



Illinois Policy Legislative Summary

A comprehensive outline of legislative action taken during the 2023 legislative session that has impact for the state's youngest children, their families and those who serve them

2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

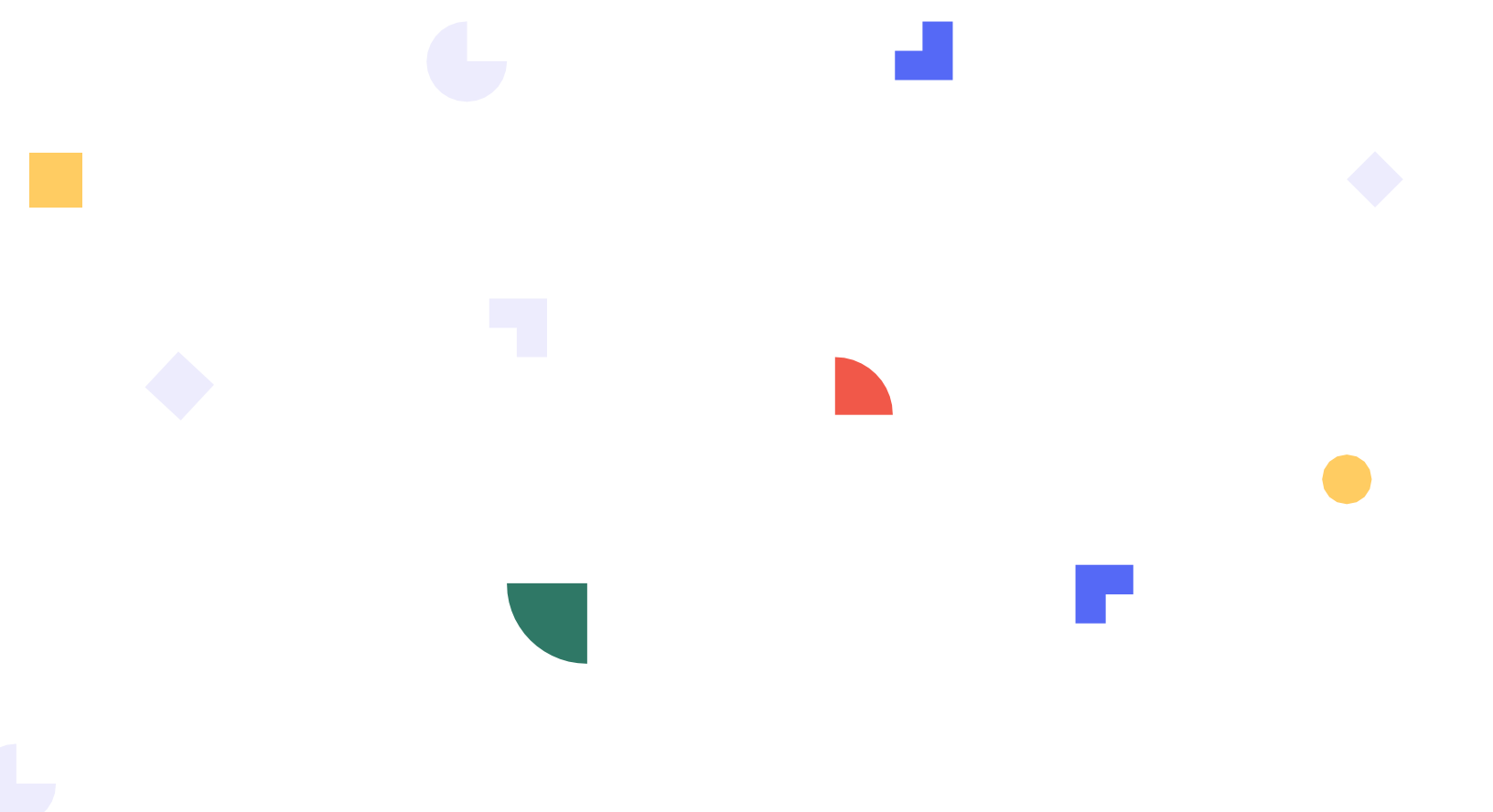


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Start Early's Illinois Policy Agenda

Our vision is for Illinois' early childhood system to be designed, implemented and sustained to successfully achieve Illinois' goal of equitably providing a continuum of high-quality early childhood services to children before birth and through age 5. To best support all of our state's families, services must be culturally, linguistically and ability responsive. Our work is cemented in our commitment to advancing racial equity and heavily informed by research, practice and the lived experiences of the families and professionals we serve at Start Early.

