



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB2791

Introduced 2/6/2025, by Rep. Edgar González, Jr.

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

110 ILCS 947/20	
110 ILCS 947/50	
110 ILCS 947/52	
110 ILCS 947/65.15	
110 ILCS 947/65.70	
110 ILCS 947/65.110	
110 ILCS 947/65.120	
110 ILCS 975/2	from Ch. 144, par. 2752
110 ILCS 975/3	from Ch. 144, par. 2753
110 ILCS 975/3.1	
110 ILCS 975/4	from Ch. 144, par. 2754
110 ILCS 975/6	from Ch. 144, par. 2756
110 ILCS 975/6.5	

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides that on the effective date of the amendatory Act, any recipient of a scholarship, grant, or waiver that has been or may be converted to a student loan under a State program for which the Illinois Student Assistance Commission is responsible for collections shall be released from the remaining financial repayment obligations under that program. In provisions concerning the Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship program, the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program, special education teacher scholarships, the Optometric Education Scholarship Program, Post-Master of Social Work School Social Work Professional Educator License scholarships, and the iGROW Tech Scholarship Program and in the Nursing Education Scholarship Law, removes provisions concerning repaying funds received due to the specified failure of a recipient to fulfill the recipient's obligations. Makes other changes. Effective immediately.

LRB104 10549 LNS 20625 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 Higher Education Student Assistance Act is  
5 amended by changing Sections 20, 50, 52, 65.15, 65.70, 65.110,  
6 and 65.120 as follows:

7 (110 ILCS 947/20)

8 Sec. 20. Functions of Commission.

9 (a) The Commission, in accordance with this Act, shall  
10 prepare and supervise the issuance of public information  
11 concerning its provisions; prescribe the form and regulate the  
12 submission of applications for assistance; provide for and  
13 conduct, or cause to be conducted, all eligibility  
14 determinations of applicants; award the appropriate financial  
15 assistance; and, upon request by a member of the General  
16 Assembly, nominate or evaluate and recommend for nomination  
17 applicants for General Assembly scholarships in accordance  
18 with criteria specified by the member under Section 30-9 of  
19 the School Code.

20 (b) The Commission is authorized to participate in any  
21 programs for monetary assistance to students and to receive,  
22 hold, and disburse all such funds made available by any agency  
23 or organization for the purpose or purposes for which they are

1 made available. The Commission is authorized to administer a  
2 program of grant assistance as authorized by the Baccalaureate  
3 Savings Act. The Commission is authorized to participate in  
4 any programs established to improve student financial aid  
5 services or the proficiency of persons engaged in student  
6 financial aid services and to receive, hold, and disburse all  
7 funds made available by any agency or organization for the  
8 purpose or purposes for which they are made available subject  
9 to the appropriations of the General Assembly.

10 (c) The Commission is authorized to deny a scholarship or  
11 a grant to any person who has defaulted on a guaranteed student  
12 loan and who is not maintaining a satisfactory repayment  
13 record. If a person has a defaulted guaranteed student loan  
14 but is otherwise eligible for assistance pursuant to Section  
15 40, the Commission shall award one term of assistance during  
16 which a satisfactory repayment record must be established. If  
17 such a repayment record is not established, additional  
18 assistance shall be denied until a satisfactory repayment  
19 record is established.

20 (d) The Commission is authorized to participate with  
21 federal, state, county, local, and university law enforcement  
22 agencies in cooperative efforts to detect and prosecute  
23 incidents of fraud in student assistance programs.

24 (e) The Administrative Review Law shall apply to and  
25 govern all proceedings for the judicial review of final  
26 administrative decisions of the Commission.

1 (f) The Commission is authorized to make all necessary and  
2 proper rules, not inconsistent with this Act, for the  
3 efficient exercise of the foregoing functions.

4 (g) Unless otherwise provided by statute, the functions of  
5 the Commission shall be exercised without regard to any  
6 applicant's race, creed, sex, color, national origin, or  
7 ancestry.

8 (h) The Commission is authorized to establish systems and  
9 programs to encourage employers to match employee  
10 contributions to prepaid programs of college savings by making  
11 donations to the Commission for prepaid programs of college  
12 savings to make higher education affordable for all residents  
13 of the State and to receive, hold, and disburse all such funds  
14 made available through those programs for the purposes for  
15 which they are authorized by rule or by law.

16 (i) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the  
17 contrary, on the effective date of this amendatory Act of the  
18 104th General Assembly, any recipient of a scholarship, grant,  
19 or waiver that has been or may be converted to a student loan  
20 under a State program for which the Commission is responsible  
21 for collections shall be released from the remaining financial  
22 repayment obligations under that program. This includes  
23 financial repayment obligations under Section 50, 52, 65.15,  
24 65.70, 65.110, or 65.120, the Nursing Education Scholarship  
25 Law, or any other similarly structured State scholarship,  
26 grant, or waiver program for which the Commission is or may

1 become responsible for collections.

2 The release from financial repayment obligations under  
3 this subsection (i) applies only to financial repayment  
4 obligations resulting from a recipient's failure to complete  
5 any required employment obligation under the terms of the  
6 scholarship, grant, or waiver. The release does not apply to  
7 amounts owed to the Commission for other reasons, including,  
8 but not limited to, error, fraud, rescission of funds, or  
9 because a recipient ceased to be eligible for the amount  
10 initially awarded.

11 (Source: P.A. 96-198, eff. 8-10-09.)

12 (110 ILCS 947/50)

13 Sec. 50. Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship  
14 program.

15 (a) As used in this Section:

16 "Eligible applicant" means a minority student who has  
17 graduated from high school or has received a State of  
18 Illinois High School Diploma and has maintained a  
19 cumulative grade point average of no less than 2.5 on a 4.0  
20 scale, and who by reason thereof is entitled to apply for  
21 scholarships to be awarded under this Section.

22 "Minority student" means a student who is any of the  
23 following:

24 (1) American Indian or Alaska Native (a person  
25 having origins in any of the original peoples of North

1 and South America, including Central America, and who  
2 maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment).

3 (2) Asian (a person having origins in any of the  
4 original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or  
5 the Indian subcontinent, including, but not limited  
6 to, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia,  
7 Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and  
8 Vietnam).

9 (3) Black or African American (a person having  
10 origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa).

11 (4) Hispanic or Latino (a person of Cuban,  
12 Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or  
13 other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race).

14 (5) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (a  
15 person having origins in any of the original peoples  
16 of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands).

17 "Qualified bilingual minority applicant" means a  
18 qualified student who demonstrates proficiency in a  
19 language other than English by (i) receiving a State Seal  
20 of Biliteracy from the State Board of Education or (ii)  
21 receiving a passing score on an educator licensure target  
22 language proficiency test.

23 "Qualified student" means a person (i) who is a  
24 resident of this State and a citizen or permanent resident  
25 of the United States; (ii) who is a minority student, as  
26 defined in this Section; (iii) who, as an eligible

1 applicant, has made a timely application for a minority  
2 teaching scholarship under this Section; (iv) who is  
3 enrolled on at least a half-time basis at a qualified  
4 Illinois institution of higher learning; (v) who is  
5 enrolled in a course of study leading to teacher  
6 licensure, including alternative teacher licensure, or, if  
7 the student is already licensed to teach, in a course of  
8 study leading to an additional teaching endorsement or a  
9 master's degree in an academic field in which he or she is  
10 teaching or plans to teach or who has received one or more  
11 College and Career Pathway Endorsements pursuant to  
12 Section 80 of the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness  
13 Act and commits to enrolling in a course of study leading  
14 to teacher licensure, including alternative teacher  
15 licensure; (vi) who maintains a grade point average of no  
16 less than 2.5 on a 4.0 scale; and (vii) who continues to  
17 advance satisfactorily toward the attainment of a degree.

18 (b) In order to encourage academically talented Illinois  
19 minority students to pursue teaching careers at the preschool  
20 or elementary or secondary school level and to address and  
21 alleviate the teacher shortage crisis in this State described  
22 under the provisions of the Transitions in Education Act, each  
23 qualified student shall be awarded a minority teacher  
24 scholarship to any qualified Illinois institution of higher  
25 learning. However, preference may be given to qualified  
26 applicants enrolled at or above the junior level.

1           (c) Each minority teacher scholarship awarded under this  
2 Section shall be in an amount sufficient to pay the tuition and  
3 fees and room and board costs of the qualified Illinois  
4 institution of higher learning at which the recipient is  
5 enrolled, up to an annual maximum of \$5,000; except that in the  
6 case of a recipient who does not reside on-campus at the  
7 institution at which he or she is enrolled, the amount of the  
8 scholarship shall be sufficient to pay tuition and fee  
9 expenses and a commuter allowance, up to an annual maximum of  
10 \$5,000. However, if at least \$2,850,000 is appropriated in a  
11 given fiscal year for the Minority Teachers of Illinois  
12 scholarship program, then, in each fiscal year thereafter,  
13 each scholarship awarded under this Section shall be in an  
14 amount sufficient to pay the tuition and fees and room and  
15 board costs of the qualified Illinois institution of higher  
16 learning at which the recipient is enrolled, up to an annual  
17 maximum of \$7,500; except that in the case of a recipient who  
18 does not reside on-campus at the institution at which he or she  
19 is enrolled, the amount of the scholarship shall be sufficient  
20 to pay tuition and fee expenses and a commuter allowance, up to  
21 an annual maximum of \$7,500.

