

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER XIX: ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

PART 2764
GOLDEN APPLE SCHOLARS OF ILLINOIS PROGRAM

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AUTHORITY: Implementing Section 52 of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/52] and authorized by Sections 20(f) and 52(h) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/20(f) and 52(h)].

SOURCE: Emergency rules adopted at 19 Ill. Reg. 976, effective February 1, 1995, for a maximum of 150 days; emergency expired on June 30, 1995; adopted at 19 Ill. Reg. 11367, effective August 1, 1995; amended at 20 Ill. Reg. 9141, effective July 1, 1996; old Part repealed at 21 Ill. Reg. 11027 and new Part adopted at 21 Ill. Reg. 11029, effective July 18, 1997; amended at 22 Ill. Reg. 11043, effective July 1, 1998; amended at 24 Ill. Reg. 9095, effective July 1, 2000; amended at 27 Ill. Reg. 10395, effective July 1, 2003; emergency amendment at 27 Ill. Reg. 14860, effective September 10, 2003, for a maximum of 150 days; amended at 28 Ill. Reg. 1749, effective January 25, 2004; amended at 28 Ill. Reg. 9162, effective July 1, 2004; amended at 30 Ill. Reg. 11687, effective July 1, 2006; amended at 32 Ill. Reg. 10333, effective July 1, 2008; amended at 33 Ill. Reg. 9784, effective July 1, 2009; amended at 36 Ill. Reg. 13957, effective September 1, 2012; emergency amendment at 37 Ill. Reg. 15446, effective September 3, 2013, for a maximum of 150 days; amended at 38 Ill. Reg. 2898, effective January 15, 2014; amended at 39 Ill. Reg. 8462, effective July 1, 2015; amended at 42 Ill. Reg. 13649, effective July 1, 2018; amended at 44 Ill. Reg. 11050, effective July 1, 2020; amended at 45 Ill. Reg. 8489, effective July 1, 2021, amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 4479, effective March 8, 2024.

Section 2764.10 Summary and Purpose

- a) *The Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program encourages academically talented Illinois students, especially minority students, to pursue teaching careers, especially in teacher shortage disciplines or at hard-to-staff schools [110 ILCS 947/52].*

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- b) This Part establishes the rules that govern the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program, hereinafter the "Program." Additional rules and definitions are contained in General Provisions (23 Ill. Adm. Code 2700).
- c) The rights and obligations of students receiving scholarship assistance through the Illinois Future Teacher Corps (IFTC) Program, as previously described in this Part, shall continue to be governed by any administrative rules in effect at the time scholarship assistance was awarded to the recipient through the IFTC Program.

(Source: Amended at 36 Ill. Reg.13957, effective September 1, 2012)

Section 2764.20 Applicant Eligibility

- a) All qualified applicants must be designated as a Golden Apple Scholar by the Golden Apple Foundation for Excellence in Teaching (the Foundation).
- b) A qualified applicant, at the time of designation as a Golden Apple Scholar by the Golden Apple Foundation for Excellence in Teaching, shall:
 - 1) be a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen;
 - 2) be a resident of Illinois;
 - 3) be a high school graduate or a person who has received a State of Illinois High School Diploma;
 - 4) be enrolled at a four-year institution designated by the Foundation as a participating Illinois college or university; and
 - 5) have entered into a program agreement and promissory note with the Foundation and ISAC, as described in this Part.
- c) In order to receive scholarship assistance under this Part, a qualified applicant shall:
 - 1) be enrolled in a postsecondary course of study leading to initial teacher licensure or taking additional courses needed to gain Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) approval to teach, including alternative teacher licensure [110 ILCS 947/52];

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- 2) have earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale if enrolled at the sophomore, junior or senior level; and
 - 3) have participated in all required programs and adhered to the residential guidelines and standards of conduct as a designated Golden Apple Scholar of the Foundation.
- d) In any academic year in which the qualified applicant accepts or receives financial assistance through the Paul Douglas Teacher Scholarship Program (23 Ill. Adm. Code 2762), the Minority Teachers of Illinois Scholarship Program (23 Ill. Adm. Code 2763), the Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver Program (23 Ill. Adm. Code 2765), or the Teach Illinois Scholarship (23 Ill. Adm. Code 2768), the qualified applicant shall not be eligible for scholarship assistance under this Part.

