

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 Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act is  
5 amended by changing Sections 5, 10, 20, and 25 and by adding  
6 Sections 8, 21, 22, and 24 as follows:

7 (110 ILCS 150/5)

8 Sec. 5. Definitions. In this Act:

9 "Community college" means a public community college in  
10 this State.

11 "State university" means a public university in this  
12 State.

13 "Transfer articulation agreement" means a formal written  
14 agreement between a community college and State university  
15 that outlines a process for the seamless transfer of credits  
16 from a community college to a State university.

17 (Source: P.A. 99-316, eff. 1-1-16.)

18 (110 ILCS 150/8 new)

19 Sec. 8. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to enhance the  
20 transfer of academic credits between community colleges and  
21 State universities in Illinois, ensuring equitable and  
22 consistent practices, reducing barriers for students, and

1 promoting accountability and transparency in transfer credit  
2 acceptance.

3 (110 ILCS 150/10)

4 Sec. 10. Associate degree for transfer.

5 (a) Commencing with the fall term of the 2016-2017  
6 academic year, a community college student who earns an  
7 associate degree for transfer, an Associate of Arts, or an  
8 Associate of Science that is consistent with degree  
9 requirements of the Illinois Community College Board and the  
10 Board of Higher Education and aligned with the policies and  
11 procedures of the Illinois Articulation Initiative, granted  
12 pursuant to subsection (b) of this Section is deemed eligible  
13 for transfer into the baccalaureate program of a State  
14 university if the student meets the requirements of the  
15 transfer degree and major-specific prerequisites and obtains a  
16 minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

17 (b) As a condition of receipt of State funds, a community  
18 college district shall develop and grant associate degrees for  
19 transfer that meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this  
20 Section. A community college district may not impose any  
21 requirements in addition to the requirements of this Section  
22 for a student to be eligible for an associate degree for  
23 transfer and subsequent admission to a State university  
24 pursuant to Section 15 of this Act without the approval of the  
25 Illinois Community College Board and the Board of Higher

1 Education.

2 (c) The General Assembly encourages a community college  
3 district to enter into transfer ~~consider the~~ articulation  
4 agreements ~~and other work~~ between the respective faculties  
5 from the affected community college and State universities in  
6 implementing the requirements of this Section.

7 (d) The General Assembly encourages community colleges to  
8 facilitate the acceptance of credits earned at other community  
9 colleges toward an associate degree for transfer pursuant to  
10 this Section.

11 (e) This Section does not preclude students who are  
12 assessed below collegiate level from acquiring remedial  
13 noncollegiate level coursework in preparation for obtaining an  
14 associate degree for transfer. Remedial noncollegiate level  
15 coursework and all other non-transfer coursework must not be  
16 counted as part of the transferable units required pursuant to  
17 subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this Section.

18 (Source: P.A. 99-316, eff. 1-1-16.)

19 (110 ILCS 150/20)

20 Sec. 20. Coursework.

21 (a) A State university may not require a student  
22 transferring pursuant to this Act to take more than 60  
23 additional semester units beyond the lower-division major  
24 requirements for majors requiring 120 semester units, provided  
25 that the student remains enrolled in the same program of study

1 and has completed university major transfer requirements.  
2 Specified high unit majors are exempt from this subsection (a)  
3 upon agreement by the board of trustees of the State  
4 university and the Board of Higher Education.

5 (b) A State university may not require students  
6 transferring pursuant to this Act to repeat courses that are  
7 articulated with those taken at the community college and  
8 counted toward an associate degree for transfer granted  
9 pursuant to Section 10 of this Act.

10 (c) ~~A The General Assembly encourages~~ State university  
11 shall universities to facilitate the seamless transfer of  
12 credits toward a baccalaureate degree pursuant to the intent  
13 of this Act.

14 (Source: P.A. 99-316, eff. 1-1-16.)

15 (110 ILCS 150/21 new)

16 Sec. 21. Community college and State university transfer  
17 articulation agreements. A State university shall, upon the  
18 request of a community college, enter into a transfer  
19 articulation agreement with the community college district to  
20 provide a seamless pathway for transfer. The community college  
21 may request to enter into multiple articulation agreements  
22 with a single State university as appropriate and requested.  
23 The agreement may include 2+2 programs designed for students  
24 to take half of a degree at the community college and the  
25 second half of the degree at the State University or 3+1

1 programs designed for students to transfer to the State  
2 university for completion of their final, senior level  
3 coursework.