Our latest [Illinois Policy Agenda for Fiscal Year 2024 – Fiscal Year 2027](#), lays out our vision for policy and systems change that will promote access to quality early care and learning programs and services and effectively meet the needs of the children and families who need them most. Below, we share the Illinois Policy Team's key goals for the next four years.

1. Strong infrastructure
2. Well-designed and administered programs and services
3. Thriving, representative workforce
4. Healthy, safe & economically secure families

As outlined in our policy agenda, we will continue to work broadly across child- and family-serving systems to influence policy change and drive investments that help us reach our goals. We also commit to advancing policy change through systems building; thought partnership/leadership and consultation; coalition and partnership efforts; administrative advocacy, legislative advocacy and outreach and engagement.

Incorporated in our policy agenda are objectives that support the work of:

- [Start Early's Policy Agenda](#), which articulates our views on critical early childhood issues and the policy levers we aim to pull at the *community, state and federal levels* across three areas: next-generation program quality; building connected, comprehensive and equitable systems; and elevating family voice and the role of families
- [Raising Illinois](#), a collective effort to support infants and toddlers through high-quality health care, quality learning experiences and economic security
- Illinois Commission on Equitable Funding for Early Childhood Education and Care, which released a [comprehensive report](#) outlining recommendations for improving and transforming the states early education system

Legislative action aligned with the three above initiatives is notated – example below – throughout this document. This summary represents Start Early-led legislation (which is notated with *) and other legislative changes led by legislators, advocacy partners, state agencies and others.

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Raising Illinois Agenda

Funding Commission Report

All legislative action included in this summary will impact the early childhood education and care infrastructure, design and administration of programs and services, workforce, and health, safety, and economic security of families. Families, early childhood professionals and organizations supporting children and families are welcome to use this information to support and inform their day-to-day professional functions and livelihoods. The measures will be organized according to the following categories:

1. Early Childhood and General Education
2. Human Services
3. Child Welfare and Safety
4. Health and Mental Health
5. Nutrition
6. Workforce and Professional Development/Higher Education

Executive Summary

At the end of May, 2023, the Illinois General Assembly approved the state's Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 2024) spending plan, which contains historic investments in the early care and education system, including proposed measures outlined in Governor J.B. Pritzker's multi-year *Smart Start Illinois* plan.

Start Early is thrilled that the [final budget](#) contains nearly \$300 million in new state funding for child care, preschool, home visiting, the Early Intervention (EI) program and inclusion supports for preschoolers with disabilities and developmental delays.

"Today is a remarkable day for young Illinoisans and their families," Start Early Vice President of Illinois Policy Ireta Gasner said. *"The General Assembly passed a budget that directs significant state funding to a set of bedrock early childhood programs families know, benefit from and love. We thank the legislature for funding the first year of Governor Pritzker's Smart Start Illinois plan, and we stand ready to work with the administration and the General Assembly to continue building and strengthening the early childhood system Illinois children and families deserve."*

With these dollars, more families will gain the access they need to critical early learning programs, and many in the early childhood workforce will see long-overdue increases in pay. Early Intervention providers, for instance, will receive a 10% rate increase come July 1, 2023, and the administration has promised to issue grants to child care providers that will allow them to increase salaries for teachers and staff. The state will also have new resources to further strengthen and expand its nation-leading system of home visiting services. Along with the creation of thousands of new preschool slots in schools and child care centers throughout Illinois, communities will be able to use additional education funding to further deepen services for families with infants and toddlers, like home visiting.

