

1 AN ACT concerning higher education scholarships.

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

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Higher Education Scholarship Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. In this Act:

7 "Commission" means the Illinois Student Assistance
8 Commission.

9 "Eligible high school" means:

- 10 (1) a public high school located in Illinois;
- 11 (2) a private school located in Illinois where
12 children are taught the branches of education taught to
13 children of corresponding age and grade in public high
14 schools in Illinois and which has been recognized by the
15 Commission; or
- 16 (3) a public or private secondary school located in
17 another state and accredited by one of the following
18 regional agencies:

19 (A) The Southern Association of Colleges and
20 Schools.

21 (B) The New England Association of Schools and
22 Colleges.

23 (C) The Middle States Association of Colleges
24 and Schools.

25 (D) The North Central Association of Colleges
26 and Schools.

27 (E) The Northwestern Association of Schools
28 and Colleges.

29 (F) The Western Association of Schools and
30 Colleges.

31 "Freshman student" means a student at an institution of

1 higher education who has attempted less than 31 semester
2 hours.

3 "Grade point average" means the numbered grade average
4 calculated using a 4.0 scale.

5 "Institution of higher education" means a community
6 college, college, or university, whether public or private,
7 located in this State.

8 "Junior student" means a student at an institution of
9 higher education who has attempted at least 61 semester hours
10 but less than 91 semester hours.

11 "Mandatory fees" means fees approved by the Illinois
12 Student Assistance Commission that are charged by an
13 institution of higher education to every student enrolled in
14 that institution of higher education, regardless of the
15 student's program of study.

16 "Matriculated status" means being recognized as a student
17 in a defined program of study leading to a degree at an
18 institution of higher education.

19 "Scholarship" means the scholarship awarded under this
20 Act.

21 "Semester hours" includes each semester hour attempted,
22 whether remedial or for credit toward a degree, but shall not
23 include any semester hour attempted before graduating from
24 high school or earning a general educational development
25 (GED) equivalency diploma.

26 "Senior student" means a student at an institution of
27 higher education who has attempted at least 91 semester hours
28 but less than 128 semester hours.

29 "Sophomore student" means a student at an institution of
30 higher education who has attempted at least 31 semester hours
31 but less than 61 semester hours.

32 "Title IV" means Title IV of the Higher Education Act of
33 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C.A. Sec. 1070, et seq.).

1 Section 10. Ineligibility for scholarship. A student is
2 ineligible for a scholarship under this Act if the student:

3 (1) is not a United States citizen or a permanent
4 resident alien who meets the definition of an eligible
5 noncitizen under federal Title IV requirements;

6 (2) is in default on a federal Title IV educational
7 loan or a State of Illinois educational loan, provided
8 that a student who is otherwise eligible and has fully
9 repaid the defaulted loan shall be eligible to obtain a
10 scholarship for future academic terms but not
11 retroactively;

12 (3) owes a refund on a federal Title IV student
13 financial aid program or an Illinois student financial
14 aid program, provided that a student who is otherwise
15 eligible and has fully paid the refund owed shall be
16 eligible to obtain a scholarship for future academic
17 terms but not retroactively; or

18 (4) does not meet each qualification listed under
19 Section 15, 20, 25, or 30 of this Act applicable to the
20 student.

21 Section 15. Freshman eligibility for scholarship. To be
22 eligible for a scholarship, an entering freshman student
23 seeking a degree at an institution of higher education shall:

24 (1) Meet residency requirements by meeting the
25 requirements to be classified as a legal resident of
26 Illinois as established by the program rules promulgated
27 by the Commission, which shall be based upon the in-state
28 tuition policy of the governing board of the institution
29 of higher education in which the student is enrolled;

30 (2) Meet achievement standards by having graduated
31 from an eligible high school with a cumulative grade
32 point average of at least 3.0 while meeting the
33 curriculum requirements of his or her program of study,

1 or, in the case of a student who is otherwise qualified
2 but did not graduate from an eligible high school, by
3 earning a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0
4 at an institution of higher education at the end of the
5 semester in which the student has attempted 30 semester
6 hours, provided that the student shall be eligible to
7 receive a retroactive scholarship for the student's
8 freshman year to be paid at the end of the freshman year;
9 and

10 (3) Meet enrollment standards by being admitted,
11 enrolled, and classified as an undergraduate student in a
12 matriculated status.