22           (d) The total amount of minority teacher scholarship  
23 assistance awarded by the Commission under this Section to an  
24 individual in any given fiscal year, when added to other  
25 financial assistance awarded to that individual for that year,  
26 shall not exceed the cost of attendance at the institution at



1     which the student is enrolled. If the amount of a minority  
2     teacher scholarship to be awarded to a qualified student as  
3     provided in subsection (c) of this Section exceeds the cost of  
4     attendance at the institution at which the student is  
5     enrolled, the minority teacher scholarship shall be reduced by  
6     an amount equal to the amount by which the combined financial  
7     assistance available to the student exceeds the cost of  
8     attendance.

9         (e) The maximum number of academic terms for which a  
10     qualified student can receive minority teacher scholarship  
11     assistance shall be 8 semesters or 12 quarters.

12         (f) In any academic year for which an eligible applicant  
13     under this Section accepts financial assistance through the  
14     Paul Douglas Teacher Scholarship Program, as authorized by  
15     Section 551 et seq. of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the  
16     applicant shall not be eligible for scholarship assistance  
17     awarded under this Section.

18         (g) All applications for minority teacher scholarships to  
19     be awarded under this Section shall be made to the Commission  
20     on forms which the Commission shall provide for eligible  
21     applicants. The form of applications and the information  
22     required to be set forth therein shall be determined by the  
23     Commission, and the Commission shall require eligible  
24     applicants to submit with their applications such supporting  
25     documents or recommendations as the Commission deems  
26     necessary.

1           (h) Subject to a separate appropriation for such purposes,  
2     payment of any minority teacher scholarship awarded under this  
3     Section shall be determined by the Commission. All scholarship  
4     funds distributed in accordance with this subsection shall be  
5     paid to the institution and used only for payment of the  
6     tuition and fee and room and board expenses incurred by the  
7     student in connection with his or her attendance at a  
8     qualified Illinois institution of higher learning. Any  
9     minority teacher scholarship awarded under this Section shall  
10    be applicable to 2 semesters or 3 quarters of enrollment. If a  
11    qualified student withdraws from enrollment prior to  
12    completion of the first semester or quarter for which the  
13    minority teacher scholarship is applicable, the school shall  
14    refund to the Commission the full amount of the minority  
15    teacher scholarship.

16           (i) The Commission shall administer the minority teacher  
17    scholarship aid program established by this Section and shall  
18    make all necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this  
19    Section for its effective implementation.

20           (j) When an appropriation to the Commission for a given  
21    fiscal year is insufficient to provide scholarships to all  
22    qualified students, the Commission shall allocate the  
23    appropriation in accordance with this subsection. If funds are  
24    insufficient to provide all qualified students with a  
25    scholarship as authorized by this Section, the Commission  
26    shall allocate the available scholarship funds for that fiscal

1 year to qualified students who submit a complete application  
2 form on or before a date specified by the Commission based on  
3 the following order of priority:

4 (1) To students who received a scholarship under this  
5 Section in the prior academic year and who remain eligible  
6 for a minority teacher scholarship under this Section.

7 (2) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (k), to  
8 students who demonstrate financial need, as determined by  
9 the Commission.

10 (k) Notwithstanding paragraph (2) of subsection (j), at  
11 least 35% of the funds appropriated for scholarships awarded  
12 under this Section in each fiscal year shall be reserved for  
13 qualified male minority applicants, with priority being given  
14 to qualified Black male applicants beginning with fiscal year  
15 2023. If the Commission does not receive enough applications  
16 from qualified male minorities on or before January 1 of each  
17 fiscal year to award 35% of the funds appropriated for these  
18 scholarships to qualified male minority applicants, then the  
19 Commission may award a portion of the reserved funds to  
20 qualified female minority applicants in accordance with  
21 subsection (j).

22 Beginning with fiscal year 2023, if at least \$2,850,000  
23 but less than \$4,200,000 is appropriated in a given fiscal  
24 year for scholarships awarded under this Section, then at  
25 least 10% of the funds appropriated shall be reserved for  
26 qualified bilingual minority applicants, with priority being

1 given to qualified bilingual minority applicants who are  
2 enrolled in an educator preparation program with a  
3 concentration in bilingual, bicultural education. Beginning  
4 with fiscal year 2023, if at least \$4,200,000 is appropriated  
5 in a given fiscal year for the Minority Teachers of Illinois  
6 scholarship program, then at least 30% of the funds  
7 appropriated shall be reserved for qualified bilingual  
8 minority applicants, with priority being given to qualified  
9 bilingual minority applicants who are enrolled in an educator  
10 preparation program with a concentration in bilingual,  
11 bicultural education. Beginning with fiscal year 2023, if at  
12 least \$2,850,000 is appropriated in a given fiscal year for  
13 scholarships awarded under this Section but the Commission  
14 does not receive enough applications from qualified bilingual  
15 minority applicants on or before January 1 of that fiscal year  
16 to award at least 10% of the funds appropriated to qualified  
17 bilingual minority applicants, then the Commission may, in its  
18 discretion, award a portion of the reserved funds to other  
19 qualified students in accordance with subsection (j).

20 (1) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for any  
21 academic year, each recipient of a minority teacher  
22 scholarship awarded under this Section shall be required by  
23 the Commission to sign an agreement under which the recipient  
24 pledges that, within the one-year period following the  
25 termination of the program for which the recipient was awarded  
26 a minority teacher scholarship, the recipient (i) shall begin

1 teaching for a period of not less than one year for each year  
2 of scholarship assistance he or she was awarded under this  
3 Section; (ii) shall fulfill this teaching obligation at a  
4 nonprofit Illinois public, private, or parochial preschool,  
5 elementary school, or secondary school at which no less than  
6 30% of the enrolled students are minority students in the year  
7 during which the recipient begins teaching at the school or  
8 may instead, if the recipient received a scholarship as a  
9 qualified bilingual minority applicant, fulfill this teaching  
10 obligation in a program in transitional bilingual education  
11 pursuant to Article 14C of the School Code or in a school in  
12 which 20 or more English learner students in the same language  
13 classification are enrolled; and (iii) shall, upon request by  
14 the Commission, provide the Commission with evidence that he  
15 or she is fulfilling or has fulfilled the terms of the teaching  
16 agreement provided for in this subsection.

17 (m) (Blank). ~~If a recipient of a minority teacher~~  
18 ~~scholarship awarded under this Section fails to fulfill the~~  
19 ~~teaching obligation set forth in subsection (1) of this~~  
20 ~~Section, the Commission shall require the recipient to repay~~  
21 ~~the amount of the scholarships received, prorated according to~~  
22 ~~the fraction of the teaching obligation not completed, at a~~  
23 ~~rate of interest equal to 5%, and, if applicable, reasonable~~  
24 ~~collection fees. If a recipient who enters into repayment~~  
25 ~~under this subsection (m) subsequently, within 5 years of~~  
26 ~~entering repayment, begins to teach at a school meeting the~~

1 ~~description under subsection (1) of this Section, the~~  
2 ~~Commission may reduce the amount owed by the recipient in~~  
3 ~~proportion to the amount of the teaching obligation completed.~~  
4 ~~The Commission is authorized to establish rules relating to~~  
5 ~~its collection activities for repayment of scholarships under~~  
6 ~~this Section. All repayments collected under this Section~~  
7 ~~shall be forwarded to the State Comptroller for deposit into~~  
8 ~~the State's General Revenue Fund.~~

9 (n) (Blank). ~~A recipient of minority teacher scholarship~~  
10 ~~shall not be considered in violation of the agreement entered~~  
11 ~~into pursuant to subsection (1) if the recipient (i) enrolls~~  
12 ~~on a full time basis as a graduate student in a course of study~~  
13 ~~related to the field of teaching at a qualified Illinois~~  
14 ~~institution of higher learning; (ii) is serving, not in excess~~  
15 ~~of 3 years, as a member of the armed services of the United~~  
16 ~~States; (iii) is a person with a temporary total disability~~  
17 ~~for a period of time not to exceed 3 years as established by~~  
18 ~~sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; (iv) is seeking and~~  
19 ~~unable to find full time employment as a teacher at an Illinois~~  
20 ~~public, private, or parochial preschool or elementary or~~  
21 ~~secondary school that satisfies the criteria set forth in~~  
22 ~~subsection (1) of this Section and is able to provide evidence~~  
23 ~~of that fact; (v) becomes a person with a permanent total~~  
24 ~~disability as established by sworn affidavit of a qualified~~  
25 ~~physician; (vi) is taking additional courses, on at least a~~  
26 ~~half time basis, needed to obtain licensure as a teacher in~~

1 ~~Illinois; or (vii) is fulfilling teaching requirements~~  
2 ~~associated with other programs administered by the Commission~~  
3 ~~and cannot concurrently fulfill them under this Section in a~~  
4 ~~period of time equal to the length of the teaching obligation.~~

5 (o) (Blank). ~~Scholarship recipients under this Section who~~  
6 ~~withdraw from a program of teacher education but remain~~  
7 ~~enrolled in school to continue their postsecondary studies in~~  
8 ~~another academic discipline shall not be required to commence~~  
9 ~~repayment of their Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship~~  
10 ~~so long as they remain enrolled in school on a full time basis~~  
11 ~~or if they can document for the Commission special~~  
12 ~~circumstances that warrant extension of repayment.~~

13 (p) If the Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship  
14 program does not expend at least 90% of the amount  
15 appropriated for the program in a given fiscal year for 3  
16 consecutive fiscal years and the Commission does not receive  
17 enough applications from the groups identified in subsection  
18 (k) on or before January 1 in each of those fiscal years to  
19 meet the percentage reserved for those groups under subsection  
20 (k), then up to 3% of amount appropriated for the program for  
21 each of next 3 fiscal years shall be allocated to increasing  
22 awareness of the program and for the recruitment of Black male  
23 applicants. The Commission shall make a recommendation to the  
24 General Assembly by January 1 of the year immediately  
25 following the end of that third fiscal year regarding whether  
26 the amount allocated to increasing awareness and recruitment

1 should continue.

