

ISAC Operational Update and Program News

August 26, 2026



Agenda



2026-2027 Award Year Update



Important Dates & Contact Information



Questions



2026-2027 Award Year

Fiscal Year (FY) 2027

2026-27 Applications Available

Program	OPEN?	Priority Deadline for 2026-27
Monetary Award Program (MAP)	Y*	ISAC is suspending the announcement of MAP awards for all students whose initial FAFSA® is received by FPS after Thursday, April 23, 2026
Displaced Energy Worker Dependent Transition Scholarship Program (DEWSP)	Y	October 1, 2026 – Full year consideration March 1, 2027 – Spring-term June 15, 2027 – Summer-term
Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship Program	Y*	May 31, 2026 (Can still apply late but will only be considered after priority applications have been awarded)
Golden Apple (GA)	N	TBD – Apply through the Golden Apple Foundation website . There is an option to be notified when the application opens.
Grant Programs for Dependents of Police-Fire-Correctional Officers (PFC)	Y	October 1, 2026 – Full year consideration March 1, 2027 – Spring-term June 15, 2027 – Summer-term
Illinois National Guard Grant (ING)	Y	When made available each year, applications are submitted on a rolling basis, must apply w/ enough time for ISAC to review application for the term recipient wants benefits used for.
Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG)	Y	Same as ING above.
Nursing Education Scholarship (NES)	N	May 31, 2026
School Social Work Scholarship Formerly known as the <i>Post-Master of Social Work School Social Work Professional Educator License Scholarship Program</i>	Y	October 31, 2026
Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver (SETTW)	N	Was March 1, 2026
Teachers of Illinois Scholarship Program (TISP)	Y	September 18, 2026

NOTICE: 2026-27 Alternative Application

- As of July 24, 2026, a federal district court ruled that undocumented students are no longer eligible to receive state financial assistance from ISAC for the 2026-2027 school year.
- As a result, the 2026-27 Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid is no longer available.
- This means that if a student completed or planned to complete the Alternative Application for the 2026-27 school year, ISAC is not allowed to pay ISAC grants or scholarships for the 2026-27 school year.

2026-27 Alternative Application – Impact

- ISAC cannot accept any payment claims and will not issue any payments on Monetary Award Program (MAP) or other scholarship and grant programs that have previously been awarded for undocumented students for the 2026-27 academic year.
- ISAC has closed the 2026-27 Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid and will not accept any further submissions.

We know this court decision brings tremendous uncertainty and financial challenges for Illinois undocumented students. The State of Illinois recognizes the harms to students as a result of this decision, and remains dedicated to college access, affordability, and opportunity for all students.

Alternative Application Future and Resources

In June 2026, Governor Pritzker signed into law an amendment to the RISE Act (HB 5093) that goes into effect for the 2027-2028 school year. The court's ruling does not apply to HB 5093.

The Alternative Application for the 2027-28 school year will open on October 1, 2026.
Please visit isac.org/AlternativeApp for more information.

We know that you, your higher education colleagues and most importantly, your students and families will have a lot of questions about what this means for them.

- We have developed a [Student FAQ Resource](#) that you can share with them.
- To read more about HB 5093 see the bill status page at lga.gov.
- For more information see the [August 7 e-message](#).

MAP – Alternative Applications Disqualify Code

- Students that have applied for MAP using the alternative application are identified by the **Disqualify Code 3**.
- They will also have the Student Eligibility issue lightbulb icon on the left of the SSN column.
 - This code can be viewed currently from the following GAP screens: **Student List Eligibility: View & Student Detail: Eligibility**
 - Once available, this code can be viewed on the Student Payment: View screen by adding the “Disqualify” column from the columns tab.

MAP 2026-2027: Student List Eligibility: View

Home Student Payment Budget Reports File Extractions

List Filter Sort Columns

Entries displayed 100

#	Pay MAP	Sel	Current SSN	Last Name	First Name	Trans#	Original Yearly Elig	Disq	MAP Susp	SAI	FPS Proc Date	Date of Birth	Academic Level	MAP Paid Credit Hrs	Cont Stu	SAI Change
1			XXX-XX-			03	\$8,064.00	3		\$-1,500	04/22/2026		First year undergraduate (freshman)	000	N	

MAP Student Detail Alt App

Disqualification Code (1/2)

To view the potentially causes of an eligibility issue:

- 1. Click the paper with the magnifying glass icon next to the second column on the left (see picture below).

#	Pay MAP	Sel	Current SSN	Last Name	First Name	Trans#	Original Yearly Elig	Disq	MAP Susp	SAI	FPS Proc Date	Date of Birth	Academic Level	MAP Paid Credit Hrs	Cont Stu	SAI Change	
22	 		XXX-XX-			01	\$8,064.00	S		\$3,870	05/18/20		First year undergraduate (freshman)	000	N		

- 2. This will take the user to the **Student Detail: Eligibility** screen where individual information about each student can be found.
- 3. Eligibility issues are highlighted in yellow on this screen (see image on the next slide).

