

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 Grow Your Own Teacher Education Act is
5 amended by changing Sections 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 48/10)

7 Sec. 10. Definitions. In this Act:

8 "Accredited teacher preparation program" means a
9 regionally accredited, Illinois approved teacher education
10 program authorized to prepare individuals to fulfill all of the
11 requirements to receive an Illinois initial teaching
12 certificate.

13 "Cohort" means a group of teacher education candidates who
14 are enrolled in and share experiences in the same program and
15 are linked by their desire to become Illinois teachers in
16 hard-to-staff schools and by their need for the services and
17 supports offered by the Initiative. A cohort may include a high
18 school student enrolled in a dual credit course offered by a
19 participating institution of higher education.

20 "Community organization" means a nonprofit organization
21 that has a demonstrated capacity to train, develop, and
22 organize parents and community leaders into a constituency that
23 will hold the school and the school district accountable for

1 achieving high academic standards; in addition to
2 organizations with a geographic focus, "community
3 organization" includes general parent organizations,
4 organizations of special education or bilingual education
5 parents, and school employee unions.

6 "Developmental classes" means classes in basic skill
7 areas, such as mathematics and language arts that are
8 prerequisite to, but not counted towards, degree requirements
9 of a teacher preparation program.

10 "Dual credit course" has the meaning given to that term
11 under the Dual Credit Quality Act.

12 "Eligible school" means an early childhood program
13 licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services in
14 which no less than 40% of the children it serves are receiving
15 subsidized care under the Department of Human Services' Child
16 Care Assistance Program, a Head Start or Early Head Start
17 Program, a Preschool for All Program, or a prevention
18 initiative or a public elementary, middle, or secondary school
19 in this State that serves a substantial percentage of
20 low-income students and that is either hard to staff or has
21 hard-to-staff teaching positions.

22 "Hard-to-staff school" means an early childhood program
23 licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services in
24 which no less than 40% of the children it serves are receiving
25 subsidized care under the Department of Human Services' Child
26 Care Assistance Program, a Head Start or Early Head Start

1 Program, a Preschool for All Program, or a prevention
2 initiative or a public elementary, middle, or secondary school
3 in this State that, based on data compiled by the State Board
4 of Education in conjunction with the Board of Higher Education,
5 serves a substantial percentage of low-income students, as
6 defined by the Board of Higher Education.

7 "Hard-to-staff teaching position" means a teaching
8 category (such as special education, bilingual education,
9 mathematics, or science) in which statewide data compiled by
10 the State Board of Education in conjunction with the Board of
11 Higher Education indicates a multi-year pattern of substantial
12 teacher shortage or that has been identified as a critical need
13 by the local school board.

14 "Initiative" means the Grow Your Own Teacher Education
15 Initiative created under this Act.

16 "Para educator" means an individual with a history of
17 demonstrated accomplishments in school staff positions (such
18 as teacher assistants, school-community liaisons, school
19 clerks, and security aides) in schools that meet the definition
20 of a hard-to-staff school under this Section.

21 "Parent and community leader" means an individual who has
22 or had a child enrolled in a school or schools that meet the
23 definition of a hard-to-staff school under this Section and who
24 has a history of active involvement in the school or who has a
25 history of working to improve schools serving a substantial
26 percentage of low-income students, including membership in a

1 community organization.

2 "Program" means a Grow Your Own Teacher preparation program
3 established by a consortium under this Act.

4 "Schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income
5 students" means schools that maintain any of grades
6 pre-kindergarten through 8, in which at least 35% of the
7 students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches
8 and schools that maintain any of grades 9 through 12, in which
9 at least 25% of the students are eligible to receive free or
10 reduced price lunches.

11 (Source: P.A. 98-1036, eff. 1-1-15.)

12 (110 ILCS 48/15)

13 Sec. 15. Creation of Initiative. The Grow Your Own Teacher
14 Education Initiative is created. Grow Your Own Illinois ~~The~~
15 ~~Board of Higher Education~~ shall administer the Initiative as a
16 grant competition to fund consortia that will carry out Grow
17 Your Own Teacher preparation programs.

18 (Source: P.A. 98-1036, eff. 1-1-15.)

19 (110 ILCS 48/20)

20 Sec. 20. Selection of grantees. The Board of Higher
21 Education shall, subject to appropriation, allocate funds to
22 Grow Your Own Illinois for the purpose of administering the
23 program and awarding ~~award~~ grants as needed to qualified
24 consortia that reflect the distribution and diversity of

1 hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff positions across this
2 State. In awarding grants, Grow Your Own Illinois ~~the Board of~~
3 ~~Higher Education~~ shall select programs that successfully
4 address Initiative criteria and that reflect a diversity of
5 strategies in terms of serving urban areas, serving rural
6 areas, the nature of the participating institutions of higher
7 education, and the nature of hard-to-staff schools and
8 hard-to-staff teaching positions on which a program is focused.