2 (q) Each qualified Illinois institution of higher learning  
3 that receives funds from the Minority Teachers of Illinois  
4 scholarship program shall host an annual information session  
5 at the institution about the program for teacher candidates of  
6 color in accordance with rules adopted by the Commission.  
7 Additionally, the institution shall ensure that each  
8 scholarship recipient enrolled at the institution meets with  
9 an academic advisor at least once per academic year to  
10 facilitate on-time completion of the recipient's educator  
11 preparation program.

12 (r) The changes made to this Section by Public Act 101-654  
13 will first take effect with awards made for the 2022-2023  
14 academic year.

15 (Source: P.A. 102-465, eff. 1-1-22; 102-813, eff. 5-13-22;  
16 102-1100, eff. 1-1-23; 103-448, eff. 8-4-23; revised 7-19-24.)

17 (110 ILCS 947/52)

18 Sec. 52. Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program; Golden  
19 Apple Foundation for Excellence in Teaching.

20 (a) In this Section, "Foundation" means the Golden Apple  
21 Foundation for Excellence in Teaching, a registered 501(c)(3)  
22 not-for-profit corporation.

23 (a-2) In order to encourage academically talented Illinois  
24 students, especially minority students, to pursue teaching  
25 careers, especially in teacher shortage disciplines (which



1 shall be defined to include early childhood education) or at  
2 hard-to-staff schools (as defined by the Commission in  
3 consultation with the State Board of Education), to provide  
4 those students with the crucial mentoring, guidance, and  
5 in-service support that will significantly increase the  
6 likelihood that they will complete their full teaching  
7 commitments and elect to continue teaching in targeted  
8 disciplines and hard-to-staff schools, and to ensure that  
9 students in this State will continue to have access to a pool  
10 of highly qualified ~~highly qualified~~ teachers, each qualified  
11 student shall be awarded a Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois  
12 Program scholarship to any Illinois institution of higher  
13 learning. The Commission shall administer the Golden Apple  
14 Scholars of Illinois Program, which shall be managed by the  
15 Foundation pursuant to the terms of a grant agreement meeting  
16 the requirements of Section 4 of the Illinois Grant Funds  
17 Recovery Act.

18 (a-3) For purposes of this Section, a qualified student  
19 shall be a student who meets the following qualifications:

20 (1) is a resident of this State and a citizen or  
21 eligible noncitizen of the United States;

22 (2) is a high school graduate or a person who has  
23 received a State of Illinois High School Diploma;

24 (3) is enrolled or accepted, on at least a half-time  
25 basis, at an institution of higher learning;

26 (4) is pursuing a postsecondary course of study

1 leading to initial certification or pursuing additional  
2 course work needed to gain State Board of Education  
3 approval to teach, including alternative teacher  
4 licensure; and

5 (5) is a participant in programs managed by and is  
6 approved to receive a scholarship from the Foundation.

7 (a-5) (Blank).

8 (b) (Blank).

9 (b-5) Funds designated for the Golden Apple Scholars of  
10 Illinois Program shall be used by the Commission for the  
11 payment of scholarship assistance under this Section or for  
12 the award of grant funds, subject to the Illinois Grant Funds  
13 Recovery Act, to the Foundation. Subject to appropriation,  
14 awards of grant funds to the Foundation shall be made on an  
15 annual basis and following an application for grant funds by  
16 the Foundation.

17 (b-10) Each year, the Foundation shall include in its  
18 application to the Commission for grant funds an estimate of  
19 the amount of scholarship assistance to be provided to  
20 qualified students during the grant period. Any amount of  
21 appropriated funds exceeding the estimated amount of  
22 scholarship assistance may be awarded by the Commission to the  
23 Foundation for management expenses expected to be incurred by  
24 the Foundation in providing the mentoring, guidance, and  
25 in-service supports that will increase the likelihood that  
26 qualified students will complete their teaching commitments

1 and elect to continue teaching in hard-to-staff schools. If  
2 the estimate of the amount of scholarship assistance described  
3 in the Foundation's application is less than the actual amount  
4 required for the award of scholarship assistance to qualified  
5 students, the Foundation shall be responsible for using  
6 awarded grant funds to ensure all qualified students receive  
7 scholarship assistance under this Section.

8 (b-15) All grant funds not expended or legally obligated  
9 within the time specified in a grant agreement between the  
10 Foundation and the Commission shall be returned to the  
11 Commission within 45 days. Any funds legally obligated by the  
12 end of a grant agreement shall be liquidated within 45 days or  
13 otherwise returned to the Commission within 90 days after the  
14 end of the grant agreement that resulted in the award of grant  
15 funds.

16 (c) Each scholarship awarded under this Section shall be  
17 in an amount sufficient to pay the tuition and fees and room  
18 and board costs of the Illinois institution of higher learning  
19 at which the recipient is enrolled, up to an annual maximum of  
20 \$5,000; except that, in the case of a recipient who does not  
21 reside on campus at the institution of higher learning at  
22 which he or she is enrolled, the amount of the scholarship  
23 shall be sufficient to pay tuition and fee expenses and a  
24 commuter allowance, up to an annual maximum of \$5,000. All  
25 scholarship funds distributed in accordance with this Section  
26 shall be paid to the institution on behalf of recipients.

1 (d) The total amount of scholarship assistance awarded by  
2 the Commission under this Section to an individual in any  
3 given fiscal year, when added to other financial assistance  
4 awarded to that individual for that year, shall not exceed the  
5 cost of attendance at the institution of higher learning at  
6 which the student is enrolled. In any academic year for which a  
7 qualified student under this Section accepts financial  
8 assistance through any other teacher scholarship program  
9 administered by the Commission, a qualified student shall not  
10 be eligible for scholarship assistance awarded under this  
11 Section.

12 (e) A recipient may receive up to 8 semesters or 12  
13 quarters of scholarship assistance under this Section.  
14 Scholarship funds are applicable toward 2 semesters or 3  
15 quarters of enrollment each academic year.

16 (f) All applications for scholarship assistance to be  
17 awarded under this Section shall be made to the Foundation in a  
18 form determined by the Foundation. Each year, the Foundation  
19 shall notify the Commission of the individuals awarded  
20 scholarship assistance under this Section. Each year, at least  
21 30% of the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program  
22 scholarships shall be awarded to students residing in counties  
23 having a population of less than 500,000.

24 (g) (Blank).

25 (h) The Commission shall administer the payment of  
26 scholarship assistance provided through the Golden Apple

1 Scholars of Illinois Program and shall make all necessary and  
2 proper rules not inconsistent with this Section for the  
3 effective implementation of this Section.

4 (i) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for any  
5 academic year, each recipient of a scholarship awarded under  
6 this Section shall be required by the Foundation to sign an  
7 agreement under which the recipient pledges that, within the  
8 2-year period following the termination of the academic  
9 program for which the recipient was awarded a scholarship, the  
10 recipient: (i) shall begin teaching for a period of not less  
11 than 5 years, (ii) shall fulfill this teaching obligation at a  
12 nonprofit Illinois public, private, or parochial preschool or  
13 an Illinois public elementary or secondary school that  
14 qualifies for teacher loan cancellation under Section  
15 465(a)(2)(A) of the federal Higher Education Act of 1965 (20  
16 U.S.C. 1087ee(a)(2)(A)) or other Illinois schools deemed  
17 eligible for fulfilling the teaching commitment as designated  
18 by the Foundation, and (iii) shall, upon request of the  
19 Foundation, provide the Foundation with evidence that he or  
20 she is fulfilling or has fulfilled the terms of the teaching  
21 agreement provided for in this subsection. Upon request, the  
22 Foundation shall provide evidence of teacher fulfillment to  
23 the Commission.

24 (j) (Blank). ~~If a recipient of a scholarship awarded under~~  
25 ~~this Section fails to fulfill the teaching obligation set~~  
26 ~~forth in subsection (i) of this Section, the Commission shall~~

~~require the recipient to repay the amount of the scholarships received, prorated according to the fraction of the teaching obligation not completed, plus interest at a rate of 5% and, if applicable, reasonable collection fees. If a recipient who enters into repayment under this subsection (j) subsequently, within 5 years of entering repayment, begins to teach at a school meeting the description under subsection (i) of this Section, the Commission may reduce the amount owed by the recipient in proportion to the amount of the teaching obligation completed. Reduction of the amount owed shall not be construed as reinstatement in the Golden Apple Scholars program. Reinstatement in the program shall be solely at the discretion of the Golden Apple Foundation on terms determined by the Foundation. Payments received by the Commission under this subsection (j) shall be remitted to the State Comptroller for deposit into the General Revenue Fund, except that that portion of a recipient's repayment that equals the amount in expenses that the Commission has reasonably incurred in attempting collection from that recipient shall be remitted to the State Comptroller for deposit into the ISAC Accounts Receivable Fund, a special fund in the State treasury.~~

(k) (Blank). ~~A recipient of a scholarship awarded by the Foundation under this Section shall not be considered to have failed to fulfill the teaching obligations of the agreement entered into pursuant to subsection (i) if the recipient (i) enrolls on a full time basis as a graduate student in a course~~

~~of study related to the field of teaching at an institution of higher learning; (ii) is serving as a member of the armed services of the United States; (iii) is a person with a temporary total disability, as established by sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; (iv) is seeking and unable to find full time employment as a teacher at a school that satisfies the criteria set forth in subsection (i) and is able to provide evidence of that fact; (v) is taking additional courses, on at least a half time basis, needed to obtain certification as a teacher in Illinois; (vi) is fulfilling teaching requirements associated with other programs administered by the Commission and cannot concurrently fulfill them under this Section in a period of time equal to the length of the teaching obligation; or (vii) is participating in a program established under Executive Order 10924 of the President of the United States or the federal National Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.). Any such extension of the period during which the teaching requirement must be fulfilled shall be subject to limitations of duration as established by the Commission.~~

