

AN ACT regarding 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 changing Section 3-15.12 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/3-15.12) (from Ch. 122, par. 3-15.12)

Sec. 3-15.12. High school equivalency testing program. The regional superintendent of schools shall make available for qualified individuals residing within the region a High School Equivalency Testing Program. For that purpose the regional superintendent alone or with other regional superintendents may establish and supervise a testing center or centers to administer the secure forms of the high school level Test of General Educational Development to qualified persons. Such centers shall be under the supervision of the regional superintendent in whose region such centers are located, subject to the approval of the President of the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Superintendent of Education~~.

An individual is eligible to apply to the regional superintendent of schools for the region in which he resides if he is: (a) a person who is 18 years of age or older, has maintained residence in the State of Illinois and is not a high school graduate, but whose high school class has graduated; (b) a member of the armed forces of the United States on active duty who is 17 years of age or older and who is stationed in Illinois or is a legal resident of Illinois; (c) a ward of the Department of Corrections who is 17 years of age or older or an inmate confined in any branch of the Illinois State Penitentiary or in a county correctional facility who is 17 years of age or older; (d) a female who is 17 years of age or older who is unable to attend school because she is either pregnant or the mother of one or more children; (e) a male 17

years of age or older who is unable to attend school because he is a father of one or more children; (f) a person who is successfully completing an alternative education program under Section 2-3.81, Article 13A, or Article 13B; (g) a person who is enrolled in a youth education program sponsored by the Illinois National Guard; or (h) a person who is 17 years of age or older who has been a dropout for a period of at least one year. For purposes of this Section, residence is that abode which the applicant considers his home. Applicants may provide as sufficient proof of such residence a picture identification card and two pieces of correctly addressed and postmarked mail. Such regional superintendent shall determine if the applicant meets statutory and regulatory state standards. If qualified the applicant shall at the time of such application pay a fee established by the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Board of Education~~, which fee shall be paid into a special fund under the control and supervision of the regional superintendent. Such moneys received by the regional superintendent shall be used, first, for the expenses incurred in administering and scoring the examination, and next for other educational programs that are developed and designed by the regional superintendent of schools to assist those who successfully complete the high school level test of General Education Development in furthering their academic development or their ability to secure and retain gainful employment, including programs for the competitive award based on test scores of college or adult education scholarship grants or similar educational incentives. Any excess moneys shall be paid into the institute fund.

Any applicant who has achieved the minimum passing standards as established by the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Board of Education~~ shall be notified in writing by the regional superintendent and shall be issued a high school equivalency certificate on the forms provided by the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Superintendent of Education~~. The regional superintendent shall then certify to the Illinois

~~Community College Board Office of the State Superintendent of Education~~ the score of the applicant and such other and additional information that may be required by the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Superintendent of Education~~. The moneys received therefrom shall be used in the same manner as provided for in this Section.

Any applicant who has attained the age of 18 years and maintained residence in the State of Illinois and is not a high school graduate but whose high school class has graduated, ~~or~~ any ward of the Department of Corrections who has attained the age of 17 years, any inmate confined in any branch of the Illinois State Penitentiary or in a county correctional facility who has attained the age of 17 years, ~~or~~ any member of the armed forces of the United States on active duty who has attained the age of 17 years and who is stationed in Illinois or is a legal resident of Illinois, ~~or~~ any female who has attained the age of 17 years and is either pregnant or the mother of one or more children, ~~or~~ any male who has attained the age of 17 years and is the father of one or more children, or any person who has successfully completed an alternative education program under Section 2-3.81, Article 13A, or Article 13B ~~and meets the requirements prescribed by the State Board of Education,~~ is eligible to apply for a high school equivalency certificate (if he or she meets the requirements prescribed by the Illinois Community College Board) upon showing evidence that he or she has completed, successfully, the high school level General Educational Development Tests, administered by the United States Armed Forces Institute, official GED Centers established in other states, or at Veterans' Administration Hospitals or the office of the State Superintendent of Education administered for the Illinois State Penitentiary System and the Department of Corrections. Such applicant shall apply to the regional superintendent of the region wherein he has maintained residence, and upon payment of a fee established by the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Board of Education~~ the regional superintendent shall issue a high school

