



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB2968

Introduced 2/6/2025, by Rep. Terra Costa Howard

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

110 ILCS 150/5
110 ILCS 150/8 new
110 ILCS 150/10
110 ILCS 150/20
110 ILCS 150/21 new
110 ILCS 150/22 new
110 ILCS 150/24 new
110 ILCS 150/25

Amends Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act. Defines "transfer articulation agreement". Sets forth the purpose of the Act. Provides that a State university shall (rather than the General Assembly encourages State universities) to facilitate the seamless transfer of credits toward a baccalaureate degree. Provides that a State university shall enter into a transfer articulation agreement with the community college district to provide a seamless pathway for transfer. Provides that if, within 180 calendar days of the community college's initial request to enter into a transfer articulation agreement with the State university, the community college and State university do not reach agreement on the transfer articulation agreement, then the community college and State university shall jointly implement the provisions of the Model Transfer Articulation Agreement. Provides that a Model Transfer Articulation Agreement shall be developed through a Transfer Articulation Committee by December 31, 2025. Requires each community college and State university to publish the institution's process and timeline for reviewing and making decisions regarding transfer credit requests on the institution's website. Removes language regarding the Board of Higher Education's reviews and reports. Provides instead that, by May 1, 2026, and May 1 of each subsequent year, each State university shall report to the Board of Higher Education specified information. Effective immediately.

LRB104 10343 LNS 20417 b

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 Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act is
5 amended by changing Sections 5, 8, 10, 20, and 25 and by adding
6 Sections 21, 22, and 24 as follows:

7 (110 ILCS 150/5)

8 Sec. 5. Definitions. In this Act:

9 "Community college" means a public community college in
10 this State.

11 "State university" means a public university in this
12 State.

13 "Transfer articulation agreement" means a formal written
14 agreement between a community college and State university
15 that outlines a process for the seamless transfer of credits
16 from a community college to a State university.

17 (Source: P.A. 99-316, eff. 1-1-16.)

18 (110 ILCS 150/8 new)

19 Sec. 8. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to enhance the
20 transfer of academic credits between community colleges and
21 State universities in Illinois, ensuring equitable and
22 consistent practices, reducing barriers for students, and

1 promoting accountability and transparency in transfer credit
2 acceptance.

3 (110 ILCS 150/10)

4 Sec. 10. Associate degree for transfer.

5 (a) Commencing with the fall term of the 2016-2017
6 academic year, a community college student who earns an
7 associate degree for transfer, an Associate of Arts, or an
8 Associate of Science that is consistent with degree
9 requirements of the Illinois Community College Board and the
10 Board of Higher Education and aligned with the policies and
11 procedures of the Illinois Articulation Initiative, granted
12 pursuant to subsection (b) of this Section is deemed eligible
13 for transfer into the baccalaureate program of a State
14 university if the student meets the requirements of the
15 transfer degree and major-specific prerequisites and obtains a
16 minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

17 (b) As a condition of receipt of State funds, a community
18 college district shall develop and grant associate degrees for
19 transfer that meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this
20 Section. A community college district may not impose any
21 requirements in addition to the requirements of this Section
22 for a student to be eligible for an associate degree for
23 transfer and subsequent admission to a State university
24 pursuant to Section 15 of this Act without the approval of the
25 Illinois Community College Board and the Board of Higher

1 Education.

2 (c) The General Assembly encourages a community college
3 district to enter into transfer ~~consider the~~ articulation
4 agreements ~~and other work~~ between the respective faculties
5 from the affected community college and State universities in
6 implementing the requirements of this Section.

7 (d) The General Assembly encourages community colleges to
8 facilitate the acceptance of credits earned at other community
9 colleges toward an associate degree for transfer pursuant to
10 this Section.

11 (e) This Section does not preclude students who are
12 assessed below collegiate level from acquiring remedial
13 noncollegiate level coursework in preparation for obtaining an
14 associate degree for transfer. Remedial noncollegiate level
15 coursework and all other non-transfer coursework must not be
16 counted as part of the transferable units required pursuant to
17 subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this Section.

18 (Source: P.A. 99-316, eff. 1-1-16.)

19 (110 ILCS 150/20)

20 Sec. 20. Coursework.

21 (a) A State university may not require a student
22 transferring pursuant to this Act to take more than 60
23 additional semester units beyond the lower-division major
24 requirements for majors requiring 120 semester units, provided
25 that the student remains enrolled in the same program of study

1 and has completed university major transfer requirements.
2 Specified high unit majors are exempt from this subsection (a)
3 upon agreement by the board of trustees of the State
4 university and the Board of Higher Education.

5 (b) A State university may not require students
6 transferring pursuant to this Act to repeat courses that are
7 articulated with those taken at the community college and
8 counted toward an associate degree for transfer granted
9 pursuant to Section 10 of this Act.