9 Grow Your Own Illinois ~~The Board of Higher Education~~ shall
10 select, manage, and oversee consortia that meet the following
11 requirements:

12 (1) A consortium shall be composed of at least one
13 4-year institution of higher education with an Illinois
14 approved teacher preparation program, at least one school
15 district or group of schools, and one or more community
16 organizations. The consortium membership may also include
17 a 2-year institution of higher education, a school employee
18 union, or a regional office of education.

19 (2) The 4-year institution of higher education
20 participating in the consortium shall have past,
21 demonstrated success in preparing teachers for elementary
22 or secondary schools serving a substantial percentage of
23 low-income students.

24 (3) The consortium shall focus on a clearly defined set
25 of eligible schools that will participate in the program.
26 The consortium shall articulate the steps that it will

1 carry out in preparing teachers for its participating
2 schools and in preparing teachers for one or more
3 hard-to-staff teaching positions in those schools.

4 (4) The consortium shall recruit potential candidates
5 for the program and shall take into consideration when
6 selecting a candidate whether the candidate:

7 (A) holds a high school diploma or its equivalent
8 or is a high school student enrolled in a dual credit
9 course offered by a participating institution of
10 higher education;

11 (B) meets either the definition of "parent and
12 community leader" or the definition of "para educator"
13 contained in Section 10 of this Act;

14 (C) (blank); ~~has experienced an interruption in~~
15 ~~his or her college education;~~

16 (D) exhibits a willingness to be a teacher in a
17 hard-to-staff school with the goal of maintaining
18 academic excellence;

19 (E) shows an interest in postsecondary education
20 and may hold an associate's degree, a bachelor's
21 degree, or another postsecondary degree, but a
22 postsecondary education is not required;

23 (F) is a parent, a para educator, a community
24 leader, or any other individual from a community with a
25 hard-to-staff school;

26 (G) commits to completing and passing all State

1 standards, including the licensure test to obtain an
2 educator license;

3 (H) shows a willingness to set high standards of
4 performance for himself or herself and students; and

5 (I) demonstrates commitment to the program by:

6 (i) maintaining a cumulative grade point
7 average of at least a 2.5 on a 4.0 scale (or the
8 equivalent as determined by the Board of Higher
9 Education);

10 (ii) attending monthly cohort meetings; and

11 (iii) applying for financial aid from all
12 other financial aid resources before applying for
13 assistance from the program.

14 (5) The consortium shall employ effective procedures
15 for teaching the skills and knowledge needed to prepare
16 highly competent teachers. Professional preparation shall
17 include on-going direct experience in target schools and
18 evaluation of this experience.

19 (6) The consortium shall offer the program to cohorts
20 of candidates, as defined in Section 10 of this Act, on a
21 schedule that enables candidates to work full time while
22 participating in the program and allows para educators to
23 continue in their current positions. In any fiscal year in
24 which an appropriation for the Initiative is made, the
25 consortium shall guarantee that support will be available
26 to an admitted cohort for the cohort's education for that

1 fiscal year. At the beginning of the Initiative, programs
2 that are already operating and existing cohorts of
3 candidates under this model shall be eligible for funding.

4 (7) The institutions of higher education participating
5 in the consortium shall document and agree to expend the
6 same amount of funds in implementing the program that these
7 institutions spend per student on similar educational
8 programs. Grants received by the consortium shall
9 supplement and not supplant these amounts.

10 (8) Grow Your Own Illinois ~~The Board of Higher~~
11 ~~Education~~ shall establish and oversee additional criteria
12 for review of proposals, including criteria that address
13 the following issues:

14 (A) Previous experience of the institutions of
15 higher education in preparing candidates for
16 hard-to-staff schools and positions and in working
17 with students with non-traditional backgrounds.

18 (B) The quality of the implementation plan,
19 including strategies for overcoming institutional
20 barriers to the progress of non-traditional
21 candidates.

22 (C) If a community college is a participant, the
23 nature and extent of existing articulation agreements
24 and guarantees between the community college and the
25 4-year institution of higher education.

26 (D) The number of candidates to be educated in the

1 planned cohort or cohorts and the capacity of the
2 consortium for adding cohorts in future cycles.

3 (E) Experience of the community organization or
4 organizations in organizing parents and community
5 leaders to achieve school improvement and a strong
6 relational school culture.

7 (F) The qualifications of the person or persons
8 designated by the 4-year institution of higher
9 education to be responsible for cohort support and the
10 development of a shared learning and social
11 environment among candidates.

12 (G) The consortium's plan for collective
13 consortium decision-making, involving all consortium
14 members, including mechanisms for candidate input.

15 (H) The consortium's plan for direct impact of the
16 program on the quality of education in the eligible
17 schools.

18 (I) The relevance of the curriculum to the needs of
19 the eligible schools and positions, and the use in
20 curriculum and instructional planning of principles
21 for effective education for adults.

