

AN ACT concerning education.

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

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

(110 ILCS 48/5)

Sec. 5. Purpose. The Grow Your Own Teacher preparation programs established under this Act shall comprise a major new statewide initiative, known as the Grow Your 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 Own Teacher Education Initiative shall effectively recruit and prepare parent and community leaders and paraeducators to become effective teachers statewide in hard-to-staff schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income students 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 Own Teacher Education Initiative shall ensure

educational rigor by effectively preparing candidates in accredited bachelor's degree programs in teaching, through which graduates shall meet the requirements to secure an Illinois initial teaching certificate.

The goal of the Grow Your 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; 94-979, eff. 6-30-06.)

(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 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.

"Eligible school" means a public elementary or secondary school in this State that serves a substantial percentage of low-income students and that is either hard to staff or has hard-to-staff teaching positions.

"Hard-to-staff school" means a public school in this State

~~an elementary or secondary school that, based on data compiled by the State Board of Education,~~ ranks in the upper third among public schools of its type (elementary, middle, or secondary) in terms of rate of attrition of its teachers ~~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 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 history of working to improve 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 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 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.

"State Board" means the State Board of Education.

(Source: P.A. 93-802, eff. 1-1-05; 94-979, eff. 6-30-06.)

(110 ILCS 48/20)

Sec. 20. Selection of grantees. The State Board shall award grants to qualified consortia that reflect the distribution and diversity of 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, 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 eligible target schools ~~serving a substantial percentage of low income students~~ that will participate in ~~be the primary focus of~~ the program. The consortium shall articulate the steps that it will carry out in preparing teachers for its participating target ~~hard-to-staff~~ schools and in preparing teachers for one or more

hard-to-staff teaching positions in those ~~its target~~ schools.

(4) A candidate ~~Candidate~~ 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 shall include on-going direct experience in target schools and evaluation of this experience.

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

(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 to be trained in the planned 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.

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

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

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

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

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

(L) The plan of the 4-year institution of higher education to ensure that candidates 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' 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.

(P) A plan for internal evaluation that provides reports at least yearly on the progress of candidates 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 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; 94-979, eff. 6-30-06.)

(110 ILCS 48/25)

Sec. 25. Expenditures under the Initiative.

(a) Every program under the Initiative shall implement a program of forgivable loans to cover any portion of tuition and direct expenses of candidates 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 hard-to-staff schools 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 for waivers or deferrals of ~~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.

(b) Grants under the Initiative shall be awarded in such a way as to provide the required support for a cohort of candidates for any fiscal year in which an appropriation for the Initiative is made ~~the cohort's entire training period.~~ Program budgets must show expenditures and needed funds for the entire period that candidates 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.

(d) Where necessary, program budgets shall include the costs of child care and other indirect expenses, such as transportation, tutoring, technology, and technology support, that are necessary to permit candidates to maintain their ~~a full class schedules schedule~~. Grant funds may be used by any member of a consortium to offset such costs, whether the needed services are ~~Child care may be~~ provided by the community organization or organizations, are provided by another member of the consortium, or are ~~be~~ independently contracted for.

(e) The institution of higher education may expend grant funds to cover 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, for providing space in the community, and for working with school personnel to facilitate individual work experiences and support of candidates.

(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 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; 94-979, eff. 6-30-06.)