Here are the specifics:

- \$170 million (41.4%) increase for the child care system at IDHS
- \$75 million (12.5%) increase for the Early Childhood Block Grant at ISBE
- \$40 million (34.5%) increase for the Early Intervention (EI) program at IDHS
- \$5 million (27.9%) increase for evidence-based home visiting programs at IDHS
- \$5 million in brand-new funding at ISBE to support inclusion in schools and community-based early childhood settings for preschoolers with disabilities and developmental delays
- \$50 million in new, one-time funding from the Build Illinois fund for the Early Childhood Construction Grant (ECCG) program (though in an unexpected policy change with which we disagree, funds will be directed only to school districts in FY 2024)

Additionally, the fiscal year 2024 [budget implementation bill \(BIMP\)](#) passed into law and will make permanent the current income eligibility threshold (225% of FPL) for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and establish in law parts of the governor's Smart Start Illinois plan. The BIMP also increases the cash assistance amount for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to 35% (previously 30%) of the federal poverty level.

The following is a comprehensive outline of legislative action taken during the 2023 legislative session that will have an impact on the state’s youngest children, their families and those who serve them.

Early Childhood and General Education

HB342 Education-Tech

Requires the Illinois State Board of Education to develop the Children’s Advisory Index, by May 31, 2025, to measure community childhood trauma exposure for children ages 3 through 19, and defines trauma, trauma-responsive learning environments and whole child. Establishes a committee tasked to change the professional educator licensure requirements to include proficiency in trauma and adverse childhood experiences and reconvenes the Whole Child Task Force to review progress and submit a report of their findings and any other additional recommendations.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Carol Ammons (D)
Senator Kimberly A. Lightford (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0413

HB2396 SCH CD-Full Day Kindergarten

Creates the Full-Day Kindergarten Task Force to inform the implementation of full-day kindergarten and requires each school board to establish a full-day, developmentally appropriate and play-based kindergarten program by the 2027-2028 school year. School districts that do not currently offer full-day kindergarten may apply for an extension of 2 additional years if they are funded below 76% of adequacy, are ranked in the top 25% of capital funding need or meet a criterion set by the task force’s recommendations.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Mary Beth Canty (D)
Senator Kimberly A. Lightford (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0410

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[Funding Commission Report](#)

HB3425 SCH CD-Bullying Notification

Requires that in instances of bullying, schools inform all parents and guardians of those involved within 24 hours of the discovery of the bullying. Also expands the definition of bullying to also include physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status and homelessness.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Margaret Croke (D)
Senator Sara Feigenholtz (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0047

HB3822 SCH CD-ST BD ED-LANG REPORT

Provides that the Illinois State Board of Education's Advisory Council on Bilingual Education will deliver a report to the General Assembly on how to incentivize dual language instruction in schools.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Abdelnasser Rashid (D)
Senator Cristina H. Pacione-Zayas (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0362

SB90 EDUCATION-HARASSMENT

Requires school districts to create at least one written policy that prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race, color or national origin and prohibits retaliation. Pending funding, it also requires ISBE to create a data collection system to report on allegations of discrimination, harassment and retaliation against students.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Laura Murphy (D)
Representative Maurice A. West (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0472

SB183 SCH CD-TRANSFER ALT SCHOOL

Requires school districts to limit use of transfers to alternative schooling programs as a disciplinary measure and lays out several protections for students going through that process. At the time of transfer, a meeting with the student and their parents must be held where the parents agree to a timeframe for reintegrating the student into their normal educational environment, and the district cannot extend that timeframe beyond what the parents agree to.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Laura Murphy (D)
Representative Michelle Mussman (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0473

SB1993 SCH CD-LOCAL ASSESSMENT-NOTICE

For any new contract for assessments administered by a school district, this law requires that the school board hold a public vote on the approval of the contract at a meeting where there is time for public comments, with adequate assessment material made available for review.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Meg Loughran Cappel (D)
Representative Mary Beth Canty (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0393

SB2243 SCH CD-STATE LITERACY PLAN

Requires the Illinois State Board of Education to create a statewide Literacy Plan by January 31st, 2024, and provide resources and supports for districts and schools to increase access and implement evidence-based, culturally inclusive core reading instruction programs, among other

things for K-12 classrooms. The literacy plan must be informed by the best literacy practices for special populations and provide professional learning for teachers, guidance around screening tools for K-12 guidance around early literacy and grades 3-12 interventions, consider the impact of bilingual and English reading instruction, contextualize the interaction of the plan with existing laws and focus on a comprehensive range of elements of literacy.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Kimberly A. Lightford (D)

