



Facts about HB5729, the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act

HB5729 passed the Illinois House and Senate unanimously in May 2016, and the Governor signed it on July 29, 2016. HB 5729 will implement strategies toward aligning colleges' and employers' expectations with elementary and secondary requirements. Advance Illinois and its 60x25 Network team are working to achieve Illinois P-20 Council's goal of 60 percent of Illinoisans having a high-quality post-secondary certificate or degree by the year 2025. HB5729 establishes the following:

- **A structure for students to avoid remedial education in community college** – Data from Advance Illinois' *The State We're In 2014* shows that 61 percent of Illinois students enroll in postsecondary education but only 37 percent "persist" through postsecondary education. One of the biggest barriers to postsecondary persistence is remedial education during college, which adds expenses and coursework. Approximately half of Illinois high school graduates require remedial education in community college. HB5729 establishes a structure for students to take a fourth year of math in high school that, if they pass the course, ensures they will go into credit-bearing math at any Illinois community college **Timeline:** A school district may elect to implement transitional math by the 2019-2020 school year.
- **College and career expectations benchmarks from eighth through 12th grade** – Too often the expectations for what it means to be prepared for college and career are inconsistent and unclear. Under HB5729, education agencies must adopt a framework that outlines what students should know about college and career each year from eighth to 12th grade. Key components include: 1) Career exploration and development; 2) College exploration, preparation and selection; 3) Financial literacy and accessing financial aid opportunities. The bill does not mandate implementation of the framework. **Timeline:** Education agencies must jointly adopt a similar framework by July 1, 2017.
- **Career and college endorsements on high school diplomas** – Under HB5729, school districts have the option of awarding college and career pathways endorsements on high school diplomas. The endorsements incentivize career exploration and development, particularly in high-demand career fields. To earn a college and career pathways endorsement, students will have followed an individualized learning plan, career-focused instruction, career exploration activities and 60 hours of supervised career development experiences. **Timeline:** School districts can offer endorsement programs for year 2020 high school graduates.
- **A pilot for districts to test updated high school graduation requirements** – A high school diploma should be provided based on a student's competency rather than the amount of time spent in class. HB5729 establishes a pilot program for voluntary school district participation in moving from "seat-time" graduation requirements to competency-based high school graduation requirements. Pilot districts must establish a plan for replacing existing high school graduation requirements with standards-aligned competencies. HB5729 limits the pilot to 12 school districts per year in the first two years of implementation, and 15 school districts per year after that. **Timeline:** State superintendent publishes initial application for pilot cohort by June 30, 2017; school districts begin implementation 2018-2019 school year.

Funding

HB5729 provides opportunities for public or private funding for each of these initiatives.