

AN ACT concerning education.

WHEREAS, The General Assembly finds and declares the following:

(a) Illinois has over one million deaf and hard of hearing residents;

(b) American Sign Language (ASL) is a fully-developed, visual-gestural language with distinct grammar, syntax, and symbols and is one of hundreds of signed languages in the world;

(c) The American deaf community is a group of citizens who are members of a unique culture who share ASL as their common language; and

(d) High school graduation requirements under Section 27-22 of the School Code require students to take one year of music, art, vocational education, or a foreign language, which includes ASL; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly hereby also declares the purpose and intent of this amendatory Act to be as follows:

(a) To recognize ASL as the language of the American deaf community; and

(b) To authorize and encourage public and independent schools, including post-secondary schools, to offer ASL as a course of study and to accept ASL credits as foreign-language credits; therefore

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

Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Sections 10-20.46 and 34-18.37 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/10-20.46 new)

Sec. 10-20.46. American Sign Language courses. School boards are encouraged to implement American Sign Language courses into school foreign language curricula.

(105 ILCS 5/34-18.37 new)

Sec. 34-18.37. American Sign Language courses. The school board is encouraged to implement American Sign Language courses into school foreign language curricula.

Section 10. The University of Illinois Act is amended by changing Section 8 and by adding Section 45 as follows:

(110 ILCS 305/8) (from Ch. 144, par. 29)

Sec. 8. Admissions.

(a) No student shall be admitted to instruction in any of the departments of the University who shall not have attained to the age of fifteen (15) years, and who shall not previously undergo a satisfactory examination in each of the branches ordinarily taught in the common schools of the state.

(b) In addition, commencing in the fall of 1993, no new student shall then or thereafter be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2 years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that institutions may admit individual applicants if the institution determines through assessment or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be

acquired in the high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Institutions may also admit 1) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory curriculum in high school, and 2) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of the 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5 categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(c) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (b).

(d) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT

shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

(110 ILCS 305/45 new)

Sec. 45. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 15. The Southern Illinois University Management Act is amended by changing Section 8e and by adding Section 30 as follows:

(110 ILCS 520/8e) (from Ch. 144, par. 658e)

Sec. 8e. Admissions.

(a) Commencing in the fall of 1993, no new student shall then or thereafter be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2 years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that institutions may admit individual applicants if the institution determines through assessment or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired in the high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Institutions may also

admit 1) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory curriculum in high school, and 2) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5 categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(b) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (a).

(c) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

Sec. 30. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 20. The Chicago State University Law is amended by changing Section 5-85 and by adding Section 5-140 as follows:

(110 ILCS 660/5-85)

Sec. 5-85. Admission requirements.

(a) No new student shall be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the Chicago State University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2 years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that Chicago State University may admit individual applicants if it determines through assessment or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired in the high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of Chicago State University shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Chicago State University may also admit (i) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory curriculum in high school, and (ii) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic

activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5 categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(b) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (a).

(c) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

(110 ILCS 660/5-140 new)

Sec. 5-140. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 25. The Eastern Illinois University Law is amended by changing Section 10-85 and by adding Section 10-140 as follows:

(110 ILCS 665/10-85)

Sec. 10-85. Admission requirements.

(a) No new student shall be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the Eastern Illinois University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2 years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that Eastern Illinois University may admit individual applicants if it determines through assessment

or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired in the high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of Eastern Illinois University shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Eastern Illinois University may also admit (i) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory curriculum in high school, and (ii) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5

categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(b) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (a).

(c) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

(110 ILCS 665/10-140 new)

Sec. 10-140. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 30. The Governors State University Law is amended by changing Section 15-85 and by adding Section 15-140 as follows:

(110 ILCS 670/15-85)

Sec. 15-85. Admission requirements.

(a) No new student shall be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the Governors State University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2 years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that Governors State University may admit individual applicants if it determines through assessment or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired in the

high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of Governors State University shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Governors State University may also admit (i) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory curriculum in high school, and (ii) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5 categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(b) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (a).

(c) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT

shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

(110 ILCS 670/15-140 new)

Sec. 15-140. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 35. The Illinois State University Law is amended by changing Section 20-85 and by adding Section 20-145 as follows:

(110 ILCS 675/20-85)

Sec. 20-85. Admission requirements.