Representative Rita Mayfield (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0402

Human Services

HB2831 TASK FORCE ON HOMELESSNESS

Codifies and expands on the executive order from 2021 to fight homelessness in Illinois by creating the Interagency Task Force on Homelessness and the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness. They are tasked with making it easier to implement a strategic plan and related initiatives that will decrease homelessness and unnecessary institutionalization.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Lindsey LaPointe (D)

Senator Adriane Johnson (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0269

SE Policy Agenda

SB1794 DHS-HOME VISITING PROGRAM *

Establishes in law the existing Illinois Department of Human Services home visiting programs and ensures that funding received for the programs adds to, and does not replace, other existing or new federal, state or local sources of funding. It also requires the department to collaborate with other agencies in the implementation of the services and to support alignment with other home visiting services.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Cristina H. Pacione-Zayas (D)

Representative Aaron Ortiz (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0498

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Child Welfare and Safety

HB1596 CHILDREN-PRONOUNS-REFERENCES

Replaces gendered language with gender neutral terms and uses “minor” under acts concerning child welfare and juvenile justice. It also indicates to a minor’s “birth family” rather than “biological family.”

Chief Sponsors

Representative Lakesia Collins (D)

Senator Mike Simmons (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0022

HB 2277 DAY CARE CENTER-PARK EXEMPT

Exempts Park District programs offered for children ages 3 and older, who meet no more than 3.5 continuous hours at a time or less and no more than 25 hours during any week, and who conduct background investigations on program employees from being defined as “day care centers” under the Department of Children and Family Services.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Anna Moeller (D)

Senator Julie A. Morrison (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0153

Health and Mental Health

HB579 REGULATION-TECH

Requires the Illinois Department of Insurance to operate the Health Benefit Exchange on the federal platform by plan year 2025, and on its own State-based platform by plan year 2026, and outlines enforcement of coverage aligning with the Affordable Care Act.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Robyn Gabel (D)
Senator Ann Gillespie (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0103

HB1121 OVERDOSE PREVENTION-TESTING

Allows trained overdose responders to dispense drug testing supplies to anyone and provides that these testing materials must be stored with an organization enrolled in the Drug Overdose Prevention Program.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Will Guzzardi (D)
Senator Paul Faraci (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0115

HB2039 ACCESS TO PUBLIC HEALTH DATA

Requires state agencies to provide public health data in a timely manner to city and county health departments across the state and directs state health agencies to enter intergovernmental agreements on data sharing with each other to further facilitate that process.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Anna Moeller (D)
Senator Karina Villa (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0423

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HB2450 SURG ASSIST/TECH TITLE-MISC

Requires healthcare providers who seek to register or renew their license, and who are required to receive continued education, to complete training on cultural competency.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Dagmara Avelar (D)
Senator Ram Villivalam (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0531

Raising Illinois Agenda

HB2519 HOSPITAL LICENSING-MILK

Requires licensed hospitals and birth centers to provide new mothers with information and education on voluntary milk donations to accredited non-profit milk banks.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Katie Stuart (D)
Senator Laura M. Murphy (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0160

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HB2820 HEALTH-MATERNITY TRAINING

Requires the Department of Public Health to ensure that all birthing facilities have a written policy that addresses airway emergencies experienced during childbirth and the management of other leading causes of maternal mortality.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Mary E. Flowers (D)
Senator Adriane Johnson (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0169

Raising Illinois Agenda

HB2847 INS-MENTAL HEALTH CARE ACCESS

Mandates private insurance coverage for one annual mental health prevention and wellness visits per year for children and adults, at no cost to the individual.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Lindsay LaPointe (D)
Senator Laura Fine (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0535

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HB3809 INS-HEALTH/IMPAIRED CHILDREN

Requires that health insurance plans delivered in Illinois must cover therapy, diagnostic testing and quality of life equipment for children who have received a clinical or medical diagnosis for any disease, syndrome, or disorder that includes neuromuscular, neurological, or cognitive impairment.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Anthony Deluca (D)
Senator Patrick J. Joyce (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0458