~~(1) (Blank). A recipient who fails to fulfill the teaching obligations of the agreement entered into pursuant to subsection (i) of this Section shall repay the amount of scholarship assistance awarded to them under this Section within 10 years.~~

(m) Annually, at a time determined by the Commission in consultation with the Foundation, the Foundation shall submit

1 a report to assist the Commission in monitoring the  
2 Foundation's performance of grant activities. The report shall  
3 describe the following:

4 (1) the Foundation's anticipated expenditures for the  
5 next fiscal year;

6 (2) the number of qualified students receiving  
7 scholarship assistance at each institution of higher  
8 learning where a qualified student was enrolled under this  
9 Section during the previous fiscal year;

10 (3) the total monetary value of scholarship funds paid  
11 to each institution of higher learning at which a  
12 qualified student was enrolled during the previous fiscal  
13 year;

14 (4) the number of scholarship recipients who completed  
15 a baccalaureate degree during the previous fiscal year;

16 (5) the number of scholarship recipients who reported  
17 that they had fulfilled their teaching obligation during  
18 the previous fiscal year;

19 (6) the number of scholarship recipients who reported  
20 that they had failed to fulfill their teaching obligation  
21 during the previous fiscal year;

22 (7) (blank); ~~the number of scholarship recipients~~  
23 ~~granted an extension described in subsection (k) of this~~  
24 ~~Section during the previous fiscal year;~~

25 (8) (blank); ~~the number of scholarship recipients~~  
26 ~~required to repay scholarship assistance in accordance~~



1 ~~with subsection (j) of this Section during the previous~~  
2 ~~fiscal year;~~

3 (9) (blank); ~~the number of scholarship recipients who~~  
4 ~~successfully repaid scholarship assistance in full during~~  
5 ~~the previous fiscal year;~~

6 (10) (blank); ~~the number of scholarship recipients who~~  
7 ~~defaulted on their obligation to repay scholarship~~  
8 ~~assistance during the previous fiscal year;~~

9 (11) (blank); ~~the amount of scholarship assistance~~  
10 ~~subject to collection in accordance with subsection (j) of~~  
11 ~~this Section at the end of the previous fiscal year;~~

12 (12) (blank); and ~~the amount of collected funds to be~~  
13 ~~remitted to the Comptroller in accordance with subsection~~  
14 ~~(j) of this Section at the end of the previous fiscal year;~~  
15 ~~and~~

16 (13) other information that the Commission may  
17 reasonably request.

18 (n) Nothing in this Section shall affect the rights of the  
19 Commission to collect information on the completion of  
20 teaching obligations ~~moneys owed to it~~ by recipients of  
21 scholarship assistance through the Illinois Future Teacher  
22 Corps Program, repealed by Public Act 98-533.

23 (o) The Auditor General shall prepare an annual audit of  
24 the operations and finances of the Golden Apple Scholars of  
25 Illinois Program. This audit shall be provided to the  
26 Governor, General Assembly, and the Commission.

1 (p) The suspension of grant making authority found in  
2 Section 4.2 of the Illinois Grant Funds Recovery Act shall not  
3 apply to grants made pursuant to this Section.

4 (Source: P.A. 102-1071, eff. 6-10-22; 102-1100, eff. 1-1-23;  
5 103-154, eff. 6-30-23; 103-448, eff. 8-4-23; revised  
6 10-16-24.)

7 (110 ILCS 947/65.15)

8 Sec. 65.15. Special education teacher scholarships.

9 (a) There shall be awarded annually 250 scholarships to  
10 persons qualifying as members of any of the following groups:

11 (1) Students who are otherwise qualified to receive a  
12 scholarship as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this  
13 Section and who make application to the Commission for  
14 such scholarship and agree to take courses that will  
15 prepare the student for the teaching of children described  
16 in Section 14-1 of the School Code.

17 (2) Persons holding a valid certificate issued under  
18 the laws relating to the certification of teachers and who  
19 make application to the Commission for such scholarship  
20 and agree to take courses that will prepare them for the  
21 teaching of children described in Section 14-1 of the  
22 School Code.

23 (3) Persons who (A) have graduated high school; (B)  
24 have not been certified as a teacher; and (C) make  
25 application to the Commission for such scholarship and

1       agree to take courses that will prepare them for the  
2       teaching of children described in Section 14-1 of the  
3       School Code.

4       Scholarships awarded under this Section shall be issued  
5       pursuant to regulations promulgated by the Commission;  
6       provided that no rule or regulation promulgated by the State  
7       Board of Education prior to the effective date of this  
8       amendatory Act of 1993 pursuant to the exercise of any right,  
9       power, duty, responsibility or matter of pending business  
10      transferred from the State Board of Education to the  
11      Commission under this Section shall be affected thereby, and  
12      all such rules and regulations shall become the rules and  
13      regulations of the Commission until modified or changed by the  
14      Commission in accordance with law.

15      For the purposes of this Section scholarships awarded each  
16      school year shall be deemed to be issued on July 1 of the year  
17      prior to the start of the postsecondary school term and all  
18      calculations for use of the scholarship shall be based on such  
19      date. Each scholarship shall entitle its holder to exemption  
20      from fees as provided in subsection (a) of Section 65.40 while  
21      enrolled in a special education program of teacher education,  
22      for a period of not more than 4 calendar years and shall be  
23      available for use at any time during such period of study  
24      except as provided in subsection (b) of Section 65.40.

25      Scholarships issued to holders of a valid certificate  
26      issued under the laws relating to the certification of

1 teachers as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection may  
2 also entitle the holder thereof to a program of teacher  
3 education that will prepare the student for the teaching of  
4 children described in Section 14-1 of the School Code at the  
5 graduate level.

6 (b) The principal, or his or her designee, of an approved  
7 high school shall certify to the Commission, for students who  
8 are Illinois residents and are completing an application, that  
9 the students ranked scholastically in the upper one-half of  
10 their graduating class at the end of the sixth semester.

11 (c) Each holder of a scholarship must furnish proof to the  
12 Commission, in such form and at such intervals as the  
13 Commission prescribes, of the holder's continued enrollment in  
14 a teacher education program qualifying the holder for the  
15 scholarship. Any holder of a scholarship who fails to register  
16 in a special education program of teacher education at the  
17 university within 10 days after the commencement of the term,  
18 quarter or semester immediately following the receipt of the  
19 scholarship or who, having registered, withdraws from the  
20 university or transfers out of teacher education, shall  
21 thereupon forfeit the right to use it and it may be granted to  
22 the person having the next highest rank as shown on the list  
23 held by the Commission. If the person having the next highest  
24 rank, within 10 days after notification thereof by the  
25 Commission, fails to register at any such university in a  
26 special education program of teacher education, or who, having

1 registered, withdraws from the university or transfers out of  
2 teacher education, the scholarship may then be granted to the  
3 person shown on the list as having the rank next below such  
4 person.

5 (d) Any person accepting ~~who has accepted~~ a scholarship  
6 under the preceding subsections of this Section must sign an  
7 agreement pledging (i) that, within one year after graduation  
8 from or termination of enrollment in a teacher education  
9 program, the recipient will begin teaching at a nonprofit  
10 Illinois public, private, or parochial preschool, ~~or~~  
11 elementary school, or secondary school for a period of at  
12 least 2 of the 5 years immediately following that graduation  
13 or termination and (ii) that the recipient will provide the  
14 Commission, upon the Commission's request, with evidence that  
15 the recipient is fulfilling or has fulfilled the terms of the  
16 teaching agreement provided for in this subsection.~~7~~  
17 ~~excluding, however, from the computation of that 5 year period~~  
18 ~~(i) any time up to 3 years spent in the military service,~~  
19 ~~whether such service occurs before or after the person~~  
20 ~~graduates; (ii) any time that person is enrolled full-time in~~  
21 ~~an academic program related to the field of teaching leading~~  
22 ~~to a graduate or postgraduate degree; (iii) the time that~~  
23 ~~person is a person with a temporary total disability for a~~  
24 ~~period of time not to exceed 3 years, as established by the~~  
25 ~~sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; (iv) the time that~~  
26 ~~person is seeking and unable to find full time employment as a~~

1 ~~teacher at an Illinois public, private, or parochial school;~~  
2 ~~(v) the time that person is taking additional courses, on at~~  
3 ~~least a half-time basis, needed to obtain certification as a~~  
4 ~~teacher in Illinois; or (vi) the time that person is~~  
5 ~~fulfilling teaching requirements associated with other~~  
6 ~~programs administered by the Commission if he or she cannot~~  
7 ~~concurrently fulfill them under this Section in a period of~~  
8 ~~time equal to the length of the teaching obligation.~~

9 ~~A person who has accepted a scholarship under the~~  
10 ~~preceding subsections of this Section and who has been unable~~  
11 ~~to fulfill the teaching requirements of this Section may~~  
12 ~~receive a deferment from the obligation of repayment under~~  
13 ~~this subsection (d) under guidelines established by the~~  
14 ~~Commission; provided that no guideline established for any~~  
15 ~~such purpose by the State Board of Education prior to the~~  
16 ~~effective date of this amendatory Act of 1993 shall be~~  
17 ~~affected by the transfer to the Commission of the~~  
18 ~~responsibility for administering and implementing the~~  
19 ~~provisions of this Section, and all guidelines so established~~  
20 ~~shall become the guidelines of the Commission until modified~~  
21 ~~or changed by the Commission.~~

