plan would be approved by State Board, and other rules to
4 develop the IHOPE Program.

5 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
6 2009.