HR86 SUPPORT OPIOID CRISIS PROGRAMS

Notes the roles that birth-to-3 investments play in prevention and remediation and encourages the commitment of some funding from the settlement of lawsuits against opioid makers/distributors for birth-to-3 programs.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Sue Scherer (D)

Current Status: Adopted

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SR36 SUPPORT OPIOID CRISIS PROGRAMS

Notes the roles that birth-to-3 investments play in prevention and remediation and encourages the commitment of some funding from the settlement of lawsuits against opioid makers/distributors for birth-to-3 programs.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Doris Turner (D)

Current Status: Adopted

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SB67 NEWBORN METABOLIC SCREENING

Creates a new test under the Newborn Metabolic Screening Act for metachromatic leukodystrophy and will require the Illinois Department of Public Health to provide screening tests to all newborns for metachromatic leukodystrophy within 6 months after meeting certain milestones. It also requires Medicaid to cover the testing fees.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Laura Fine (D)

Representative Anna Moeller (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0368

SB101 INS-PEDIATRIC AUTOIMMUNE COVER

Provides that no group or individual policy of accident and health insurance or managed care plan can deny or delay coverage for the medically necessary treatment of pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections or pediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome solely because the patient previously received any treatment or the same or similar treatment for an otherwise diagnosed condition.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Laura Fine (D)

Representative Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0564

SB646 HEALTH-TECH

Creates the Healing-Centered Illinois Task Force to advance the State's efforts to become trauma-informed and healing-centered through improved alignment with existing efforts, common definitions and metrics, and strategic planning for long-term transformation. The task force will submit a report to the General Assembly and the Governor within one year of the start of this act and will dissolve a year after the date of the report.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Cristina H. Pacione-Zayas (D)
Representative Justin Slaughter (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0545

SB724 CHILDREN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SVC

Creates a new position--Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Officer--tasked with leading the Interagency Children's Behavioral Health Services Team. The Team is responsible for collecting and providing information on how to provide the State's children with comprehensive community-based youth services.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Sara Feigenholtz (D)
Representative Lindsey LaPointe (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0546

SB1568 INS-HEALTH PARITY/DISABILITY

Requires the Department of Insurance to collect information concerning disability insurance plans and limitations on mental health and substance use disorder benefits and requires them to present their findings to the General Assembly no later than April 30th, 2024.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Julie A. Morrison (D)
Representative Bob Morgan (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0094

SB1709 MENTAL HEALTH-STUDENT ACCESS

Provides that the Department of Human Services will partner with the Illinois State Board of Education to deliver mental health care and mental health resources for students during the school day, and report on the results of these efforts by July 2025.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Mike Simmons (D)
Representative Marcus C. Evans Jr. (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0222

Nutrition

HB2214 DHS-STOLEN SNAP BENEFITS DATA

Requires the Department of Human Services to track Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) theft and/or fraud, keep record of all reports, refer the matters to the State's Attorney, and assist the State's Attorney in the prosecution of the alleged theft or fraud.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Sonya M. Harper (D)
Senator Mattie Hunter (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0297

HB2471 SCH BREAKFAST/LUNCH-SUPP AID

Creates the Healthy School Meals for All program which will provide free and healthy meals for all school children. School boards who decide to participate will provide nutritious meals and be completely reimbursed for doing so. Note: Additional funding will be required in order to implement this change with fidelity.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Maurice A. West (D)
Senator Laura Ellman (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0532

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Workforce and Professional Development/Higher Education

HB1291 SCH CD-TEACHER-ANNUAL INCENTIV

Increases the annual incentive to \$2,250 (rather than \$1,500) for qualified educators who hold both a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards designation and a certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching, and that 45 (rather than 30) hours of mentoring will be required.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Katie Stuart (D)
Senator Meg Loughran Cappel (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0122

HB1561 SCHCD-EMPLOYEE TRAUMA TRAINING

Allows school districts to maintain a trauma kit onsite for dealing with emergencies and requires that all school district employees get trained in trauma response every two years. Also makes school district employees immune from civil liability for good faith use of the trauma kit to address emergencies.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Camille Y. Lilly (D)
Senator Adriane Johnson (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0128