(Source: Amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 4479, effective March 8, 2024)

Section 2764.30 Program Procedures

- a) Qualified applicants shall have completed and filed an application for program participation with the Foundation prior to becoming eligible for scholarship assistance under this Section. Applications shall be made available to qualified applicants by and submitted to the Foundation before a qualified applicant may be designated as a Golden Apple Scholar by the Foundation.
- b) The Foundation shall designate Golden Apple Scholars as defined in their established selection protocol.
- c) Each year, the Foundation shall identify Golden Apple Scholars eligible to receive scholarship assistance from ISAC under this Part by submitting to ISAC any necessary data related to the qualified applicant and, at such time, by certifying that:
 - 1) Students selected to receive scholarship assistance under this Part meet the eligibility requirements described in Section 2764.20(a) or in the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/52];
 - 2) Students selected to receive scholarship assistance under this Part have entered into a Program Agreement and Promissory Note with the Foundation that satisfies the requirements listed in this Part; and
 - 3) Thirty percent of students selected to receive scholarship assistance under this Part in a given fiscal year will be awarded to students residing in

counties having a population of fewer than 500,000.

- d) In order to receive scholarship assistance under this Part, a Golden Apple Scholar must have signed a program agreement and promissory note with the Foundation on behalf of ISAC that includes the following stipulations:
- 1) the recipient pledges to teach, on a full time basis, for a period of not less than five years and in accordance with any additional commitment to teach in a teacher shortage discipline, which shall include early childhood education;
 - 2) the recipient shall begin teaching within two years following completion of the postsecondary education degree or certificate program for which the scholarship was awarded, and shall teach on a continuous basis for the required period of time;
 - 3) the teaching requirement will be fulfilled at a nonprofit Illinois public, private or parochial preschool, or an Illinois public elementary or secondary school that qualifies for teacher loan cancellation under section 465(a)(2)(A) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1087ee(a)(2)(A));
 - 4) if the teaching requirement is not fulfilled, the scholarship assistance provided under this Part converts to a loan and the recipient must repay the entire amount of the scholarship prorated according to the fraction of the teaching obligation not completed, plus interest at a rate equal to five percent and, if applicable, reasonable collection fees;
 - 5) the recipient agrees to provide the Foundation or ISAC with evidence of compliance with program requirements (e.g., responses to annual follow-up questionnaires, etc.); and
 - 6) the recipient promises to use the proceeds of the scholarship for educational expenses.
- e) All amounts collected on a scholarship that converts to a loan under this Part, less any portion of those funds that equals the amount in expenses that ISAC has incurred in collecting the debt, shall be remitted to the Comptroller for deposit in the General Revenue Fund.
- f) A recipient of a scholarship awarded under this Part shall not be in violation of the program agreement and promissory note for failing to begin teaching within two years after graduation if, during that period, the recipient:

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- 1) serves, for not more than three years, as a member of the United States Armed Forces; or
 - 2) is enrolled full-time in a graduate course of study related to the field of teaching at an institution of higher learning; or
 - 3) is temporarily totally disabled, for not more than three years, as established by the sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; or
 - 4) is actively seeking and unable to find full-time employment as a teacher at a school that satisfies the criteria set forth in subsection (d)(3) for one continuous period not to exceed two years, and is able to provide evidence of that fact; or
 - 5) is taking additional courses, on at least a half-time basis, needed to obtain licensure as a teacher in Illinois; or
 - 6) is fulfilling teaching requirements associated with other programs administered by ISAC if the requirements cannot be concurrently fulfilled in a period of time equal to the length of the teaching commitment; or
 - 7) is participating in a program established by Executive Order 10924 of the President of the United States or the National Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq., as amended).
- g) If a recipient is required to repay any portion of the scholarship, the repayment period shall be completed within 10 years. The Commission shall grant a period of forbearance or deferment during repayment of the loan that shall not be counted toward the 10-year repayment period, if the recipient:
- 1) serves, for not more than three years, as a member of the United States Armed Forces; or
 - 2) is temporarily disabled, for not more than three years, as established by the sworn affidavit of a licensed physician; or
 - 3) is pursuing a graduate course of study and is enrolled on a full-time basis for one continuous period of time not to exceed three years; or
 - 4) is seeking and unable to find full-time employment for one continuous period not to exceed two years and is able to provide evidence of that fact; or