22 ~~Any such person who fails to fulfill this teaching~~  
23 ~~requirement shall pay to the Commission the amount of tuition~~  
24 ~~waived by virtue of his or her acceptance of the scholarship,~~  
25 ~~together with interest at 5% per year on that amount. However,~~  
26 ~~this obligation to repay the amount of tuition waived plus~~

~~interest does not apply when the failure to fulfill the teaching requirement results from the death or adjudication as a person under legal disability of the person holding the scholarship, and no claim for repayment may be filed against the estate of such a decedent or person under legal disability. If a recipient who enters into repayment under this paragraph subsequently, within 5 years of entering repayment, begins to teach at a school meeting the description under this subsection (d), the Commission may reduce the amount owed by the recipient in proportion to the amount of the teaching obligation completed. Payments received by the Commission under this subsection (d) shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit in the General Revenue Fund. Each person receiving a scholarship shall be provided with a description of the provisions of this subsection (d) at the time he or she qualifies for the benefits of such a scholarship.~~

~~(e) (Blank). This Section is basically the same as Sections 30-1, 30-2, 30-3, and 30-4a of the School Code, which are repealed by this amendatory Act of 1993, and shall be construed as a continuation of the teacher scholarship program established by that prior law, and not as a new or different teacher scholarship program. The State Board of Education shall transfer to the Commission, as the successor to the State Board of Education for all purposes of administering and implementing the provisions of this Section, all books,~~

~~accounts, records, papers, documents, contracts, agreements, and pending business in any way relating to the teacher scholarship program continued under this Section; and all scholarships at any time awarded under that program by, and all applications for any such scholarships at any time made to, the State Board of Education shall be unaffected by the transfer to the Commission of all responsibility for the administration and implementation of the teacher scholarship program continued under this Section. The State Board of Education shall furnish to the Commission such other information as the Commission may request to assist it in administering this Section.~~

(Source: P.A. 103-448, eff. 8-4-23.)

(110 ILCS 947/65.70)

Sec. 65.70. Optometric Education Scholarship Program.

(a) The General Assembly finds and declares that the provision of graduate education leading to a doctoral degree in optometry for persons of this State who desire such an education is important to the health and welfare of this State and Nation and, consequently, is an important public purpose. Many qualified potential optometrists are deterred by financial considerations from pursuing their optometric education with consequent irreparable loss to the State and Nation of talents vital to health and welfare. A program of scholarships for individuals who pledge to practice, repayment



1 ~~of which may be excused if the individual practices~~  
2 professional optometry in this State, will enable such  
3 individuals to attend qualified public or private institutions  
4 of their choice in the State.

5 (b) Beginning with the 2003-2004 academic year, the  
6 Commission shall, each year, consider applications for  
7 scholarship assistance under this Section. An applicant is  
8 eligible for a scholarship under this Section if the  
9 Commission finds that the applicant is:

10 (1) a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen;

11 (2) a resident of Illinois; and

12 (3) enrolled on a full-time basis in a public or  
13 private college of optometry located in this State that  
14 awards a doctorate degree in optometry and is approved by  
15 the Department of Professional Regulation.

16 (c) Each year the Commission shall award 10 scholarships  
17 under this Section among applicants qualified pursuant to  
18 subsection (b). Two of these scholarships each shall be  
19 awarded to eligible applicants enrolled in their first year,  
20 second year, third year, and fourth year. The remaining 2  
21 scholarships shall be awarded to any level of student. The  
22 Commission shall receive funding for the scholarships through  
23 appropriations from the Optometric Licensing and Disciplinary  
24 Board Fund. If in any year the number of qualified applicants  
25 exceeds the number of scholarships to be awarded, the  
26 Commission shall give priority in awarding scholarships to

1 students demonstrating exceptional merit and who are in  
2 financial need. A scholarship shall be in the amount of \$5,000  
3 each year applicable to tuition and fees.

4 (d) The total amount of scholarship assistance awarded by  
5 the Commission under this Section to an individual in any  
6 given fiscal year, when added to other financial assistance  
7 awarded to that individual for that year, shall not exceed the  
8 cost of attendance at the institution at which the student is  
9 enrolled.

10 (e) A recipient may receive up to 8 semesters or 12  
11 quarters of scholarship assistance under this Section.

12 (f) Subject to a separate appropriation made for such  
13 purposes, payment of any scholarship awarded under this  
14 Section shall be determined by the Commission. All scholarship  
15 funds distributed in accordance with this Section shall be  
16 paid to the institution on behalf of the recipients.  
17 Scholarship funds are applicable toward 2 semesters or 3  
18 quarters of enrollment within an academic year.

19 (g) The Commission shall administer the Optometric  
20 Education Scholarship Program established by this Section and  
21 shall make all necessary and proper rules not inconsistent  
22 with this Section for its effective implementation.

23 (h) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for any  
24 academic year, each recipient of a scholarship awarded under  
25 this Section shall be required by the Commission to sign an  
26 agreement under which the recipient pledges that, within the

1 one-year period following the termination of the academic  
2 program for which the recipient was awarded a scholarship, the  
3 recipient shall practice in this State as a licensed  
4 optometrist under the Illinois Optometric Practice Act of 1987  
5 for a period of not less than one year for each year of  
6 scholarship assistance awarded under this Section. Each  
7 recipient shall, upon request of the Commission, provide the  
8 Commission with evidence that the recipient ~~he or she~~ is  
9 fulfilling or has fulfilled the terms of the practice  
10 agreement provided for in this subsection.

11 (i) (Blank). ~~If a recipient of a scholarship awarded under~~  
12 ~~this Section fails to fulfill the practice obligation set~~  
13 ~~forth in subsection (h) of this Section, the Commission shall~~  
14 ~~require the recipient to repay the amount of the scholarships~~  
15 ~~received, prorated according to the fraction of the obligation~~  
16 ~~not completed, plus interest at a rate of 5% and, if~~  
17 ~~applicable, reasonable collection fees. The Commission is~~  
18 ~~authorized to establish rules relating to its collection~~  
19 ~~activities for repayment of scholarships under this Section.~~

20 (j) (Blank). ~~A recipient of a scholarship awarded by the~~  
21 ~~Commission under this Section shall not be in violation of the~~  
22 ~~agreement entered into pursuant to subsection (h) if the~~  
23 ~~recipient (i) is serving as a member of the armed services of~~  
24 ~~the United States; (ii) is enrolled in a residency program~~  
25 ~~following graduation at an approved institution; (iii) is a~~  
26 ~~person with a temporary total disability, as established by~~

~~sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; or (iii) cannot  
fulfill the employment obligation due to his or her death,  
disability, or incompetency, as established by sworn affidavit  
of a qualified physician. No claim for repayment may be filed  
against the estate of such a decedent or incompetent. Any  
extension of the period during which the employment  
requirement must be fulfilled shall be subject to limitations  
of duration as established by the Commission.~~

(Source: P.A. 99-143, eff. 7-27-15.)

(110 ILCS 947/65.110)

Sec. 65.110. Post-Master of Social Work School Social Work  
Professional Educator License scholarship.

(a) Subject to appropriation, beginning with awards for  
the 2022-2023 academic year, the Commission shall award  
annually up to 250 Post-Master of Social Work School Social  
Work Professional Educator License scholarships to a person  
who:

(1) holds a valid Illinois-licensed clinical social  
work license or social work license;

(2) has obtained a master's degree in social work from  
an approved program;

(3) is a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen;  
and

(4) submits an application to the Commission for such  
scholarship and agrees to take courses to obtain an

1 Illinois Professional Educator License with an endorsement  
2 in School Social Work.

3 (b) If an appropriation for this Section for a given  
4 fiscal year is insufficient to provide scholarships to all  
5 qualified applicants, the Commission shall allocate the  
6 appropriation in accordance with this subsection (b). If funds  
7 are insufficient to provide all qualified applicants with a  
8 scholarship as authorized by this Section, the Commission  
9 shall allocate the available scholarship funds for that fiscal  
10 year to qualified applicants who submit a complete application  
11 on or before a date specified by the Commission, based on the  
12 following order of priority:

13 (1) firstly, to students who received a scholarship  
14 under this Section in the prior academic year and who  
15 remain eligible for a scholarship under this Section;

16 (2) secondly, to new, qualified applicants who are  
17 members of a racial minority, as defined in subsection  
18 (c); and

19 (3) finally, to other new, qualified applicants in  
20 accordance with this Section.

21 (c) Scholarships awarded under this Section shall be  
22 issued pursuant to rules adopted by the Commission. In  
23 awarding scholarships, the Commission shall give priority to  
24 those applicants who are members of a racial minority. Racial  
25 minorities are underrepresented as school social workers in  
26 elementary and secondary schools in this State, and the

1 General Assembly finds that it is in the interest of this State  
2 to provide them with priority consideration for programs that  
3 encourage their participation in this field and thereby foster  
4 a profession that is more reflective of the diversity of  
5 Illinois students and the parents they will serve. A more  
6 reflective workforce in school social work allows improved  
7 outcomes for students and a better utilization of services.  
8 Therefore, the Commission shall give priority to those  
9 applicants who are members of a racial minority. In this  
10 subsection (c), "racial minority" means a person who is a  
11 citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident of  
12 the United States and who is:

13 (1) Black (a person having origins in any of the black  
14 racial groups in Africa);

15 (2) Hispanic (a person of Spanish or Portuguese  
16 culture with origins in Mexico, South or Central America,  
17 or the Caribbean Islands, regardless of race);

18 (3) Asian American (a person having origins in any of  
19 the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the  
20 Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands); or

21 (4) American Indian or Alaskan Native (a person having  
22 origins in any of the original peoples of North America).

