

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Children's Low-cost Laptop Act.

Section 5. Policy and purpose. The General Assembly finds that the decreasing cost of computer technology makes it possible today to equip more children than ever before with 21st century learning tools. The dramatic expansion of low-cost computing options and the worldwide reliance on computer technology for commerce, education, information, and social interaction makes it ever more important to introduce computing skills to students at an early age. Accordingly, the State Board of Education shall establish a pilot project whereby schools will provide a low-cost laptop computer to each student, teacher, and relevant administrator in a participating school and implement the use of educational software and computer skills training in order to improve academic achievement and the progress measures listed in subsection (a) of Section 20 in this Act.

Section 10. Definitions. In this Act:

"Primary school" means any school with students in third,

fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth grade.

"Low-cost laptop" means a portable personal computing device suitable for use among primary school-aged children, under \$400 in initial cost or with a financed cost of under \$250 per year.

"State Board" means the State Board of Education.

Section 15. Pilot project; Children's Low-cost Laptop Fund.

(a) Subject to an appropriation made specifically for this purpose, the State Board shall provide for the administration of a low-cost laptop pilot project. The pilot project shall be for a period of at least 2 years. In administering the pilot project, the State Board shall:

- (1) select participating primary schools;
- (2) coordinate a statewide grant program for selected schools to purchase and distribute laptop computers and other technologies;
- (3) define the conditions for the distribution and use of grant funding;
- (4) monitor project implementation; and
- (5) evaluate the project.

(b) The State Board may also use, for the purposes of the pilot project, any public or private gift, grant, or donation deposited into the State Board of Education Special Purpose Trust Fund under Section 2-3.127a of the School Code. Pilot

project funds must be used for the following:

- (1) to purchase low-cost laptop computers;
- (2) for network infrastructure to support wireless access points, cables, and routers;
- (3) for replacements for any of the following low-cost laptop components: batteries, power cords, or other software and hardware;
- (4) for professional development and technical support for participating teachers; for the purposes of this item (4), "professional development" means the training of certified teaching professionals in the integration of low-cost laptop computers into the classroom curriculum;
- (5) to support necessary staff positions at the State Board; and
- (6) to evaluate the pilot program's effectiveness.

The State Board may not allocate more than \$100 million for the pilot project. The pilot project must be implemented as long as funds are available under this Section to support the participation of at least 3 schools.

Section 20. Program participation requirements. A school may apply to the State Board to establish a low-cost laptop pilot project grant for the entire school or for a particular grade or classroom or classrooms.

The State Board shall select up to 300 schools to participate in the pilot project. At least one-third of the

participating students shall be located in the City of Chicago; at least one-third shall be located in the area that makes up the counties of DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, Will, and that portion of Cook County that is located outside of the City of Chicago; and at least one-third shall be located in the remainder of the State.

The State Board shall select the participating schools for the pilot project based on need. In selecting participants, the State Board shall consider each school's:

- (1) free and reduced lunch eligible student population;
- (2) access to educational technology resources; and
- (3) performance on standardized tests required by the State Board.

Section 25. Reporting.

(a) The school board of each participating school shall send an annual progress report to the State Board no later than September 1 of each year that the school is participating in the pilot project. The report must include the project's effect on:

- (1) performance on standardized tests required by the State Board;
- (2) school costs;
- (3) attendance rates;
- (4) teacher performance and retention;

- (5) parental involvement in education;
- (6) community support for the school; and
- (7) student technology proficiency.

(b) With guidance from the State Board, each participating school shall determine how the low-cost laptops are purchased, assigned, maintained, and retained.

Section 30. Repeal. This Act is repealed on August 31, 2012.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.