

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, 8, 10, 20, and 25 and by adding
6 Sections 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 district, 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 between the State university and the community
24 college district may include 2+2 programs, which are designed
25 for students to take half of a degree at the community college

1 and the second half of the degree at the State university, or
2 3+1 programs, which are designed for students to transfer to
3 the State university for completion of their final,
4 senior-level coursework.

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

9 (1) A statement identifying the participating
10 institutions or divisions of institutions that are part of
11 the agreement. The agreements may be program-to-program
12 agreements that align community college associate degree
13 programs with comparable bachelor's degree options,
14 major-to-major agreements that align specific program
15 coursework to external accreditation standards, or
16 institution-to-institution agreements that establish
17 partnerships and alignment between a specific college,
18 discipline, or program area.

19 (2) A list of the eligibility criteria for transfer
20 admissions, including any minimum GPA requirements and
21 prerequisites needed. Any limitations to the agreement for
22 admission to specific academic programs shall also be
23 included.

24 (3) A timeline for timely response on applications for
25 transferring credits.

26 (4) A list of all fees and costs assessed during the

1 transfer and admission process and any scholarships or
2 financial assistance available to students participating
3 in the articulation agreement.

4 (5) A standardized transfer credit framework for
5 general education and lower-division, major-specific
6 courses, which clearly identify specific courses that will
7 transfer between institutions, the number of credits that
8 will transfer, the program at the State university to
9 which credits will apply, if applicable, and an outline of
10 how transferred credits will be applied toward degree
11 requirements.

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

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

19 (8) Other degree requirements, including, but not
20 limited to, standardized test scores, required clinical
21 hours, or residency requirements.

22 (9) A policy on the reverse transfer of credit and
23 transfer of credit earned for experiential learning,
24 including, but not limited to, prior learning assessment
25 and competency-based education.

26 (10) The academic and non-academic opportunities and

1 supports and, if applicable, guidance that will be
2 provided to students participating in the articulation
3 agreement.

4 (11) Data-sharing requirements and limitations,
5 including, if applicable, assessment policies to measure
6 effectiveness of the agreement.

7 (12) An agreement on the marketing process and
8 responsibilities for programs covered by the articulation
9 agreement, including any limitations imposed by either
10 party.

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

20 (14) Dates of applicability of the agreement and
21 conditions for renewal or termination of the agreement.

22 An agreement executed under this Section shall not negate
23 any previous transfer articulation agreement a community
24 college has developed with a State university.

25 If, within 180 calendar days of the community college's
26 initial request to enter into a transfer articulation

1 agreement with the State university, the community college and
2 State university do not reach agreement on the transfer
3 articulation agreement, then the community college and State
4 university shall jointly implement the provisions of the Model
5 Transfer Articulation Agreement established under Section 22
6 of this Act.

7 (110 ILCS 150/22 new)

8 Sec. 22. Model Transfer Articulation Agreement and
9 Committee. A Model Transfer Articulation Agreement shall be
10 developed through a Transfer Articulation Committee by March
11 31, 2026. The Committee shall consist of 5 members appointed
12 by the Executive Director of the Board of Higher Education and
13 5 members appointed by the Executive Director of the Illinois
14 Community College Board. The Committee shall be co-chaired by
15 the Executive Director of the Board of Higher Education or his
16 or her designee and the Executive Director of the Illinois
17 Community College Board or his or her designee. The Model
18 Transfer Articulation Agreement shall address all of the
19 requirements set forth in Section 21. The Model Transfer
20 Articulation Agreement shall be reviewed and updated every 5
21 years by the Board of Higher Education and the Illinois
22 Community College Board.

23 (110 ILCS 150/24 new)

24 Sec. 24. Transfer credit review process. Each community

1 college and State university shall publish the institution's
2 process and a timeline for reviewing and making decisions
3 regarding transfer credit requests on the institution's
4 website. The institution shall update its website within 30
5 days after making a change to its process and timeline for
6 reviewing and issuing decisions regarding transfer credit
7 request.

8 (110 ILCS 150/25)

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

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

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

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

23 ~~(A) The number and percentage of community college~~
24 ~~students who transferred to a State university and~~
25 ~~earned an associate degree for transfer pursuant to~~

1 ~~this Act.~~

2 ~~(B) The average amount of time and units it takes a~~
3 ~~community college student earning an associate degree~~
4 ~~for transfer pursuant to this Act to transfer to and~~
5 ~~graduate from a State university, as compared to the~~
6 ~~average amount of time and units it took community~~
7 ~~college transfer students prior to the implementation~~
8 ~~of this Act and compared to students using other~~
9 ~~transfer processes available.~~

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

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

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

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

26 ~~(2) Recommendations for statutory changes necessary to~~

1 ~~facilitate the goal of a clear and transparent transfer~~
2 ~~process.~~

3 (c) By May 1, 2027, and May 1 of each subsequent year, each
4 State university shall report to the Board of Higher
5 Education, in a form prescribed by the Board, all of the
6 following information:

7 (1) The total number of community college transfer
8 students admitted, offered provisional admission, and
9 denied admission, disaggregated by the student's community
10 college district of origin.

11 (2) Of the students admitted, the total number of
12 credits presented for transfer and the percentage and
13 number of credits accepted for transfer from each
14 community college district.

15 (3) For credits that are denied, the reason for denial
16 and whether those courses are part of the Illinois
17 Articulation Initiative General Education Core Curriculum.

18 (4) Of the credits accepted in paragraph (2), the
19 total number applied toward the University's meeting
20 general education requirements that are identified as part
21 of the Illinois Articulation Initiative General Education
22 Core Curriculum disaggregated by the student's community
23 college district of origin. For those courses identified
24 as part of the General Education Core Curriculum that are
25 denied transfer credit, including the rationale for
26 denial.

1 (5) If the student has declared a major, the total
2 number of degree program credits that were applied as
3 elective credit, applied as major equivalent credit, or
4 not applied disaggregated by degree program and community
5 college district of origin.

6 For any courses where credit is not applied,
7 identification if they are or are not part of the Illinois
8 Articulation Initiative Major Panels and the rationale for
9 denying the application of credit.

10 The Board of Higher Education shall publish an analysis
11 and report of the information provided by the State
12 universities annually by October 1, 2027, and October 1 of
13 each subsequent year. The report shall be filed with the
14 Governor and General Assembly. An electronic copy of the
15 report shall be accessible on the 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.