4 The transfer articulation agreement shall be signed by the  
5 president or chancellor of the community college and State  
6 university and shall include all of the following:

7 (1) Identification of participating institutions or  
8 divisions of institutions that are part of the agreement.

9 The agreements may be program to program that align  
10 community college associate degree programs with  
11 comparable bachelor's degree options, major to major that  
12 align specific program coursework to external  
13 accreditation standards, or institution to institution  
14 that establish partnerships and alignment between a  
15 specific college, discipline, or program area.

16 (2) Eligibility criteria for transfer admissions  
17 including any minimum GPA requirements and prerequisites  
18 needed. Any limitations to the agreement for admission to  
19 specific academic programs shall be included.

20 (3) A timeline for timely response on applications for  
21 transferring credits.

22 (4) Identification of all fees and cost assessed  
23 during the transfer and admission process and any  
24 scholarships or financial assistance available to students  
25 participating in the articulation agreement.

26 (5) A standardized transfer credit framework for

1 general education and lower-division, major-specific  
2 courses. This framework shall clearly identify specific  
3 courses that will transfer between institutions, how many  
4 credits will transfer, which program at the State  
5 university credits will apply if applicable, and an  
6 outline of how transferred credits will count toward  
7 degree requirements.

8 (6) A clearly defined transfer pathway outlining how  
9 students at the community college can progress from their  
10 program to the corresponding program at the State  
11 university and be granted junior or senior status as  
12 appropriate.

13 (7) Guidelines for alignment of course objectives,  
14 learning outcomes, and credit hours.

15 (8) Other degree requirements, including, but not  
16 limited to, standardized test scores, required clinical  
17 hours, or residency requirements.

18 (9) A policy on the reverse transfer of credit and  
19 transfer of credit earned for experiential learning,  
20 including, but not limited to, prior learning assessment  
21 and competency-based education.

22 (10) The academic and non-academic opportunities and  
23 supports and, if applicable, guidance that will be  
24 provided to students participating in the articulation  
25 agreement.

26 (11) Data sharing requirements and limitations,

1 including if applicable, assessment policies to measure  
2 effectiveness of the agreement.

3 (12) Agreement on marketing process and  
4 responsibilities for programs covered by the articulation  
5 agreement, including any limitations imposed by either  
6 party.

7 (13) A clear and transparent process for resolving  
8 disputes over transfer credit acceptance. The agreement  
9 shall outline policies to provide students transparency in  
10 how and why credit is accepted or rejected by the State  
11 university and how and why credit is or is not applied  
12 toward degree requirements. The agreement shall also  
13 provide for a process for the student to appeal the State  
14 university's failure to accept the student's request for  
15 transfer credit.

16 (14) Dates of applicability of the agreement and  
17 conditions for renewal or termination of the agreement.

18 This agreement shall not negate any previous transfer  
19 articulation agreement a community college has developed with  
20 a State university.

21 If, within 180 calendar days of the community college's  
22 initial request to enter into a transfer articulation  
23 agreement with the State university, the community college and  
24 State university do not reach agreement on the transfer  
25 articulation agreement, then the community college and State  
26 university shall jointly implement the provisions of the Model

1 Transfer Articulation Agreement established under Section 22  
2 of this Act.

3 (110 ILCS 150/22 new)

4 Sec. 22. Model Transfer Articulation Agreement and  
5 Committee. A Model Transfer Articulation Agreement shall be  
6 developed through a Transfer Articulation Committee by  
7 December 31, 2025. The Committee shall consist of 5 members  
8 appointed by the Executive Director of the Board of Higher  
9 Education and 5 members appointed by the Executive Director of  
10 the Illinois Community College Board. The Committee shall be  
11 co-chaired by the Executive Director of the Board of Higher  
12 Education or his or her designee and the Executive Director of  
13 the Illinois Community College Board or his or her designee.  
14 The Model Transfer Articulation Agreement shall address all of  
15 the requirements set forth in Section 21. The Model Transfer  
16 Articulation Agreement shall be reviewed and updated every 5  
17 years by the Board of Higher Education and the Illinois  
18 Community College Board.

19 (110 ILCS 150/24 new)

20 Sec. 24. Transfer credit review process. Each community  
21 college and State university shall publish the institution's  
22 process and timeline for reviewing and making decisions  
23 regarding transfer credit requests on the institution's  
24 website. The institution shall update its website within 30

1 days after making a change to its process and timeline for  
2 reviewing and issuing decisions regarding transfer credit  
3 request.

