

AN ACT concerning education.

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

Section 5. The Grow Our Own Teacher Education Act is amended by changing Sections 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 as follows:

(110 ILCS 48/1)

Sec. 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Grow Your ~~Our~~ Own Teacher Education Act.

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05.)

(110 ILCS 48/5)

Sec. 5. Purpose. The Grow Your ~~Our~~ Own Teacher preparation programs established under this Act shall comprise a major new statewide initiative, known as the Grow Your ~~Our~~ Own Teacher Education Initiative, to prepare highly skilled, committed teachers who will teach in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff teaching positions and who will remain in these schools for substantial periods of time.

The Grow Your ~~Our~~ Own Teacher Education Initiative shall effectively recruit and prepare parent and community leaders and paraeducators to become effective teachers ~~and teacher leaders~~ statewide in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff teaching positions in schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income students. Further, the Initiative shall increase the diversity of teachers, including diversity based on race, ethnicity, and disability.

The Grow Your ~~Our~~ Own Teacher Education Initiative shall ensure educational rigor by effectively preparing candidates ~~students~~ in accredited bachelor's degree programs in teaching, through which graduates shall meet the requirements to secure an Illinois initial ~~standard~~ teaching certificate.

The goal of the Grow Your ~~Our~~ Own Teacher Education Initiative is to add 1,000 teachers to low-income and other hard-to-staff Illinois schools by 2016 with an average retention period of 7 years, as opposed to the current rate of 2.5 years for new teachers in such areas.

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05.)

(110 ILCS 48/10)

Sec. 10. Definitions. In this Act:

"Accredited teacher preparation program" means a State or regionally accredited higher education program authorized to prepare individuals to fulfill all of the requirements to receive an Illinois initial ~~standard~~ teaching certificate.

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

"Hard-to-staff school" means an elementary or secondary school that, based on data compiled by the State Board of Education, ranks in the upper third of schools in this State on a combined index measuring the percentage of the school's teachers who are not fully certified and the percentage of the school's teachers who leave their positions annually.

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

"Initiative" means the Grow Your ~~Our~~ Own Teacher Education Initiative created under this Act.

"Paraeducators" means individuals with a history of demonstrated accomplishments in school staff positions (such as teacher assistants, school-community liaisons, school clerks, and security aides) in schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income students.

"Parent and community leaders" means individuals with a ~~significant~~ history of working to improve ~~involvement in~~ ~~improving~~ schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income students, including membership in a community organization.

"Community organization" means a nonprofit organization that has a demonstrated capacity to train, develop, and organize parents and community leaders into a constituency that will hold the school and the school district accountable for achieving high academic standards; in addition to organizations with a geographic focus, "community organization" includes general parent organizations, organizations of special education or bilingual education parents, and school employee unions.

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

"Schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income students" means schools that maintain any of grades pre-kindergarten through 8, in which at least 35% of the students are eligible to receive ~~whose percentage of students receiving~~ free or reduced-price lunches and schools that maintain any of grades 9 through 12, in which at least 25% of the students are eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches ~~is at or above the district average percentage.~~

"State Board" means the State Board of Education.

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05.)

(110 ILCS 48/15)

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

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05.)

(110 ILCS 48/20)

Sec. 20. Selection of grantees. The State Board shall award grants to ~~up to 10~~ qualified consortia that reflect the distribution and diversity of ~~target~~ hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff positions across this State. In awarding grants, the State Board shall select programs that successfully address Initiative criteria and that reflect a diversity of strategies in terms of serving urban areas, serving rural areas, the nature of the participating institutions of higher education, ~~whether participants will be trained at the baccalaureate or master's level,~~ and the nature of hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff teaching positions on which a program is focused.

The State Board shall select consortia that meet the following requirements:

(1) A consortium shall be composed of at least one 4-year institution of higher education with an accredited teacher preparation program, at least one school district or group of schools, and one or more community organizations. The consortium may also include a 2-year institution of higher education or a school employee union or both.

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

(3) The consortium shall focus on a clearly defined set of target schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income students that will be the primary focus of the program. The consortium shall articulate the steps that it will carry out in preparing teachers for its target hard-to-staff schools and in preparing teachers for one or more hard-to-staff teaching positions in its target schools.

(4) Candidate ~~Student participants~~ in a program under the Initiative must hold a high school diploma or its equivalent and must meet either the definition of "parent

and community leaders" or the definition of "paraeducators" contained in Section 10 of this Act.

