

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 School Code is amended by adding Section  
5 26-20 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/26-20 new)

7 Sec. 26-20. The Chronic Absence Task Force.

8 (a) The Chronic Absence Task Force is created within the  
9 State Board of Education to study the impact of the COVID-19  
10 pandemic on chronic absence and to support the development of  
11 a State strategy to address the ongoing challenges presented  
12 by chronic absenteeism for students in early childhood  
13 education and care programs and students in grades  
14 kindergarten through 12.

15 (b) The Task Force shall consist of the following members:

16 (1) the Director of Children and Family Services or  
17 his or her designee;

18 (2) the Chairperson of the State Board of Education or  
19 his or her designee;

20 (3) the Chairperson of the Board of Higher Education  
21 or his or her designee;

22 (4) the Secretary of Human Services or his or her  
23 designee;

1           (5) the Secretary of Early Childhood or his or her  
2           designee;

3           (6) the Director of Public Health or his or her  
4           designee;

5           (7) the Chairperson of the Illinois Community College  
6           Board or his or her designee; and

7           (8) the following persons, each appointed by the State  
8           Superintendent of Education:

9                   (A) one expert in children's disabilities,  
10                   impairments, and social-emotional issues;

11                   (B) 3 educators who (i) are either teachers or  
12                   school support personnel and (ii) are currently  
13                   employed in a public school or early learning center  
14                   in this State;

15                   (C) one member who represents a non-profit  
16                   organization that advocates for students in temporary  
17                   living situations;

18                   (D) one member who represents a non-profit  
19                   organization that advocates for the well-being of all  
20                   children and families in this State;

21                   (E) one member who represents a State non-profit  
22                   organization that conducts community organizing around  
23                   family issues;

24                   (F) 2 members who each represent separate  
25                   statewide professional teachers' organizations;

26                   (G) one member who represents a professional

1 teachers' organization in a city having a population  
2 exceeding 500,000;

3 (H) one member who represents an association for  
4 school administrators;

5 (I) one member who represents an association for  
6 school board members;

7 (J) one member who represents an association for  
8 school principals;

9 (K) one member who represents an association for  
10 regional superintendents of schools;

11 (L) one member who represents an association for  
12 parents;

13 (M) one member who represents an association for  
14 high school districts;

15 (N) one member who represents an association for  
16 large unit districts;

17 (O) one member who represents an organization that  
18 advocates for healthier school environments in this  
19 State;

20 (P) one member who represents an organization that  
21 advocates for the health and safety of youth and  
22 families in this State by providing capacity-building  
23 services;

24 (Q) one member who represents a statewide  
25 association of local philanthropic organizations that  
26 advocates for effective educational, health, and human

1 service policies to improve this State's communities;

2 (R) one member who represents a statewide  
3 organization that advocates for partnerships among  
4 schools, families, and the community and that, using a  
5 school as a hub, provides access to support and  
6 removes barriers to learning and development;

7 (S) one member who represents an organization for  
8 charter schools in this State; and

9 (T) one member who represents an organization for  
10 statewide programs actively involved in truancy  
11 intervention.

12 (c) Task Force members shall serve without compensation  
13 and shall, subject to the rules of the appropriate travel  
14 control board, be reimbursed for any travel expenses from  
15 appropriations to the State Board of Education available for  
16 that purpose.

17 (d) The Task Force shall meet initially at the call of the  
18 State Superintendent of Education. The members shall elect a  
19 chairperson at the initial meeting of the Task Force. For  
20 every meeting after the initial meeting, the Task Force shall  
21 meet at the call of the chairperson.

22 (e) The State Board of Education shall provide  
23 administrative support to the Task Force.

24 (f) The Task Force shall hold hearings on a periodic basis  
25 to receive testimony from the public regarding the chronic  
26 absence of students.

1       (g) The Task Force shall identify strategies, mechanisms,  
2       and approaches to help families, educators, principals,  
3       superintendents, and the State Board of Education address and  
4       mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the chronic  
5       absence of students in early childhood education and care  
6       programs and students in grades kindergarten through 12 and  
7       shall recommend the following to the General Assembly and the  
8       State Board of Education:

9               (1) a coherent State strategy for addressing the high  
10              rates of chronic absenteeism in this State;

11              (2) State goals for a reduction in chronic  
12              absenteeism;

13              (3) recommendations related to current State Board of  
14              Education policies regarding chronic absence, truancy, and  
15              attendance;

16              (4) State policies or initiatives to be established in  
17              order to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on chronic  
18              absenteeism; and

19              (5) evidence-based practices for using attendance and  
20              chronic absenteeism data to create a multi-tiered system  
21              of support that promotes ongoing professional development  
22              and equips school-based and community-based personnel with  
23              the skills and knowledge necessary to reduce contributing  
24              factors to chronic absenteeism in early childhood  
25              education and care programs and elementary and secondary  
26              schools, which will result in students being ready for

1       college and a career.

2       (h) The Task Force shall submit an annual report to the  
3       General Assembly and the State Board of Education no later  
4       than December 15 of each year.

5       (i) The Task Force is dissolved and this Section is  
6       repealed on December 16, 2027.

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