HB2274 SPEECH/LANG ASSIST-FIELD WORK

Creates an additional pathway that allows individuals to become a licensed speech-language pathology assistant if they have a bachelor's degree in speech-language pathology or communication science and disorders from a regionally or nationally accredited institution and have evidence of completing at least 100 hours of documented field work supervised by a licensed speech-language pathologist.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Travis Weaver (D)
Senator Win Stoller (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0302

HB2365 SOCIAL WORK-EXAM ALTERNATE

Provides that individuals who do not pass the licensing exam and are seeking to independently practice clinical social work can do so with an examination alternative. The examination alternative will consist of an additional 3,000 hours of supervised professional experience in addition to any other supervised clinical professional experience required for licensure.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Lindsey LaPointe (D)
Senator Karina Villa (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0433

HB2380 HIGHER ED-HUM SERV LOAN REPAY

Expands the Human Services Professional Loan Repayment Program and allows the grant committee to consider financial need when prioritizing applications and removes the cap on the amount of times an applicant can receive funds from the program.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Lindsey LaPointe (D)

Senator Laura Fine (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0031

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HB3498 HIGHER ED-SCHOLARSHIP REPAYMENT

Regarding the Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship program, the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program and special education teacher scholarships, if a recipient enters a repayment for not fulfilling the teaching obligations subsequently, but within 5 years of entering the repayment begins the required teaching obligations, then the Illinois Student Assistance Commission may reduce what the recipient owes in proportion to the amount of the teaching obligation completed.

Chief Sponsors

Representative Sharon Chung (D)

Senator David Koehler (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0448

SB49 HIGHER ED-DEBT ASSISTANCE

Requires higher education institutions to provide access to transcripts to students and their requested employers, even if the student owes a debt, though the institution can set conditions for providing this access. Each higher education institution also must report any registration holds they have to an appropriate agency on July 1 of each year.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Laura Fine (D)

Representative Bob Morgan (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0054

SB57 HIGHER ED-LOAN REPAYMENT AWARDS

Increases the Community Behavioral Health Care Professional Loan Repayment Program grant awards. It adds additional behavioral health professions who qualify for the program and reserves no less than 30% of the program's funding for minority applicants until January 1st of a given fiscal year.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Laura Fine (D)

Representative Lindsey LaPointe (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0056

SB1351 SCH CD-TEACHER EVAL-LAST YEAR

Makes changes regarding teacher evaluation plans and promotions and allows teachers who are due to be evaluated in the last year before they are set to retire to be offered the opportunity to waive their evaluation and to retain their most recent rating, unless the teacher was rated poorly, and allows school districts to reserve their right to evaluate a teacher if they give enough notice.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Kimberly A. Lightford (D)
Representative Sue Scherer (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0085

SB1468 PEN CD-TRS-RETURN TO SERVICE

Through June 2026, allows retired teachers to accept employment of up to 120 paid days per school year at a district without changing their retirement status, so long as that work is outside of the school year in which they retired.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Tom Bennett (R)
Representative Katie Stuart (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0088

SB1488 SCH CD-EDUCATOR TESTING

Puts on hold the requirement for candidates to pass the teacher performance assessment in the teacher preparation program, until August 31st, 2025, and establishes a taskforce to make recommendations for an objective and consistent teacher performance assessment as part of the Illinois teacher licensure process.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Tom Bennett (R)
Representative Katie Stuart (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0488

SE Policy Agenda

SB1558 HIGHER ED-DIRECT SUPPORT PROF

Requires the Illinois Community College Board to develop and recommend a model program for licensing students as direct support professionals, pending consultation with stakeholders. The program must be made available by the 2026-27 academic year and must be provided for at least 2 years.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Laura M. Murphy (D)
Representative Anna Moeller (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0092

SB1872 SCH CD-TEACHER TENURE/3 YEARS

Shortens the time needed for teachers to be eligible for tenure and reduces the time that principals and coaches must support newer teachers before making tenure decisions.