13 Section 20. Sophomore eligibility for scholarship. To be
14 eligible for a scholarship, a sophomore student seeking a
15 degree at an institution of higher education shall:

16 (1) Meet residency requirements by meeting the
17 requirements to be classified as a legal resident of
18 Illinois as established by the program rules promulgated
19 by the Commission, which shall be based upon the in-state
20 tuition policy of the governing board of the institution
21 of higher education in which the student is enrolled;

22 (2) Meet achievement standards by meeting the
23 following criteria:

24 (A) Earning a cumulative grade point average of
25 at least 3.0 at an institution of higher education
26 at the end of the semester in which the student has
27 attempted 30 semester hours; and

28 (B) Maintaining satisfactory academic progress
29 in a course of study in accordance with the
30 standards and practices used for federal Title IV
31 programs by the institution of higher education in
32 which the student is enrolled; and

33 (3) Meet enrollment standards by being admitted,

1 enrolled, and classified as an undergraduate student in a
2 matriculated status.

3 Section 25. Junior eligibility for scholarship. To be
4 eligible for a scholarship, a junior student seeking a degree
5 at an institution of higher education shall:

6 (1) Meet residency requirements by meeting the
7 requirements to be classified as a legal resident of
8 Illinois as established by the program rules promulgated
9 by the Commission, which shall be based upon the in-state
10 tuition policy of the governing board of the institution
11 of higher education in which the student is enrolled;

12 (2) Meet achievement standards by meeting the
13 following criteria:

14 (A) Earning a cumulative grade point average
15 of at least 3.0 at an institution of higher
16 education at the end of the semester in which the
17 student has attempted 60 semester hours; and

18 (B) Maintaining satisfactory academic progress
19 in a course of study in accordance with the
20 standards and practices used for federal Title IV
21 programs by the institution of higher education in
22 which the student is enrolled; and

23 (3) Meet enrollment standards by being admitted,
24 enrolled, and classified as an undergraduate student in a
25 matriculated status.

26 Section 30. Senior eligibility for scholarship. To be
27 eligible for a scholarship, a senior student seeking a degree
28 at an institution of higher education shall:

29 (1) Meet residency requirements by meeting the
30 requirements to be classified as a legal resident of
31 Illinois as established by the program rules promulgated
32 by the Commission, which shall be based upon the in-state

1 tuition policy of the governing board of the institution
2 of higher education in which the student is enrolled;

3 (2) Meet achievement standards by meeting the
4 following criteria:

5 (A) Meeting all achievement standards for
6 scholarship eligibility in his or her junior year;

7 (B) Earning a cumulative grade point average
8 of at least 3.0 at an institution of higher
9 education at the end of the semester in which the
10 student has attempted 90 semester hours; and

11 (C) Maintaining satisfactory academic progress
12 in a course of study in accordance with the
13 standards and practices used for federal Title IV
14 programs by the institution of higher education in
15 which the student is enrolled; and

16 (3) Meet enrollment standards by being admitted,
17 enrolled, and classified as an undergraduate student in a
18 matriculated status.

19 Section 35. Cessation of eligibility.

20 (a) A student who fails to maintain a cumulative grade
21 point average of at least 3.0 at the end of the semester in
22 which the student has attempted 30 semester hours may attend
23 the next 30 semester hours without a scholarship. An
24 otherwise eligible student who regains a cumulative grade
25 point average of at least 3.0 at the end of the semester in
26 which the student has attempted 60 semester hours may
27 requalify for a scholarship.

28 (b) For students eligible for a scholarship under this
29 Act, no minimum number of hours of enrollment is required.

30 (c) Except as set out in subsection (d) of this Section,
31 a student may receive the scholarship until the first of
32 these events:

33 (1) The student has earned a baccalaureate degree;

1 or

2 (2) The student has attempted at any institution of
3 higher education a total of 127 semester hours.

4 (d) A student enrolled in an undergraduate degree
5 program designed to be more than 127 semester hours in length
6 is eligible to receive the scholarship for the lesser of:

7 (1) A total of 150 attempted semester hours; or

8 (2) The number of hours required for graduation if
9 the student has a cumulative grade point average of at
10 least 3.0 after the semester in which the student
11 attempted 127 semester hours.

12 Section 37. Condition for receipt of scholarship. As a
13 condition for receiving a scholarship under this Act, a
14 student must certify that he or she has applied for other
15 federal and State grants.

16 Section 40. Scholarship amount. Subject to the amounts
17 appropriated by the General Assembly, a scholarship awarded
18 under this Act shall include (i) for a public institution of
19 higher education, tuition and approved mandatory fees or (ii)
20 for a private institution of higher education, tuition and
21 approved mandatory fees in an amount not to exceed the
22 maximum amount allowed to be awarded each academic year under
23 Section 35 of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act.
24 However, a scholarship may be applied only to tuition and
25 mandatory fees not covered by any federal grant.

26 Section 990. Rules. The Commission is authorized to
27 promulgate rules not inconsistent with this Act relating to
28 scholarships described in this Act.

29 Section 995. Funding. The funding for the scholarships
30 described in this Act shall be subject to annual

1 appropriations enacted by the General Assembly, which shall
2 establish the total amount of funding for these scholarships.

3 Section 999. Effective date. This Act takes effect on
4 July 1, 2004.