(a) No new student shall be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the Illinois State University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2

years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that Illinois State University may admit individual applicants if it determines through assessment or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired in the high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of Illinois State University shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Illinois State University may also admit (i) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory

curriculum in high school, and (ii) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5 categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(b) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (a).

(c) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

(110 ILCS 675/20-145 new)

Sec. 20-145. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful

completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 40. The Northeastern Illinois University Law is amended by changing Section 25-85 and by adding Section 25-140 as follows:

(110 ILCS 680/25-85)

Sec. 25-85. Admission requirements.

(a) No new student shall be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the Northeastern Illinois University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2 years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that Northeastern Illinois University may admit individual applicants if it determines through assessment or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired in the high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Northeastern Illinois University may also admit (i) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory curriculum in high school, and (ii) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic

activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5 categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(b) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (a).

(c) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

(110 ILCS 680/25-140 new)

Sec. 25-140. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 45. The Northern Illinois University Law is amended by changing Section 30-85 and by adding Section 30-150 as follows:

(110 ILCS 685/30-85)

Sec. 30-85. Admission requirements.

(a) No new student shall be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the Northern Illinois University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2 years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that Northern Illinois University may admit individual applicants if it determines through assessment

or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired in the high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Northern Illinois University may also admit (i) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory curriculum in high school, and (ii) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5

categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(b) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (a).

(c) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

(110 ILCS 685/30-150 new)

Sec. 30-150. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 50. The Western Illinois University Law is amended by changing Section 35-85 and by adding Section 35-145 as follows:

(110 ILCS 690/35-85)

Sec. 35-85. Admission requirements.

(a) No new student shall be admitted to instruction in any of the departments or colleges of the Western Illinois University unless such student also has satisfactorily completed:

(1) at least 15 units of high school coursework from the following 5 categories:

(A) 4 years of English (emphasizing written and oral communications and literature), of which up to 2 years may be collegiate level instruction;

(B) 3 years of social studies (emphasizing history and government);

(C) 3 years of mathematics (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or fundamentals of computer programming);

(D) 3 years of science (laboratory sciences); and

(E) 2 years of electives in foreign language, which may be deemed to include American Sign Language, music, vocational education or art;

(2) except that Western Illinois University may admit individual applicants if it determines through assessment or through evaluation based on learning outcomes of the coursework taken, including vocational education courses and courses taken in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code, that the applicant demonstrates knowledge and skills substantially equivalent to the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired in the

high school courses required for admission. The Board of Trustees of Western Illinois University shall not discriminate in the University's admissions process against an applicant for admission because of the applicant's enrollment in a charter school established under Article 27A of the School Code. Western Illinois University may also admit (i) applicants who did not have an opportunity to complete the minimum college preparatory curriculum in high school, and (ii) educationally disadvantaged applicants who are admitted to the formal organized special assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of such students, providing that in either case, the institution incorporates in the applicant's baccalaureate curriculum courses or other academic activities that compensate for course deficiencies; and

(3) except that up to 3 of 15 units of coursework required by paragraph (1) of this subsection may be distributed by deducting no more than one unit each from the categories of social studies, mathematics, sciences and electives and completing those 3 units in any of the 5 categories of coursework described in paragraph (1).

(b) When allocating funds, local boards of education shall recognize their obligation to their students to offer the coursework required by subsection (a).

(c) A student who has graduated from high school and has scored within the University's accepted range on the ACT or SAT

shall not be required to take the high school level General Educational Development (GED) Test as a prerequisite to admission.

(Source: P.A. 91-374, eff. 7-30-99.)

(110 ILCS 690/35-145 new)

Sec. 35-145. American Sign Language courses. The University may award academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by the University, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of the foreign language requirements of the University, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 55. The Public Community College Act is amended by adding Section 3-29.4 as follows:

(110 ILCS 805/3-29.4 new)

Sec. 3-29.4. American Sign Language courses. To adopt regulations for the awarding of academic credit for the successful completion of any American Sign Language course offered or approved by a community college, which may be applied toward the satisfaction of any foreign language requirements of the community college, except for those requirements related to the content of a student's academic major.

Section 90. The State Mandates Act is amended by adding Section 8.33 as follows:

(30 ILCS 805/8.33 new)

Sec. 8.33. Exempt mandate. Notwithstanding Sections 6 and 8 of this Act, no reimbursement by the State is required for the implementation of any mandate created by this amendatory Act of the 96th General Assembly.