

AN ACT concerning education.

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

Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Section 2-3.66b as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.66b new)

Sec. 2-3.66b. IHOPE Program.

(a) There is established the Illinois Hope and Opportunity Pathways through Education (IHOPE) Program. The State Board of Education shall implement and administer the IHOPE Program. The goal of the IHOPE Program is to develop a comprehensive system in this State to re-enroll significant numbers of high school dropouts in programs that will enable them to earn their high school diploma.

(b) The IHOPE Program shall award grants, subject to appropriation for this purpose, to educational service regions and a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code from appropriated funds to assist in establishing instructional programs and other services designed to re-enroll high school dropouts. From any funds appropriated for the IHOPE Program, the State Board of Education may use up to 5% for administrative costs, including the performance of a program evaluation and the hiring of staff to implement and

administer the program.

The IHOPE Program shall provide incentive grant funds for regional offices of education and a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code to develop partnerships with school districts, public community colleges, and community groups to build comprehensive plans to re-enroll high school dropouts in their regions or districts.

Programs funded through the IHOPE Program shall allow high school dropouts, up to and including age 21 notwithstanding Section 26-2 of this Code, to re-enroll in an educational program in conformance with rules adopted by the State Board of Education. Programs may include without limitation comprehensive year-round programming, evening school, summer school, community college courses, adult education, vocational training, work experience, programs to enhance self-concept, and parenting courses. Any student in the IHOPE Program who wishes to earn a high school diploma must meet the prerequisites to receiving a high school diploma specified in Section 27-22 of this Code and any other graduation requirements of the student's district of residence. Any student who successfully completes the requirements for his or her graduation shall receive a diploma identifying the student as graduating from his or her district of residence.

(c) In order to be eligible for funding under the IHOPE Program, an interested regional office of education or a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code shall develop

an IHOPE Plan to be approved by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall develop rules for the IHOPE Program that shall set forth the requirements for the development of the IHOPE Plan. Each Plan shall involve school districts, public community colleges, and key community programs that work with high school dropouts located in an educational service region or the City of Chicago before the Plan is sent to the State Board for approval. No funds may be distributed to a regional office of education or a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code until the State Board has approved the Plan.

(d) A regional office of education or a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code may operate its own program funded by the IHOPE Program or enter into a contract with other not-for-profit entities, including school districts, public community colleges, and not-for-profit community-based organizations, to operate a program.

A regional office of education or a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code that receives an IHOPE grant from the State Board of Education may provide funds under a sub-grant, as specified in the IHOPE Plan, to other not-for-profit entities to provide services according to the IHOPE Plan that was developed. These other entities may include school districts, public community colleges, or not-for-profit community-based organizations or a cooperative partnership among these entities.

(e) In order to distribute funding based upon the need to ensure delivery of programs that will have the greatest impact, IHOPE Program funding must be distributed based upon the proportion of dropouts in the educational service region or school district, in the case of a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code, to the total number of dropouts in this State. This formula shall employ the dropout data provided by school districts to the State Board of Education.

A regional office of education or a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code may claim State aid under Section 18-8.05 of this Code for students enrolled in a program funded by the IHOPE Program, provided that the State Board of Education has approved the IHOPE Plan and that these students are receiving services that are meeting the requirements of Section 27-22 of this Code for receipt of a high school diploma and are otherwise eligible to be claimed for general State aid under Section 18-8.05 of this Code, including provisions related to the minimum number of days of pupil attendance pursuant to Section 10-19 of this Code and the minimum number of daily hours of school work and any exceptions thereto as defined by the State Board of Education in rules.

(f) IHOPE categories of programming may include the following:

(1) Full-time programs that are comprehensive, year-round programs.

(2) Part-time programs combining work and study

scheduled at various times that are flexible to the needs of students.

(3) Online programs and courses in which students take courses and complete on-site, supervised tests that measure the student's mastery of a specific course needed for graduation. Students may take courses online and earn credit or students may prepare to take supervised tests for specific courses for credit leading to receipt of a high school diploma.

(4) Dual enrollment in which students attend high school classes in combination with community college classes or students attend community college classes while simultaneously earning high school credit and eventually a high school diploma.

(g) In order to have successful comprehensive programs re-enrolling and graduating low-skilled high school dropouts, programs funded through the IHOPE Program shall include all of the following components:

(1) Small programs (70 to 100 students) at a separate school site with a distinct identity. Programs may be larger with specific need and justification, keeping in mind that it is crucial to keep programs small to be effective.

(2) Specific performance-based goals and outcomes and measures of enrollment, attendance, skills, credits, graduation, and the transition to college, training, and

employment.

(3) Strong, experienced leadership and teaching staff who are provided with ongoing professional development.

(4) Voluntary enrollment.

(5) High standards for student learning, integrating work experience, and education, including during the school year and after school, and summer school programs that link internships, work, and learning.

(6) Comprehensive programs providing extensive support services.

(7) Small teams of students supported by full-time paid mentors who work to retain and help those students graduate.

(8) A comprehensive technology learning center with Internet access and broad-based curriculum focusing on academic and career subject areas.

(9) Learning opportunities that incorporate action into study.

(h) Programs funded through the IHOPE Program must report data to the State Board of Education as requested. This information shall include, but is not limited to, student enrollment figures, attendance information, course completion data, graduation information, and post-graduation information, as available.

(i) Rules must be developed by the State Board of Education to set forth the fund distribution process to regional offices

Public Act 096-0106

SB1796 Enrolled

LRB096 10970 NHT 21240 b

of education and a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code, the planning and the conditions upon which an IHOPE Plan would be approved by State Board, and other rules to develop the IHOPE Program.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1, 2009.