23 (d) Each scholarship shall be applied to the payment of  
24 tuition and mandatory fees at the University of Illinois,  
25 Southern Illinois University, Chicago State University,  
26 Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University,

1 Illinois State University, Northeastern Illinois University,  
2 Northern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University.  
3 Each scholarship may be applied to pay tuition and mandatory  
4 fees required to obtain an Illinois Professional Educator  
5 License with an endorsement in School Social Work.

6 (e) The Commission shall make tuition and fee payments  
7 directly to the qualified institution of higher learning that  
8 the applicant attends.

9 (f) Any person accepting ~~who has accepted~~ a scholarship  
10 under this Section must sign an agreement pledging (i) that,  
11 within one year after graduation or termination of enrollment  
12 in a Post-Master of Social Work Professional Education License  
13 with an endorsement in School Social Work program, the  
14 recipient will begin working as a school social worker at a  
15 public or nonpublic not-for-profit preschool, elementary  
16 school, or secondary school located in this State for at least  
17 2 of the 5 years immediately following that graduation or  
18 termination and (ii) that the recipient shall, upon request of  
19 the Commission, provide the Commission with evidence that the  
20 recipient is fulfilling or has fulfilled the terms of the work  
21 agreement provided for in this subsection. ~~, excluding,~~  
22 ~~however, from the computation of that 5-year period: (i) any~~  
23 ~~time up to 3 years spent in the military service, whether such~~  
24 ~~service occurs before or after the person graduates; (ii) the~~  
25 ~~time that person is a person with a temporary total disability~~  
26 ~~for a period of time not to exceed 3 years, as established by~~

1 ~~the sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; and (iii) the~~  
2 ~~time that person is seeking and unable to find full-time~~  
3 ~~employment as a school social worker at a State public or~~  
4 ~~nonpublic not-for-profit preschool, elementary school, or~~  
5 ~~secondary school.~~

6 (g) (Blank). ~~If a recipient of a scholarship under this~~  
7 ~~Section fails to fulfill the work obligation set forth in~~  
8 ~~subsection (f), the Commission shall require the recipient to~~  
9 ~~repay the amount of the scholarships received, prorated~~  
10 ~~according to the fraction of the obligation not completed, at~~  
11 ~~a rate of interest equal to 5%, and, if applicable, reasonable~~  
12 ~~collection fees. The Commission is authorized to establish~~  
13 ~~rules relating to its collection activities for repayment of~~  
14 ~~scholarships under this Section. All repayments collected~~  
15 ~~under this Section shall be forwarded to the State Comptroller~~  
16 ~~for deposit into this State's General Revenue Fund.~~

17 ~~A recipient of a scholarship under this Section is not~~  
18 ~~considered to be in violation of the failure to fulfill the~~  
19 ~~work obligation under subsection (f) if the recipient (i)~~  
20 ~~enrolls on a full-time basis as a graduate student in a course~~  
21 ~~of study related to the field of social work at a qualified~~  
22 ~~Illinois institution of higher learning; (ii) is serving, not~~  
23 ~~in excess of 3 years, as a member of the armed services of the~~  
24 ~~United States; (iii) is a person with a temporary total~~  
25 ~~disability for a period of time not to exceed 3 years, as~~  
26 ~~established by the sworn affidavit of a qualified physician;~~



~~(iv) is seeking and unable to find full-time employment as a school social worker at an Illinois public or nonpublic not-for-profit preschool, elementary school, or secondary school that satisfies the criteria set forth in subsection (f) and is able to provide evidence of that fact; or (v) becomes a person with a permanent total disability, as established by the sworn affidavit of a qualified physician.~~

(Source: P.A. 102-621, eff. 1-1-22; 102-813, eff. 5-13-22; 102-1030, eff. 5-27-22.)

(110 ILCS 947/65.120)

Sec. 65.120. iGROW Tech Scholarship Program.

(a) As used in this Section:

"Eligible applicant" means a student who has graduated from high school or has received a State of Illinois High School Diploma, who has maintained a cumulative grade point average of no less than 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, who is pursuing or intends to pursue a qualifying degree in a qualified institution, and who is entitled to apply for assistance under this Section.

"Full-time" means the number of credit hours the Commission determines is full-time enrollment for a student for purposes of the program created under this Section.

"Minority student" has the same meaning as the term is defined under Section 50 of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act (110 ILCS 947).

1       "Program" means the iGROW Tech Scholarship Program created  
2 under this Section.

3       "Qualifying degree" means an associate or a bachelor's  
4 degree granted by a qualified institution in the field of  
5 computer information sciences; information technology;  
6 information science; computer science; computer systems  
7 networking and telecommunications; computer and information  
8 systems security or information assurance, including  
9 cybersecurity; or management information systems.

10       "Qualifying job" means a job with an employer in this  
11 State performing work that is directly related to the field of  
12 study that qualified the candidate for assistance under this  
13 Section.

14       "Qualified student" means a person (i) who is a resident  
15 of this State; (ii) who, as an eligible applicant, has made a  
16 timely application for an iGROW tech scholarship under this  
17 Section; (iii) who is enrolled on at least a half-time basis at  
18 a qualified institution; (iv) who is enrolled in a course of  
19 study in the field of computer and information sciences;  
20 information technology; information science; computer science;  
21 computer systems networking and telecommunications; computer  
22 and information systems security or information assurance,  
23 including cybersecurity; or management information systems;  
24 (v) who maintains a grade point average of no less than a 2.5  
25 on a 4.0 scale; and (vi) who continues to advance  
26 satisfactorily toward the attainment of a degree.

1       "Recipient" means an Illinois resident enrolled in a  
2       qualified institution who receives an award under this  
3       Section.

4       (b) Subject to appropriation, and no sooner than the  
5       2024-2025 academic year, there is established the Illinois  
6       Graduate and Retain Our Workforce (iGROW) Tech Scholarship  
7       Program to recruit and train individuals to work in technology  
8       jobs that have a high demand for new employees and offer high  
9       wages by awarding scholarships.

10      (c) Each iGROW tech scholarship awarded under this Section  
11      shall be determined by the Commission in an amount up to and  
12      including the full costs of tuition and fees and room and board  
13      of the qualified institution at which the recipient is  
14      enrolled if the institution is public, or an equivalent rate  
15      established by the Commission for private institutions. The  
16      total amount of iGROW tech scholarship assistance awarded by  
17      the Commission under this Section to an eligible applicant in  
18      any given fiscal year, when added to other financial  
19      assistance awarded to that individual for that year, shall not  
20      exceed the cost of attendance at the institution at which the  
21      student is enrolled. If the amount of financial assistance to  
22      be awarded to a qualified student exceeds the cost of  
23      attendance at the institution at which the student is  
24      enrolled, the iGROW tech scholarship shall be reduced by an  
25      amount equal to the amount by which the combined financial  
26      assistance available to the student exceeds the cost of

1 attendance.

2 (d) The maximum number of academic terms for which a  
3 qualified student can receive iGROW tech scholarship  
4 assistance shall be 8 semesters or 12 quarters.

5 (e) All applications for scholarships awarded under this  
6 Section shall be made to the Commission on forms which the  
7 Commission shall provide for eligible applicants. The form of  
8 applications and the information required to be set forth  
9 therein shall be determined by the Commission, and the  
10 Commission shall require eligible applicants to submit with  
11 their applications such supporting documents or  
12 recommendations as the Commission deems necessary.

13 (f) Subject to appropriation for such purposes, payment of  
14 any iGROW tech scholarship awarded under this Section shall be  
15 determined by the Commission. All scholarship funds  
16 distributed in accordance with this subsection shall be paid  
17 to the qualified institution and used only for payment of the  
18 tuition and fees assessed by the institution and the standard  
19 housing and food allowance used for all undergraduate students  
20 by the qualified student in connection with his or her  
21 attendance at a qualified institution.

22 Any iGROW tech scholarship awarded under this Section  
23 shall be applicable to 2 semesters or 3 quarters of enrollment  
24 annually. The qualified institution can only request payment  
25 for tuition and fees up to the amount of actual tuition and fee  
26 expenses incurred.

1        If a student withdraws after the expiration of the tuition  
2        refund or withdrawal adjustment period, the student may  
3        receive payment for tuition and fees incurred up to the term  
4        award. The housing and food allowance shall be prorated based  
5        on the qualified institution's return of funds policy.

6        (g) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance for any  
7        academic year, each recipient of an iGROW tech scholarship  
8        awarded under this Section shall be required by the Commission  
9        to sign an agreement under which the recipient pledges that  
10       the recipient (i) shall work in the State in a qualified job  
11       for a period of not less than one year for each year of  
12       scholarship assistance he or she was awarded under this  
13       Section; however, in no event shall he or she agree to work in  
14       the State in a qualified job for a period of less than 2 years;  
15       and (ii) shall, upon request by the Commission, provide the  
16       Commission with evidence that he or she is fulfilling or has  
17       fulfilled the terms of the agreement provided for in this  
18       subsection.