4 (110 ILCS 150/25)

5 Sec. 25. Reporting requirements on course transfer ~~Board~~  
6 ~~of Higher Education reviews and reports.~~

7 (a) (Blank). ~~The Board of Higher Education shall review~~  
8 ~~the implementation of this Act and file a report on that review~~  
9 ~~with the General Assembly on or before May 31, 2017, as~~  
10 ~~provided in Section 3.1 of the General Assembly Organization~~  
11 ~~Act.~~

12 (b) (Blank). ~~The Board of Higher Education shall review~~  
13 ~~both of the following and file a report on that review with the~~  
14 ~~General Assembly within 4 years after the effective date of~~  
15 ~~this Act, as provided in Section 3.1 of the General Assembly~~  
16 ~~Organization Act:~~

17 ~~(1) The outcomes of implementation of this Act,~~  
18 ~~including, but not limited to, all of the following:~~

19 ~~(A) The number and percentage of community college~~  
20 ~~students who transferred to a State university and~~  
21 ~~earned an associate degree for transfer pursuant to~~  
22 ~~this Act.~~

23 ~~(B) The average amount of time and units it takes a~~  
24 ~~community college student earning an associate degree~~  
25 ~~for transfer pursuant to this Act to transfer to and~~

1 ~~graduate from a State university, as compared to the~~  
2 ~~average amount of time and units it took community~~  
3 ~~college transfer students prior to the implementation~~  
4 ~~of this Act and compared to students using other~~  
5 ~~transfer processes available.~~

6 ~~(C) Student progression and completion rates.~~

7 ~~(D) Other relevant indicators of student success.~~

8 ~~(E) The degree to which the requirements for an~~  
9 ~~associate degree for transfer take into account~~  
10 ~~existing articulation agreements and the degree to~~  
11 ~~which community colleges facilitate the acceptance of~~  
12 ~~credits between community college districts, as~~  
13 ~~outlined in subsections (c) and (d) of Section 10 of~~  
14 ~~this Act.~~

15 ~~(F) It is the intent of the General Assembly that~~  
16 ~~student outcome data provided under this subsection~~  
17 ~~(b) include the degree to which State universities~~  
18 ~~were able to accommodate students admitted under this~~  
19 ~~Act in being admitted to the State university of their~~  
20 ~~choice and in a major that is similar to their~~  
21 ~~community college major.~~

22 ~~(2) Recommendations for statutory changes necessary to~~  
23 ~~facilitate the goal of a clear and transparent transfer~~  
24 ~~process.~~

25 (c) By May 1, 2026, and May 1 of each subsequent year, each  
26 State university shall report to the Board of Higher

1 Education, in a form prescribed by the Board, all of the  
2 following information:

3 (1) The total number of community college transfer  
4 students admitted, offered provisional admission, and  
5 denied admission, disaggregated by the student's community  
6 college district of origin.

7 (2) The percentage and average number of credits per  
8 student accepted for transfer from each community college  
9 district.

10 (3) The average time needed to complete a bachelor's  
11 degree and total number of credit hours earned for a  
12 transfer student compared to a non-transfer, native  
13 student.

14 (4) The total number of credits accepted and applied  
15 towards meeting general education requirements that are  
16 identified as part of the Illinois Articulation Initiative  
17 General Education Core Curriculum disaggregated by the  
18 student's community college district of origin. For those  
19 courses identified as part of the General Education Core  
20 Curriculum that are denied transfer credit, including the  
21 rationale for denial.

22 (5) If the student has declared a major, the total  
23 number of credits that were accepted and not accepted and  
24 the number of credits that were applied and were not  
25 applied to each student's degree program course  
26 requirements at the time the student initially transferred

1       to and enrolled in the State University disaggregated by  
2       degree program and community college district of origin.

3       For those courses not accepted for transfer, the State  
4       university shall include the rationale for denial. For courses  
5       that are part of the Illinois Articulation Initiative Major  
6       Panels and are not accepted for equivalent major credit, the  
7       State university shall provide the reason credit was not  
8       applied to the student's degree program.

9       The Board of Higher Education shall compile and publish  
10      the information provided by each State university in an annual  
11      report by October 1, 2026, and October 1 of each subsequent  
12      year. The report shall be filed with the Governor and General  
13      Assembly and provided to the Illinois Community College Board.  
14      An electronic copy of the report shall be accessible on the  
15      Board's official website.

16      (Source: P.A. 99-316, eff. 1-1-16.)

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