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

(6) The consortium shall offer the program to cohorts of candidates ~~students~~ who begin by moving through the program together. The program shall be offered on a schedule that enables candidates ~~students~~ to work full time while participating in the program and allows paraeducators to continue in their current positions. The consortium shall guarantee that support will be available to an admitted cohort through the cohort's full period of training. At the beginning of the Initiative, programs that are already operating and existing cohorts of candidates ~~students~~ under this model shall be eligible for funding.

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

(8) The State Board shall establish additional criteria for review of proposals, including criteria that address the following issues:

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

(B) The quality of the implementation plan, including strategies for overcoming institutional barriers to the progress of non-traditional candidates ~~students~~.

(C) If a community college is a participant, the

nature and extent of existing articulation agreements and guarantees between the community college and the 4-year institution of higher education.

(D) The number of candidates ~~participants~~ to be trained in the planned ~~current~~ cohort or cohorts and the capacity of the consortium for adding cohorts in future cycles.

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

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

(G) The consortium's plan for collective consortium decision-making, including mechanisms for community and candidate ~~participant~~ input.

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

(I) The relevance of the curriculum to the needs of targeted schools and positions, and the use in curriculum and instructional planning of principles for effective education for adults ~~adult education~~.

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

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

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

Act.

(M) The availability of supportive services, including counseling, tutoring, and child care.

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

(O) A plan for testing and qualitative evaluation of candidates' ~~participants'~~ teaching skills that ensures that graduates of the program are as prepared for teaching as other individuals completing the institution of higher education's preparation program for the certificate sought ~~those from the conventional teacher training program of the 4-year institution of higher education.~~

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

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

(R) Consortium commitment for sustaining the program over time, as evidenced by plans for reduced requirements for external funding in subsequent cycles.

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

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05.)

(110 ILCS 48/25)

Sec. 25. Expenditures under the Initiative.

(a) Every program under the Initiative shall implement ~~and manage~~ a program of forgivable loans to cover any portion of

tuition and direct expenses of candidates ~~students~~ under the program in excess of grants-in-aid and other forgivable loans received. All students admitted to a cohort shall be eligible for such loans. Loans shall be fully forgiven if a graduate completes 5 years of service in ~~a~~ hard-to-staff schools ~~school~~ or hard-to-staff teaching positions, with partial forgiveness for shorter periods of service. The State Board shall establish standards for the approval of requests from programs to waive this obligation for individual candidates and for deferral of repayment for work interruptions after certification. The State Board shall also define standards for the fiscal management of these loan funds ~~position.~~

(b) Grants under the Initiative shall be awarded in such a way as to provide the required support for a cohort of candidates ~~students~~ for the cohort's entire training period. Program budgets must show expenditures for the entire period that candidates ~~participants~~ are expected to be enrolled.

(c) No funds under the Initiative may be used to supplant the average per-capita expenditures by the institution of higher education for candidates ~~students in regular education degree programs.~~

(d) Where necessary, program budgets shall include the costs of child care to permit candidates ~~parents~~ to maintain a full class schedule. Child care may be provided by the community organization or organizations or be independently contracted for.

(e) The institution of higher education may expend grant funds to cover the ~~salary of a site based cohort coordinator and the~~ additional costs of offering classes in community settings and for tutoring services.

(f) The community organization or organizations may receive a portion of the grant money for the expenses of recruitment, community orientation, and counseling of potential candidates ~~participants~~, for providing space in the community, and for working with school personnel to facilitate individual work experiences and support of candidates



~~participants.~~

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

(h) One member of the consortium may expend funds to cover the salary of a site-based cohort coordinator.

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

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05.)

(110 ILCS 48/30)

Sec. 30. Implementation of Initiative. The State Board shall develop guidelines and application procedures for the Initiative in fiscal year 2005. The State Board may, if it chooses, award a small number of planning grants during any fiscal year ~~2005~~ to potential consortia ~~using existing resources.~~ Other than existing cohorts, the ~~The~~ first programs under the Initiative shall be awarded grants in such a way as to allow candidates ~~participants~~ to begin their work at the beginning of the 2006-2007 ~~2005-2006~~ school year.

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05.)

(110 ILCS 48/35)

Sec. 35. Independent program evaluation. The State Board shall contract for an independent evaluation of program implementation by each of its participating consortia and of the impact of each program, including the extent of candidate ~~student~~ persistence in program enrollment, acceptance as an education major in a 4-year institution of higher education,

completion of a bachelor's degree in teaching, obtaining a teaching position in a target school or similar school, subsequent effectiveness as a teacher, and persistence in teaching in a target school or similar school. The evaluation shall assess the Initiative's overall effectiveness and shall identify particular program strategies that are especially effective.

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05.)

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