22 (J) The availability of classes under the program
23 in places and times accessible to the candidates.

24 (K) Provision of a level of performance to be
25 maintained by candidates as a condition of continuing
26 in the program.

1 (L) The plan of the 4-year institution of higher
2 education to ensure that candidates take advantage of
3 existing financial aid resources before using the loan
4 funds described in Section 25 of this Act.

5 (M) The availability of supportive services,
6 including, but not limited to, counseling, tutoring,
7 transportation, technology and technology support, and
8 child care.

9 (N) A plan for continued participation of
10 graduates of the program in a program of support for at
11 least 2 years, including mentoring and group meetings.

12 (O) A plan for testing and qualitative evaluation
13 of candidates' teaching skills that ensures that
14 graduates of the program are as prepared for teaching
15 as other individuals completing the institution of
16 higher education's preparation program for the
17 certificate sought.

18 (P) A plan for internal evaluation that provides
19 reports at least yearly on the progress of candidates
20 towards graduation and the impact of the program on the
21 target schools and their communities.

22 (Q) Contributions from schools, school districts,
23 and other consortia members to the program, including
24 stipends for candidates during their student teaching.

25 (R) Consortium commitment for sustaining the
26 program over time, as evidenced by plans for reduced

1 requirements for external funding, in subsequent
2 cycles.

3 (S) The inclusion in the planned program of
4 strategies derived from community organizing that will
5 help candidates develop tools for working with parents
6 and other community members.

7 Subject to the requirements under the Dual Credit Quality
8 Act, a participating institution of higher education may offer
9 a high school student a dual credit course under the program.

10 The Board of Higher Education may not adopt rules regarding
11 candidate eligibility that are more restrictive than this
12 Section.

13 (Source: P.A. 98-1036, eff. 1-1-15.)

14 (110 ILCS 48/25)

15 Sec. 25. Expenditures under the Initiative.

16 (a) Every program under the Initiative shall implement a
17 program of forgivable loans to cover any portion of tuition,
18 books, and fees of candidates under the program in excess of
19 the candidates' grants-in-aid. All students admitted to a
20 cohort shall be eligible for a forgivable student loan. Loans
21 shall be fully forgiven if a graduate completes 5 years of
22 service in hard-to-staff schools or hard-to-staff teaching
23 positions, with partial forgiveness for shorter periods of
24 service. Grow Your Own Illinois ~~The Board of Higher Education~~
25 shall establish standards for the approval of requests for

1 waivers or deferrals from individuals to waive this obligation
2 ~~and. The Board of Higher Education~~ shall also define standards
3 for the fiscal management of these loan funds.

4 (b) Grow Your Own Illinois ~~The Board of Higher Education~~
5 shall award grants under the Initiative in such a way as to
6 provide the required support for a cohort of candidates for any
7 fiscal year in which an appropriation for the Initiative is
8 made. Program budgets must show expenditures and needed funds
9 for the entire period that candidates are expected to be
10 enrolled.

11 (c) No funds under the Initiative may be used to supplant
12 the average per-capita expenditures by the institution of
13 higher education for candidates.

14 (d) Where necessary, program budgets shall include the
15 costs of child care and other indirect expenses, such as
16 transportation, tutoring, technology, and technology support,
17 necessary to permit candidates to maintain their class
18 schedules. Grant funds may be used by any member of a
19 consortium to offset such costs, and the services may be
20 provided by the community organization or organizations, by any
21 other member of the consortium, or by independent contractors.

22 (e) The institution of higher education may expend grant
23 funds to cover the additional costs of offering classes in
24 community settings and for tutoring services.

25 (f) The community organization or organizations may
26 receive a portion of the grant money for the expenses of

1 recruitment, community orientation, and counseling of
2 potential candidates, for providing space in the community, and
3 for working with school personnel to facilitate individual work
4 experiences and support of candidates.

5 (g) The school district or school employee union or both
6 may receive a portion of the grant money for expenses of
7 supporting the work experiences of candidates and providing
8 mentors for graduates. Notwithstanding the provisions of
9 Section 10-20.15 of the School Code, school districts may also
10 use these or other applicable public funds to pay participants
11 in programs under the Initiative for student teaching required
12 by an accredited teacher preparation program.

13 (h) One or more members of the consortium may expend funds
14 to cover the salary of a site-based cohort coordinator.

15 (i) Grant funds may also be expended to pay directly for
16 required developmental classes for candidates beginning a
17 program.

18 (Source: P.A. 98-1036, eff. 1-1-15.)

19 (110 ILCS 48/30)

20 Sec. 30. Implementation of Initiative. Grow Your Own
21 Illinois ~~The Board of Higher Education~~ may, if it chooses,
22 award and administer a small number of planning grants during
23 any fiscal year to potential consortia.

24 (Source: P.A. 98-1036, eff. 1-1-15.)

25 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon

1 becoming law.