19       ~~If a recipient of an iGROW tech scholarship awarded under~~  
20       ~~this Section fails to fulfill the obligations set forth in~~  
21       ~~this subsection, the Commission shall require the recipient to~~  
22       ~~repay the amount of the scholarships received, prorated~~  
23       ~~according to the fraction of the employment obligation not~~  
24       ~~completed, at a rate of interest equal to 5%, and, if~~  
25       ~~applicable, reasonable collection fees. The Commission is~~  
26       ~~authorized to establish rules relating to its collection~~

1 ~~activities for repayment of scholarships under this Section.~~  
2 ~~All repayments collected under this Section shall be forwarded~~  
3 ~~to the State Comptroller for deposit into the State's General~~  
4 ~~Revenue Fund.~~

5 ~~A recipient of an iGROW tech scholarship shall not be~~  
6 ~~considered in violation of the agreement entered into pursuant~~  
7 ~~to this subsection if the recipient (I) enrolls on a full time~~  
8 ~~basis as a graduate student in a course of study related to the~~  
9 ~~technology degree for which he or she qualified for the iGROW~~  
10 ~~tech scholarship at a qualified institution; (II) is serving,~~  
11 ~~not in excess of 3 years, as a member of the armed services of~~  
12 ~~the United States; (III) is a person with a temporary total~~  
13 ~~disability for a period of time not to exceed 3 years as~~  
14 ~~established by sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; (IV)~~  
15 ~~is seeking and unable to find full time employment with a~~  
16 ~~State employer that satisfies the criteria set forth in this~~  
17 ~~subsection and is able to provide evidence of that fact; (V)~~  
18 ~~becomes a person with a permanent total disability as~~  
19 ~~established by sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; or~~  
20 ~~(VI) meets any other criteria that the Commission may deem~~  
21 ~~necessary.~~

22 (h) (Blank.) ~~Scholarship recipients under this Section who~~  
23 ~~withdraw from a program of computer science or other related~~  
24 ~~major area of study provided under this Section but remain~~  
25 ~~enrolled in school to continue their postsecondary studies in~~  
26 ~~another academic discipline shall not be required to commence~~

1 ~~repayment of their iGROW tech scholarship so long as they~~  
2 ~~remain enrolled in school on a full-time basis or if they can~~  
3 ~~document for the Commission special circumstances that warrant~~  
4 ~~extension of repayment.~~

5 (i) If the Program does not expend at least 90% of the  
6 amount appropriated for the Program in a given fiscal year for  
7 3 consecutive fiscal years on or before January 1 in each of  
8 those fiscal years, then up to 3% of amount appropriated for  
9 the Program for each of next 3 fiscal years shall be allocated  
10 to increasing awareness of the program.

11 (j) The Commission shall administer the Program and shall  
12 make all necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this  
13 Section for its effective implementation.

14 (k) The Commission shall establish a methodology for  
15 prioritizing applications from applicants who demonstrate a  
16 financial need or hardship, applications from minority  
17 students, and applications from applicants demonstrating  
18 academic excellence. After the first academic year that the  
19 Program operates, the Commission shall prioritize the  
20 applications of those applicants who received a scholarship  
21 under this Section during the prior academic year and who  
22 remain eligible for a scholarship under this Section.

23 (l) Each fiscal year, the Commission may use up to 5% of  
24 money appropriated for the Program for administration.

25 (m) Scholarships may be made under this Section through  
26 the 2029-30 academic year.

1           (n) The Illinois Graduate and Retain Our Workforce (iGROW)  
2     Tech Scholarship Fund is created as a special fund in the State  
3     treasury. Moneys in the fund may come from both public  
4     entities and institutional, organizational, or other private  
5     entities. All money in the Fund shall be used, subject to  
6     appropriation, by the Commission to implement and administer  
7     the Program pursuant to this Section.

8     (Source: P.A. 103-519, eff. 1-1-24.)

9           Section 10. The Nursing Education Scholarship Law is  
10    amended by changing Sections 2, 3, 3.1, 4, 6, and 6.5 as  
11    follows:

12           (110 ILCS 975/2) (from Ch. 144, par. 2752)

13           Sec. 2. Legislative finding and declaration of policy.

14           (a) The General Assembly finds and hereby declares that  
15    the provision of a higher education leading to an associate  
16    degree in nursing, an associate degree in applied sciences in  
17    nursing, a hospital-based diploma in nursing, a baccalaureate  
18    degree in nursing, a graduate degree in nursing, or a  
19    certificate in practical nursing for persons of this State who  
20    desire such an education is important to the health, welfare  
21    and security of this State and Nation, and consequently is an  
22    important public purpose. Many qualified and potential nurses  
23    are deterred by financial considerations from pursuing their  
24    nursing education, with consequent irreparable loss to the



1 State and Nation of talents vital to health, welfare and  
2 security. A system of scholarships for individuals who plan to  
3 work in this State as, ~~repayment of which may be excused if the~~  
4 ~~individual is employed as~~ a registered professional nurse or a  
5 licensed practical nurse after obtaining an associate degree  
6 in nursing, associate degree in applied sciences in nursing,  
7 hospital-based diploma in nursing, baccalaureate degree in  
8 nursing, graduate degree in nursing, or certificate in  
9 practical nursing<sup>7</sup>, will enable such individuals to attend  
10 approved institutions of their choice in the State, public or  
11 private.

12 (b) The General Assembly finds that there is a critical  
13 shortage of nursing instructors in this State, and such a  
14 shortage will only worsen the shortage of available nurses in  
15 this State and jeopardize the quality of healthcare citizens  
16 of this State have every right to enjoy. In order to provide  
17 for the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of this  
18 State, the General Assembly declares that there is a need for  
19 an increase in skilled nurse educators in this State.

20 (Source: P.A. 96-805, eff. 10-30-09.)

21 (110 ILCS 975/3) (from Ch. 144, par. 2753)

22 Sec. 3. Definitions. The following terms, whenever used or  
23 referred to, have the following meanings except where the  
24 context clearly indicates otherwise:

25 (1) "Board" means the Board of Higher Education created by

1 the Board of Higher Education Act.

2 (2) "Department" means the Illinois Department of Public  
3 Health.

4 (3) "Approved institution" means a public community  
5 college, private junior college, hospital-based diploma in  
6 nursing program, or public or private college or university  
7 with a pre-licensure nursing education program located in this  
8 State that has approval by the Department of Financial and  
9 Professional Regulation for an associate degree in nursing  
10 program, associate degree in applied sciences in nursing  
11 program, hospital-based diploma in nursing program,  
12 baccalaureate degree in nursing program, graduate degree in  
13 nursing program, or certificate in a practical nursing program  
14 or a post-licensure nursing education program approved by the  
15 Board of Higher Education or any successor agency with similar  
16 authority.

17 (4) "Baccalaureate degree in nursing program" means a  
18 program offered by an approved institution and leading to a  
19 bachelor of science degree in nursing.

20 (5) "Enrollment" means the establishment and maintenance  
21 of an individual's status as a student in an approved  
22 institution, regardless of the terms used at the institution  
23 to describe such status.

24 (6) "Academic year" means the period of time from  
25 September 1 of one year through August 31 of the next year or  
26 as otherwise defined by the academic institution.

1           (7) "Associate degree in nursing program or hospital-based  
2 diploma in nursing program" means a program offered by an  
3 approved institution and leading to an associate degree in  
4 nursing, associate degree in applied sciences in nursing, or  
5 hospital-based diploma in nursing.

6           (8) "Graduate degree in nursing program" means a program  
7 offered by an approved institution and leading to a master of  
8 science degree in nursing or a doctorate of philosophy or  
9 doctorate of nursing degree in nursing.

10          (9) "Director" means the Director of the Illinois  
11 Department of Public Health.

12          (10) "Accepted for admission" means a student has  
13 completed the requirements for entry into an associate degree  
14 in nursing program, associate degree in applied sciences in  
15 nursing program, hospital-based diploma in nursing program,  
16 baccalaureate degree in nursing program, graduate degree in  
17 nursing program, or certificate in practical nursing program  
18 at an approved institution, as documented by the institution.

19          (11) "Fees" means those mandatory charges, in addition to  
20 tuition, that all enrolled students must pay, including  
21 required course or lab fees.

22          (12) "Full-time student" means a student enrolled for at  
23 least 12 hours per term or as otherwise determined by the  
24 academic institution.

25          (13) "Law" means the Nursing Education Scholarship Law.

26          (14) "Nursing employment obligation" means employment in

1 this State as a registered professional nurse, licensed  
2 practical nurse, or advanced practice registered nurse in  
3 direct patient care for at least one year for each year of  
4 scholarship assistance received through the Nursing Education  
5 Scholarship Program.

6 (15) "Part-time student" means a person who is enrolled  
7 for at least one-third of the number of hours required per term  
8 by a school for its full-time students.

9 (16) "Practical nursing program" means a program offered  
10 by an approved institution leading to a certificate in  
11 practical nursing.

12 (17) "Registered professional nurse" means a person who is  
13 currently licensed as a registered professional nurse by the  
14 Department of Professional Regulation under the Nurse Practice  
15 Act.

16 (18) "Licensed practical nurse" means a person who is  
17 currently licensed as a licensed practical nurse by the  
18 Department of Professional Regulation under the Nurse Practice  
19 Act.

20 (19) "School term" means an academic term, such as a  
21 semester, quarter, trimester, or number of clock hours, as  
22 defined by an approved institution.

23 (20) "Student in good standing" means a student  
24 maintaining a cumulative grade point average equivalent to at  
25 least the academic grade of a "C".

26 (21) (Blank). ~~"Total and permanent disability" means a~~

~~physical or mental impairment, disease, or loss of a permanent nature that prevents nursing employment with or without reasonable accommodation. Proof of disability shall be a declaration from the social security administration, Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission, Department of Defense, or an insurer authorized to transact business in Illinois who is providing disability insurance coverage to a contractor.~~

(22) "Tuition" means the established charges of an institution of higher learning for instruction at that institution.

(23) "Nurse educator" means a person who is currently licensed as a registered nurse by the Department of Professional Regulation under the Nurse Practice Act, who has a graduate degree in nursing, and who is employed by an approved academic institution to educate registered nursing students, licensed practical nursing students, and registered nurses pursuing graduate degrees.

(24) "Nurse educator employment obligation" means employment in this State as a nurse educator for at least 2 years for each year of scholarship assistance received under Section 6.5 of this Law.