10 (c) ~~A The General Assembly encourages~~ State university
11 shall universities to facilitate the seamless transfer of
12 credits toward a baccalaureate degree pursuant to the intent
13 of this Act.

14 (Source: P.A. 99-316, eff. 1-1-16.)

15 (110 ILCS 150/21 new)

16 Sec. 21. Community college and State university transfer
17 articulation agreements. A State university shall, upon the
18 request of a community college, enter into a transfer
19 articulation agreement with the community college district to
20 provide a seamless pathway for transfer. The community college
21 may request to enter into multiple articulation agreements
22 with a single State university as appropriate and requested.
23 The agreement may include 2+2 programs designed for students
24 to take half of a degree at the community college and the
25 second half of the degree at the State University or 3+1

1 programs designed for students to transfer to the State
2 university for completion of their final, senior level
3 coursework.

4 The transfer articulation agreement shall be signed by the
5 president or chancellor of the community college and State
6 university and shall include all of the following:

7 (1) Identification of participating institutions or
8 divisions of institutions that are part of the agreement.

9 The agreements may be program to program that align
10 community college associate degree programs with
11 comparable bachelor's degree options, major to major that
12 align specific program coursework to external
13 accreditation standards, or institution to institution
14 that establish partnerships and alignment between a
15 specific college, discipline, or program area.

16 (2) Eligibility criteria for transfer admissions
17 including any minimum GPA requirements and prerequisites
18 needed. Any limitations to the agreement for admission to
19 specific academic programs shall be included.

20 (3) A timeline for timely response on applications for
21 transferring credits.

22 (4) Identification of all fees and cost assessed
23 during the transfer and admission process and any
24 scholarships or financial assistance available to students
25 participating in the articulation agreement.

26 (5) A standardized transfer credit framework for

1 general education and lower-division, major-specific
2 courses. This framework shall clearly identify specific
3 courses that will transfer between institutions, how many
4 credits will transfer, which program at the State
5 university credits will apply if applicable, and an
6 outline of how transferred credits will count toward
7 degree requirements.

8 (6) A clearly defined transfer pathway outlining how
9 students at the community college can progress from their
10 program to the corresponding program at the State
11 university and be granted junior or senior status as
12 appropriate.

13 (7) Guidelines for alignment of course objectives,
14 learning outcomes, and credit hours.

15 (8) Other degree requirements, including, but not
16 limited to, standardized test scores, required clinical
17 hours, or residency requirements.

18 (9) A policy on the reverse transfer of credit and
19 transfer of credit earned for experiential learning,
20 including, but not limited to, prior learning assessment
21 and competency-based education.

22 (10) The academic and non-academic opportunities and
23 supports and, if applicable, guidance that will be
24 provided to students participating in the articulation
25 agreement.

26 (11) Data sharing requirements and limitations,

1 including if applicable, assessment policies to measure
2 effectiveness of the agreement.

3 (12) Agreement on marketing process and
4 responsibilities for programs covered by the articulation
5 agreement, including any limitations imposed by either
6 party.

7 (13) A clear and transparent process for resolving
8 disputes over transfer credit acceptance. The agreement
9 shall outline policies to provide students transparency in
10 how and why credit is accepted or rejected by the State
11 university and how and why credit is or is not applied
12 toward degree requirements. The agreement shall also
13 provide for a process for the student to appeal the State
14 university's failure to accept the student's request for
15 transfer credit.

16 (14) Dates of applicability of the agreement and
17 conditions for renewal or termination of the agreement.

18 This agreement shall not negate any previous transfer
19 articulation agreement a community college has developed with
20 a State university.

21 If, within 180 calendar days of the community college's
22 initial request to enter into a transfer articulation
23 agreement with the State university, the community college and
24 State university do not reach agreement on the transfer
25 articulation agreement, then the community college and State
26 university shall jointly implement the provisions of the Model

1 Transfer Articulation Agreement established under Section 22
2 of this Act.

3 (110 ILCS 150/22 new)

4 Sec. 22. Model Transfer Articulation Agreement and
5 Committee. A Model Transfer Articulation Agreement shall be
6 developed through a Transfer Articulation Committee by
7 December 31, 2025. The Committee shall consist of 5 members
8 appointed by the Executive Director of the Board of Higher
9 Education and 5 members appointed by the Executive Director of
10 the Illinois Community College Board. The Committee shall be
11 co-chaired by the Executive Director of the Board of Higher
12 Education or his or her designee and the Executive Director of
13 the Illinois Community College Board or his or her designee.
14 The Model Transfer Articulation Agreement shall address all of
15 the requirements set forth in Section 21. The Model Transfer
16 Articulation Agreement shall be reviewed and updated every 5
17 years by the Board of Higher Education and the Illinois
18 Community College Board.

