

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 2-3.173 and by changing Section 27-22.05 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.173 new)

Sec. 2-3.173. Registered apprenticeship program.

(a) In this Section, "registered apprenticeship program" means an industry-based occupational training program of study with standards reviewed and approved by the United States Department of Labor that meets each of the following characteristics:

(1) Apprentices in the program are at all times employed by a company participating in the program.

(2) The program features a structured combination of on-the-job learning supported by related technical classroom instruction, met either by a high school or a public community college.

(3) Apprentices in the program are paid a training wage of not less than the State minimum wage, which escalates throughout the life of the apprenticeship, and employment is continued with the company following conclusion of the apprenticeship for a period of not less than 2 years.

(4) Apprentices in the program earn an industry-related occupational skills certificate and a high school diploma.

(5) Apprentices in the program may earn postsecondary credit toward a certificate or degree, as applicable. "Registered apprenticeship program" does not include an apprenticeship program related to construction, as defined under the Employee Classification Act.

(b) No later than 6 months after the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 100th General Assembly, the State Board of Education shall initiate a rulemaking proceeding to adopt rules as may be necessary to allow students of any high school in this State who are 16 years of age or older to participate in registered apprenticeship programs. The rules shall include the waiver of all non-academic requirements mandated for graduation from a high school under this Code that would otherwise prohibit or prevent a student from participating in a registered apprenticeship program.

(105 ILCS 5/27-22.05)

Sec. 27-22.05. Required course substitute. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article or this Code, a school board that maintains any of grades 9 through 12 is authorized to adopt a policy under which a student who is enrolled in any of those grades may satisfy one or more high school course or graduation requirements, including, but not limited to, any

requirements under Sections 27-6 and 27-22, by successfully completing a registered apprenticeship program under rules adopted by the State Board of Education under Section 2-3.173 of this Code, or by substituting for and successfully completing in place of the high school course or graduation requirement a related vocational or technical education course. A vocational or technical education course shall not qualify as a related vocational or technical education course within the meaning of this Section unless it contains at least 50% of the content of the required course or graduation requirement for which it is substituted, as determined by the State Board of Education in accordance with standards that it shall adopt and uniformly apply for purposes of this Section. No vocational or technical education course may be substituted for a required course or graduation requirement under any policy adopted by a school board as authorized in this Section unless the pupil's parent or guardian first requests the substitution and approves it in writing on forms that the school district makes available for purposes of this Section.

(Source: P.A. 88-269.)

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