

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. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Teaching Fellows Program Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions.

7 "Commission" means the Teaching Fellows Commission.

8 "Program" means the Teaching Fellows Program.

9 Section 10. Teaching Fellows Commission.

10 (a) There is hereby established the Teaching Fellows  
11 Commission. The Commission shall exercise its powers and  
12 functions independently of the Illinois Student Assistance  
13 Commission.

14 (b) The Commission shall consist of all the following  
15 persons, which may not be members of the General Assembly:

16 (1) The Executive Director of the Illinois Student  
17 Assistance Commission or his or her designee.

18 (2) The Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee,  
19 who shall serve as chairperson.

20 (3) Three persons appointed by the Governor.

21 (4) Two persons appointed by the General Assembly,  
22 by joint resolution, on the recommendation of the  
23 President of the Senate.

24 (5) Two persons appointed by the General Assembly,  
25 by joint resolution, on the recommendation of the  
26 Minority Leader of the Senate.

27 (6) Two persons appointed by the General Assembly,  
28 by joint resolution, on the recommendation of the Speaker  
29 of the House of Representatives.

30 (7) Two persons appointed by the General Assembly,

1 by joint resolution, on the recommendation of the  
2 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

3 (c) Members of the Commission shall be chosen in such a  
4 way as to seek to achieve a balanced membership representing,  
5 to the maximum extent possible, the State as a whole and  
6 shall be chosen from among those individuals who have  
7 demonstrated a commitment to education.

8 (d) Of the initial members appointed by the General  
9 Assembly, 4 members shall be appointed for a term expiring on  
10 June 30, 2003 and 4 members shall be appointed for a term  
11 expiring on June 30, 2005, as determined by lot at the first  
12 meeting of the Commission. Thereafter, members appointed by  
13 the General Assembly shall be appointed for a term of 4  
14 years. The initial members appointed by the Governor shall  
15 be appointed for a term expiring on June 30, 2003.  
16 Thereafter, members appointed by the Governor shall be  
17 appointed for a term of 4 years. All appointed members shall  
18 serve until their successors are appointed and qualified.

19 (e) In the event a vacancy occurs for any reason, the  
20 vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the individual or  
21 entity that made the appointment. The new appointee shall  
22 serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

23 (f) Members of the Commission shall receive per diem and  
24 necessary travel and subsistence expenses.

25 (g) The Commission shall meet regularly at those times  
26 and places that the chairperson deems necessary.

27 Section 15. Teaching Fellows Program.

28 (a) A Teaching Fellows Program shall be established and  
29 administered by the Commission. Under the Program, the  
30 Commission shall provide a 4-year scholarship loan of \$6,500  
31 per person per year to high school seniors in this State  
32 interested in preparing to teach in the public schools of  
33 this State. The Commission shall adopt stringent standards,

1 including minimum grade point average and scholastic aptitude  
2 test scores, for awarding these scholarship loans to ensure  
3 that only the top high school seniors receive them.

4 (b) The Commission shall administer the Program in  
5 cooperation with teacher training institutions selected by  
6 the Commission. Teaching fellows shall be required to be  
7 exposed to a range of extra-curricular activities while in  
8 college. These activities must be geared to instilling a  
9 strong motivation not only to remain in teaching but also to  
10 provide leadership to schools.

11 (c) The Commission shall form regional review committees  
12 to assist it in identifying the top high school seniors  
13 eligible for the Program. The Commission and the review  
14 committees shall make an effort to identify and encourage  
15 minority students and students who may not otherwise consider  
16 a career in teaching to enter the Program.

17 (d) A scholarship loan under the Program shall be  
18 evidenced by a note made payable to the Commission and shall  
19 bear interest at a rate determined by the Commission, but not  
20 exceeding a 10% annual percentage rate per year beginning  
21 September 1 after completion of the Program or immediately  
22 after termination of the scholarship loan, whichever is  
23 earlier. The scholarship loan may be terminated by the  
24 recipient withdrawing from school or by the recipient not  
25 meeting the standards set by the Commission.

26 (e) The Commission shall forgive a scholarship loan if,  
27 within 7 years after receiving a teaching certificate, the  
28 recipient teaches for 4 years in a public school in this  
29 State. The Commission shall forgive the loan if, within 7  
30 years after receiving a teaching certificate, the recipient  
31 teaches for 3 consecutive years, unless the recipient takes  
32 an approved leave of absence, in a public school in this  
33 State in a local school administrative unit that, at the time  
34 the recipient accepts employment with the unit, is a

1 low-performing school system or is on warning status as  
2 defined by the State Board of Education. The Commission shall  
3 forgive the loan if it finds that it is impossible for the  
4 recipient to teach for 4 years, within 7 years after  
5 receiving a teaching certificate, at a public school in this  
6 State because of the death or permanent disability of the  
7 recipient.

8 (f) The Teaching Fellows Revolving Fund is created as a  
9 special fund in the State treasury. All funds appropriated  
10 to or otherwise received by the Commission for scholarships,  
11 all funds received as repayment of scholarship loans, and all  
12 interest earned on these funds, shall be placed in the Fund.  
13 All money in the Fund shall be used, subject to  
14 appropriation, by the Commission for scholarship loans  
15 granted under the Program. With the prior approval of the  
16 General Assembly, the Fund may be used, subject to  
17 appropriation, for campus and summer program support and  
18 costs related to the disbursement of awards and collection of  
19 loan repayments.

20 (g) The administrative costs for the Program shall not  
21 exceed 5% of the funds appropriated for the Program.

22 Section 990. The State Finance Act is amended by adding  
23 Section 5.545 as follows:

24 (30 ILCS 105/5.545 new)

25 Sec. 5.545. The Teaching Fellows Revolving Fund.