19 (110 ILCS 150/24 new)

20 Sec. 24. Transfer credit review process. Each community
21 college and State university shall publish the institution's
22 process and timeline for reviewing and making decisions
23 regarding transfer credit requests on the institution's
24 website. The institution shall update its website within 30

1 days after making a change to its process and timeline for
2 reviewing and issuing decisions regarding transfer credit
3 request.

4 (110 ILCS 150/25)

5 Sec. 25. Reporting requirements on course transfer ~~Board~~
6 ~~of Higher Education reviews and reports.~~

7 (a) (Blank). ~~The Board of Higher Education shall review~~
8 ~~the implementation of this Act and file a report on that review~~
9 ~~with the General Assembly on or before May 31, 2017, as~~
10 ~~provided in Section 3.1 of the General Assembly Organization~~
11 ~~Act.~~

12 (b) (Blank). ~~The Board of Higher Education shall review~~
13 ~~both of the following and file a report on that review with the~~
14 ~~General Assembly within 4 years after the effective date of~~
15 ~~this Act, as provided in Section 3.1 of the General Assembly~~
16 ~~Organization Act:~~

17 ~~(1) The outcomes of implementation of this Act,~~
18 ~~including, but not limited to, all of the following:~~

19 ~~(A) The number and percentage of community college~~
20 ~~students who transferred to a State university and~~
21 ~~earned an associate degree for transfer pursuant to~~
22 ~~this Act.~~

23 ~~(B) The average amount of time and units it takes a~~
24 ~~community college student earning an associate degree~~
25 ~~for transfer pursuant to this Act to transfer to and~~

1 ~~graduate from a State university, as compared to the~~
2 ~~average amount of time and units it took community~~
3 ~~college transfer students prior to the implementation~~
4 ~~of this Act and compared to students using other~~
5 ~~transfer processes available.~~

6 ~~(C) Student progression and completion rates.~~

7 ~~(D) Other relevant indicators of student success.~~

8 ~~(E) The degree to which the requirements for an~~
9 ~~associate degree for transfer take into account~~
10 ~~existing articulation agreements and the degree to~~
11 ~~which community colleges facilitate the acceptance of~~
12 ~~credits between community college districts, as~~
13 ~~outlined in subsections (c) and (d) of Section 10 of~~
14 ~~this Act.~~

15 ~~(F) It is the intent of the General Assembly that~~
16 ~~student outcome data provided under this subsection~~
17 ~~(b) include the degree to which State universities~~
18 ~~were able to accommodate students admitted under this~~
19 ~~Act in being admitted to the State university of their~~
20 ~~choice and in a major that is similar to their~~
21 ~~community college major.~~

22 ~~(2) Recommendations for statutory changes necessary to~~
23 ~~facilitate the goal of a clear and transparent transfer~~
24 ~~process.~~

25 (c) By May 1, 2026, and May 1 of each subsequent year, each
26 State university shall report to the Board of Higher

1 Education, in a form prescribed by the Board, all of the
2 following information:

3 (1) The total number of community college transfer
4 students admitted, offered provisional admission, and
5 denied admission, disaggregated by the student's community
6 college district of origin.

7 (2) The percentage and average number of credits per
8 student accepted for transfer from each community college
9 district.

10 (3) The average time needed to complete a bachelor's
11 degree and total number of credit hours earned for a
12 transfer students compared to a non-transfer, native
13 student.

14 (4) The total number of credits accepted and applied
15 towards meeting general education requirements that are
16 identified as part of the Illinois Articulation Initiative
17 General Education Core Curriculum disaggregated by the
18 student's community college district of origin. For those
19 courses identified as part of the General Education Core
20 Curriculum that are denied transfer credit, including the
21 rationale for denial.

22 (5) If the student has declared a major, the total
23 number of credits that were accepted and not accepted and
24 the number of credits that were applied and were not
25 applied to each student's degree program course
26 requirements at the time the student initially transferred

1 to and enrolled in the State University disaggregated by
2 degree program and community college district of origin.

3 For those courses not accepted for transfer the State
4 university shall include the rationale for denial. For courses
5 that are part of the Illinois Articulation Initiative Major
6 Panels and are not accepted for equivalent major credit, the
7 State university shall provide the reason credit was not
8 applied to the student's degree program.

9 The Board of Higher Education shall compile and publish
10 the information provided by each State university in an annual
11 report by October 1, 2026, and October 1 of each subsequent
12 year. The report shall be filed with the Governor and General
13 Assembly and provided to the Illinois Community College Board.
14 An electronic copy of the report shall be accessible on the
15 Board's official website.

16 (Source: P.A. 99-316, eff. 1-1-16.)

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