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- 5) withdraws from a course of study leading to licensure/approval in a teacher shortage discipline, but is enrolled at least half-time as an undergraduate for one continuous period of time not to exceed three years.
- h) During the time a recipient qualifies for periods of deferment or forbearance described in subsection (g), payments shall not be required and interest shall not accrue.
- i) A recipient shall enter repayment status on the earliest of the following dates:
 - 1) the first day of the first calendar month after the recipient has ceased to pursue a course of study leading to licensure as a teacher, but not until six months have elapsed after the cessation of at least half-time enrollment in such a course of study;
 - 2) the date the Foundation informs ISAC or ISAC otherwise learns that a recipient of scholarship assistance has not fulfilled the teaching obligation; or
 - 3) the day after the latest date upon which the recipient must have begun teaching after completing the postsecondary education for which the scholarship was awarded.
- j) *If a recipient who enters into repayment under subsection (d) subsequently, within 5 years of entering repayment, begins to teach at a school meeting the description under subsection (d)(3), the amount owed by the recipient may be reduced in proportion to the amount of the teaching obligation completed. [110 ILCS 947/50]*
- k) A recipient shall not be required to repay the amount of the scholarship received if the recipient becomes permanently and totally disabled, so as to be unable to perform the essential function of a teacher with or without accommodation as determined by a licensed physician, or if a recipient's representative provides ISAC with a death certificate or other evidence that the recipient has died.

(Source: Amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 4479, effective March 8, 2024)

Section 2764.40 Institutional Procedures

- a) The institution shall certify eligibility information for selected recipients.
- b) Golden Apple awards are paid directly to the approved institution of record that

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certifies to ISAC that the applicant is an eligible recipient.

- 1) ISAC will annually establish priority claim dates for the submission of payment requests and inform institutions of the required priority dates.
 - 2) Late payment requests will result in delayed processing of payments. Payment requests are processed in the sequence of receipt by ISAC and as funds are available.
 - 3) Institutions may submit their payment requests beginning 10 days prior to the start of classes for the term for which payment is being requested.
- c) ISAC shall disburse scholarship funds in two or three installments, depending on the number of terms financed by the scholarship, except that multiple disbursements shall not be required in cases where the applicant's eligibility is not determined until the final term of the academic year for which the scholarship is being awarded or when a student is attending only one term and the maximum award does not exceed the student's cost of attendance.
- d) Funds shall be remitted by ISAC to institutions on behalf of the recipients.
- e) Upon receipt of scholarship funds, the institution shall verify the recipient's enrollment status for the term for which the award was intended. If enrolled, the institution may credit the scholarship funds to the recipient's account for expenses due and payable. The balance of the disbursement shall be released to the recipient.
- f) Upon receipt of the scholarship funds, if the recipient has withdrawn from enrollment for the terms for which the award was intended, the institution shall return the amount of the scholarship payment to ISAC.
- g) Scholarship assistance provided under this Part shall be subject to the following conditions:
- 1) A recipient may receive up to 8 semesters or 12 quarters of scholarship assistance under this program.
 - 2) Scholarship funds are applicable toward two semesters or three quarters of half-time and full-time study within an academic year.
 - 3) The total number of scholarships awarded in a given fiscal year is contingent upon available funding.

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- 4) Program scholarships are applicable only toward tuition, fees and room and board charges or commuter allowances, if applicable.
- 5) The annual scholarship amount shall be computed by the institution and be the lesser of:
 - A) tuition and fees plus room and board expenses charged by the institution;
 - B) tuition and fees plus the institution's standard cost of living allowance for students living off-campus;
 - C) an amount not to exceed \$5,000 unless otherwise authorized by this Section.
- 6) The total amount of scholarship assistance awarded under this Section to a recipient of scholarship assistance under this Part in a given academic year, when added to the other financial aid available to the qualified applicant for that year, cannot exceed the cost of attendance.
- 7) A recipient of scholarship assistance under this Part may receive grant assistance under the Golden Apple Scholars Program only up to the amount by which the qualified applicant's cost of attendance exceeds the amount of the Monetary Award Program grant.
- h) To provide sufficient time for processing and vouchering through the State Comptroller's Office in Springfield, all payment requests must be received by ISAC no later than July 1.

(Source: Amended at 45 Ill. Reg. 8489, effective July 1, 2021)