Chief Sponsors

Senator Kimberly A. Lightford (D)

Representative Dave Vella (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0500

SB2390 SCHOOL CODE-VARIOUS*

Among other changes to address teacher vacancies in the state, extends for five years the current staffing flexibility that allows early childhood educators with a Level 5 from Gateways to Opportunity to teach in a Preschool For All classroom provided they are working to secure their teaching license.

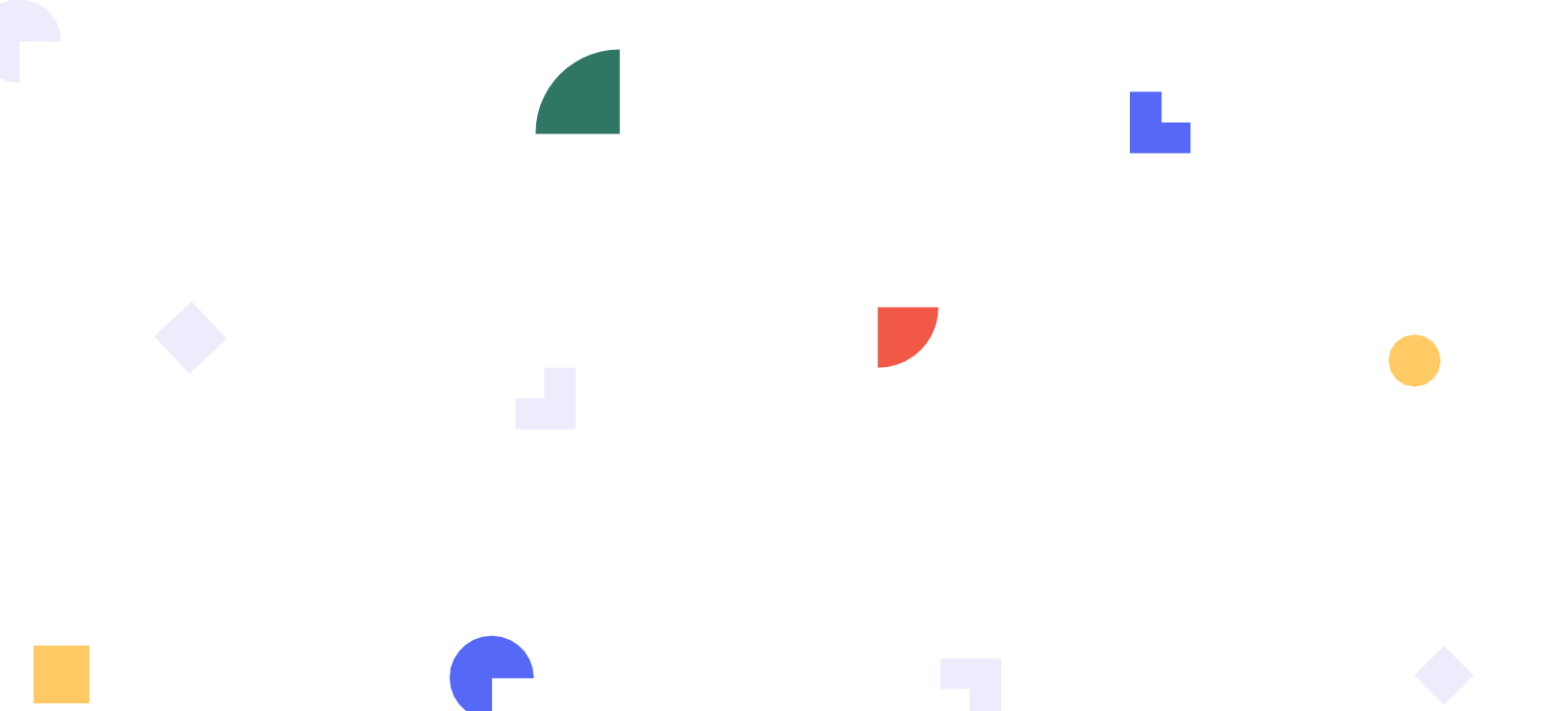
Chief Sponsors

Senator Cristina H. Pacione-Zayas (D)

Representative Maurice A. West, II (D)

Current Status: Public Act 103-0111

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