equivalency certificate, and immediately thereafter certify to the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Superintendent of Education~~ the score of the applicant and such other and additional information as may be required by the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Superintendent of Education~~.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section, any applicant who has been out of school for at least one year may request the regional superintendent of schools to administer the restricted GED test upon written request of: The director of a program who certifies to the Chief Examiner of an official GED center that the applicant has completed a program of instruction provided by such agencies as the Job Corps, the Postal Service Academy or apprenticeship training program; an employer or program director for purposes of entry into apprenticeship programs; another State Department of Education in order to meet regulations established by that Department of Education, a post high school educational institution for purposes of admission, the Department of Professional Regulation for licensing purposes, or the Armed Forces for induction purposes. The regional superintendent shall administer such test and the applicant shall be notified in writing that he is eligible to receive the Illinois High School Equivalency Certificate upon reaching age 18, provided he meets the standards established by the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Board of Education~~.

Any test administered under this Section to an applicant who does not speak and understand English may at the discretion of the administering agency be given and answered in any language in which the test is printed. The regional superintendent of schools may waive any fees required by this Section in case of hardship.

In counties of over 3,000,000 population a GED certificate ~~issued on or after July 1, 1994~~ shall contain the signatures of the President of the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Superintendent of Education~~, the superintendent, president or other chief executive officer of the institution where GED

instruction occurred and any other signatures authorized by the Illinois Community College Board ~~State Superintendent of Education~~.

The regional superintendent of schools shall furnish the Illinois Community College Board with any information that the Illinois Community College Board requests with regard to testing and certificates under this Section.

(Source: P.A. 92-42, eff. 1-1-02.)

Section 10. The Public Community College Act is amended by adding Sections 2-21 and 2-22 as follows:

(110 ILCS 805/2-21 new)

Sec. 2-21. High school equivalency testing. On the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 94th General Assembly, all powers and duties of the State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Education with regard to high school equivalency testing under the School Code shall be transferred to the Illinois Community College Board. Within a reasonable period of time after that date, all assets, liabilities, contracts, property, records, pending business, and unexpended appropriations of the State Board of Education with regard to high school equivalency testing shall be transferred to the Illinois Community College Board. The Illinois Community College Board may adopt any rules necessary to carry out its responsibilities under the School Code with regard to high school equivalency testing. All rules, standards, and procedures adopted by the State Board of Education under the School Code with regard to high school equivalency testing shall continue in effect as the rules, standards, and procedures of the Illinois Community College Board, until they are modified by the Illinois Community College Board.

(110 ILCS 805/2-22 new)

Sec. 2-22. High school equivalency certificates. On the

effective date of this amendatory Act of the 94th General Assembly, all powers and duties of the State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Education with regard to high school equivalency certificates under the School Code shall be transferred to the Illinois Community College Board. Within a reasonable period of time after that date, all assets, liabilities, contracts, property, records, pending business, and unexpended appropriations of the State Board of Education with regard to high school equivalency certificates shall be transferred to the Illinois Community College Board. The Illinois Community College Board may adopt any rules necessary to carry out its responsibilities under the School Code with regard to high school equivalency certificates and to carry into efficient and uniform effect the provisions for the issuance of high school equivalency certificates in this State. All rules, standards, and procedures adopted by the State Board of Education under the School Code with regard to high school equivalency certificates shall continue in effect as the rules, standards, and procedures of the Illinois Community College Board, until they are modified by the Illinois Community College Board.

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.34 rep.) (from Ch. 122, par. 2-3.34)

Section 15. The School Code is amended by repealing Section 2-3.34.

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