(25) "Commission" means the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

Rulemaking authority to implement the provisions of this Act is conditioned on the rules being adopted in accordance with all provisions of the Illinois Administrative Procedure

1 Act and all rules and procedures of the Joint Committee on  
2 Administrative Rules; any purported rule not so adopted, for  
3 whatever reason, is unauthorized.

4 (Source: P.A. 102-699, eff. 4-19-22.)

5 (110 ILCS 975/3.1)

6 Sec. 3.1. Approved institutions. An approved institution  
7 must maintain compliance with all applicable State and federal  
8 laws. An ~~approved~~ institution approved to participate in the  
9 scholarship program under this Law is not necessarily eligible  
10 for other programs administered by the Commission and is not,  
11 in order to participate in the program under this Law,  
12 required to meet the definition of "institution of higher  
13 learning", "qualified institution", or "institution" as  
14 defined in Section 10 of the Higher Education Student  
15 Assistance Act. The Commission may establish by rule  
16 additional requirements for approved institutions.

17 (Source: P.A. 102-699, eff. 4-19-22.)

18 (110 ILCS 975/4) (from Ch. 144, par. 2754)

19 Sec. 4. Functions of Department. The Department shall  
20 prepare and supervise the issuance of public information about  
21 the provisions of this Article, ~~and~~ prescribe the form and  
22 regulate the submission of applications for scholarships, ~~and~~  
23 determine the eligibility of applicants, ~~and~~ award the  
24 appropriate scholarships, and ~~prescribe the contracts or~~

1 ~~either~~ acknowledgments of scholarship which an applicant is  
2 required to execute, ~~and determine whether all or any part of a~~  
3 ~~recipient's scholarship needs to be monetarily repaid, or has~~  
4 ~~been excused from repayment, and the extent of any repayment~~  
5 ~~or excused repayment. The Department may require a recipient~~  
6 ~~to reimburse the State for expenses, including but not limited~~  
7 ~~to attorney's fees, incurred by the Department or other agent~~  
8 ~~of the State for a successful legal action against the~~  
9 ~~recipient for a breach of any provision of the scholarship~~  
10 ~~contract.~~ The Department is authorized to make all necessary  
11 and proper rules, not inconsistent with this Article, for the  
12 efficient exercise of the foregoing functions.

13 (Source: P.A. 100-872, eff. 8-14-18.)

14 (110 ILCS 975/6) (from Ch. 144, par. 2756)

15 Sec. 6. Nursing requirements for scholarship recipients.  
16 In accepting a scholarship under Section 5, a recipient must  
17 pledge that (i) within ~~Within~~ 12 months after graduation from  
18 an associate degree in nursing program, hospital-based diploma  
19 in nursing program, baccalaureate degree in nursing program,  
20 graduate degree in nursing program, or certificate in  
21 practical nursing program, the any recipient will ~~who accepted~~  
22 ~~a scholarship under Section 5 shall~~ begin meeting the required  
23 nursing employment obligation and (ii) upon request by the  
24 Commission, the recipient will provide the Commission with  
25 evidence that the recipient is fulfilling or has fulfilled the

1 ~~terms of the agreement provided for in this Section. In order~~  
2 ~~to defer his or her continuous employment obligation, a~~  
3 ~~recipient must request the deferment in writing from the~~  
4 ~~Department. A recipient shall notify program staff within 30~~  
5 ~~days if he or she spends up to 4 years in military service~~  
6 ~~before or after graduation. A recipient shall notify program~~  
7 ~~staff within 30 days if he or she is enrolled in an academic~~  
8 ~~program leading to a graduate degree in nursing. If a~~  
9 ~~recipient receives funding through the Nursing Education~~  
10 ~~Scholarship Program for a higher degree, the nursing~~  
11 ~~employment obligation shall be deferred until he or she is no~~  
12 ~~longer enrolled or has graduated. The recipient must begin~~  
13 ~~meeting the required nursing employment obligations no later~~  
14 ~~than 6 months after the end of the deferments.~~

15 ~~Any person who fails to fulfill the nursing employment~~  
16 ~~obligation shall pay to the Department an amount equal to the~~  
17 ~~amount of scholarship funds received per year for each~~  
18 ~~unfulfilled year of the nursing employment obligation,~~  
19 ~~together with interest at 7% per year on the unpaid balance.~~  
20 ~~Payment must begin within 6 months following the date of the~~  
21 ~~occurrence initiating the repayment. All repayments must be~~  
22 ~~completed within 6 years from the date of the occurrence~~  
23 ~~initiating the repayment. However, this obligation may be~~  
24 ~~deferred and re-evaluated every 6 months when the failure to~~  
25 ~~fulfill the nursing employment obligation results from~~  
26 ~~involuntarily leaving the profession due to a decrease in the~~



~~number of nurses employed in the State or when the failure to fulfill the nursing employment obligation results from total and permanent disability. The repayment obligation shall be excused if the failure to fulfill the nursing employment obligation results from the death or adjudication as incompetent of the person holding the scholarship. No claim for repayment may be filed against the estate of such a decedent or incompetent.~~

~~Each person applying for such a scholarship shall be provided with a copy of this Section at the time of application for the benefits of such scholarship.~~

(Source: P.A. 92-43, eff. 1-1-02; 93-879, eff. 1-1-05.)

(110 ILCS 975/6.5)

Sec. 6.5. Nurse educator scholarships.

(a) Beginning with the fall term of the 2009-2010 academic year, the Department shall provide scholarships to individuals selected from among those applicants who qualify for consideration by showing the following:

(1) that he or she has been a resident of this State for at least one year prior to application and is a citizen or a lawful permanent resident of the United States;

(2) that he or she is enrolled in or accepted for admission to a graduate degree in nursing program at an approved institution; and

(3) that he or she agrees to meet the nurse educator

1 employment obligation.

2 (b) If in any year the number of qualified applicants  
3 exceeds the number of scholarships to be awarded under this  
4 Section, the Department shall, in consultation with the  
5 Illinois Nursing Workforce Center Advisory Board, consider the  
6 following factors in granting priority in awarding  
7 scholarships:

8 (1) Financial need, as shown on a standardized  
9 financial needs assessment form used by an approved  
10 institution, of students who will pursue their education  
11 on a full-time or close to full-time basis and who already  
12 have a diploma in nursing and are pursuing a higher  
13 degree.

14 (2) A student's status as a registered nurse who is  
15 pursuing a graduate degree in nursing to pursue employment  
16 in an approved institution that educates licensed  
17 practical nurses and that educates registered nurses in  
18 undergraduate and graduate nursing programs.

19 (3) A student's merit, as shown through his or her  
20 grade point average, class rank, experience as a nurse,  
21 including supervisory experience, experience as a nurse in  
22 the United States military, and other academic and  
23 extracurricular activities.

24 (c) Unless otherwise indicated, scholarships under this  
25 Section shall be awarded to recipients at approved  
26 institutions for a period of up to 3 years.

1       (d) In accepting a scholarship under this Section, a  
2 recipient must pledge that (i) within ~~Within~~ 12 months after  
3 graduation from a graduate degree in nursing program for nurse  
4 educators, the any recipient will ~~who accepted a scholarship~~  
5 ~~under this Section shall~~ begin meeting the required nurse  
6 educator employment obligation and (ii) the recipient will,  
7 upon request by the Commission, provide the Commission with  
8 evidence that the recipient is fulfilling or has fulfilled the  
9 terms of the agreement provided for in this Section. ~~In order~~  
10 ~~to defer his or her continuous employment obligation, a~~  
11 ~~recipient must request the deferment in writing from the~~  
12 ~~Department. A recipient shall receive a deferment if he or she~~  
13 ~~notifies the Department, within 30 days after enlisting, that~~  
14 ~~he or she is spending up to 4 years in military service. A~~  
15 ~~recipient shall receive a deferment if he or she notifies the~~  
16 ~~Department, within 30 days after enrolling, that he or she is~~  
17 ~~enrolled in an academic program leading to a graduate degree~~  
18 ~~in nursing. The recipient must begin meeting the required~~  
19 ~~nurse educator employment obligation no later than 6 months~~  
20 ~~after the end of the deferment or deferments.~~

21       ~~Any person who fails to fulfill the nurse educator~~  
22 ~~employment obligation shall pay to the Department an amount~~  
23 ~~equal to the amount of scholarship funds received per year for~~  
24 ~~each unfulfilled year of the nurse educator employment~~  
25 ~~obligation, together with interest at 7% per year on the~~  
26 ~~unpaid balance. Payment must begin within 6 months following~~

~~the date of the occurrence initiating the repayment. All repayments must be completed within 6 years from the date of the occurrence initiating the repayment. However, this repayment obligation may be deferred and re-evaluated every 6 months when the failure to fulfill the nurse educator employment obligation results from involuntarily leaving the profession due to a decrease in the number of nurses employed in this State or when the failure to fulfill the nurse educator employment obligation results from total and permanent disability. The repayment obligation shall be excused if the failure to fulfill the nurse educator employment obligation results from the death or adjudication as incompetent of the person holding the scholarship. No claim for repayment may be filed against the estate of such a decedent or incompetent.~~

~~The Department may allow a nurse educator employment obligation fulfillment alternative if the nurse educator scholarship recipient is unsuccessful in finding work as a nurse educator. The Department shall maintain a database of all available nurse educator positions in this State.~~

(e) Each person applying for a scholarship under this Section must be provided with a copy of this Section at the time of application for the benefits of this scholarship.

(f) Rulemaking authority to implement this Act is conditioned on the rules being adopted in accordance with all provisions of the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act and all rules and procedures of the Joint Committee on

1 Administrative Rules; any purported rule not so adopted, for  
2 whatever reason, is unauthorized.

3 (Source: P.A. 102-699, eff. 4-19-22; 102-1030, eff. 5-27-22;  
4 103-154, eff. 6-30-23.)

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