MAP Student Detail Alt App Disqualification Code (2/2)

- You can navigate to another student using the “Current SSN” section.
 - Type in the next student’s SSN or ISAC ID Number (which is assigned by ISAC to Alternative Application applicants) and click “Go”.
- The most recent student transaction is shown by default.
 - To view a different transaction, select the desired number from the drop-down menu of the “Transaction” section and click “Go”.

MAP 2026-2027: Student Detail: Eligibility

[Home](#) [Student](#) [Payment](#) [Budget](#) [Reports](#) [File Extractions](#)

[List](#) [Eligibility](#) [Edit MAP Code](#) [Payment](#)

Current SSN

Go

Transaction

01

Go

School ID

Main MAP Code

002

Go

Person UUID

Term	MAP Code	Eligible Amount	MAP Code Paid
1		\$4,032.00	
2		\$4,032.00	

Original Yearly Eligible Amount

\$8,064.00

Total of all terms not to exceed Maximum annual award amount.

Details

Depend Code

D

Academic Level

First year undergraduate (freshman)

Living Allowance

\$5,200

SAI Change Flag

Update Type

U

As Of Date

05/06/2026

Disqualify

3

MAP Suspend

MAP Eligibility – New Columns

Two new columns have been included on the **Student List: Eligibility** screen.

- **ING Certified** – has the same values as the Certified Column in ING (Y or N) if the student is in ING, and blank if a student is not in the ING system.
- **IVG Benefits** – has a Y if the student received benefits above \$0 in this year (but not necessarily at this school) and N if not.

ING Certified		IVG Benefits	
			N

MAP – First-term Payment Open

Payment for Fall Term (first-term) MAP is available as of Monday **August 24, 2026**.

- The 2026-27 maximum award amount is \$8,064.
- Payment requests are submitted either through the MAP system in GAP Access or via the File Transfer Protocol (FTP) process.
- Any 2026-27 payment requests that were submitted via FTP prior to August 24, 2026, will not be processed, and will need to be resubmitted by the college.
- Payment Request Deadline date for the Fall (first-term) term: on or before **December 4, 2026**.
- See the [August 24 e-message](#) for more details.

MAP Payment Reminders

- Payment requests are processed on a nightly basis; results are provided the next business day.
- ISAC has [suspended the announcement](#) of 2026-27 MAP grants for all students whose initial [FAFSA](#) is received after April 23, 2026.
- A Payment Result Summary and Invoice Detail Report can be viewed or printed by selecting the Report tab in the MAP system the day after a payment request has been processed.
 - The report includes Payment Results, Payment Exceptions and Invoice Detail about the payment claim.
 - Be sure to review the report to see which requests, if any, did not process as expected.
- Because [Payment Offset and Reconciliation](#) procedures apply to MAP, refund checks should not be sent for cancellations/adjustments made throughout the award year.
 - Funds should only be returned to ISAC *after* a final reconciliation has been completed at the end of the regular school year.

MAP – Dependency Override in GAP Access

A Dependent Residency Override function is available on the **Student Detail: Payment screen**.

This is intended to address situations for dependent students with divorced or separated parents who reside in Illinois with a parent who is also an Illinois resident, but the student was required to list an out-of-state parent contributor on the FAFSA.

To use the Dependency Override function:

1. From the payments tab in the MAP system, Click the Payment Icon next to the student's name.
2. Check the box for "Dependent Residency Override". This box will need to be checked for both terms when requesting payment through the GAP system.
 - a. This will remove the MAP disqualify code that appears for dependent students whose parent contributor does not report Illinois as their state of residence on the FAFSA.

Term	Term 1
MAP Code	
Request	
Enrollment Hours	
Short-Term Certificate Program 	☐
Request Amount Override	\$4,200.00
Current Eligible Amount	\$4,200.00
Original Eligible Amount	\$4,200.00
User Defined	
Dependent Residency Override	☐
NSLDS Override	NSLDS Override

MAP – Dependency Override using FTP

The MAP 160-Byte File also includes a Dependent Residency Override field.

- **Field #15** on the FTP file may be used to provide a Dependent Residency Override.
- This field should be populated with a Y to indicate a student requires a Dependency Override.

MAP 160 Byte File Layout Specifications

F) The following 160 byte record layout will be used for transmitting data between schools and ISAC.

Position		Field #	Data Element	Type (Length)	School to ISAC	ISAC to School	
					Payment or Cancellation Request	Elig File	Payment Results
Start	End				MAP Only	MAP	MAP
160 Byte Format							
1	3	1	Applicable MAP School Code	9(03)	X	X	X
4	4	2	Record Type	X(01)	4	7	5 / 6
5	5	3	Term Enrolled	9(01)	=1, 2, or 3		=1, 2, or 3
6	7	4	College Year	9(02)	25	25	25
8	8	5	Payment Request Code (valid values = P or C)	X(01)	X		X
9	14	6	Title IV School Code	X(06)	X	X	X
15	50	7	Person UUID	X(36)	X	X	X
51	53	8	Filler	X(03)			
54	54	9	User Defined	X(01)			
55	61	10	Requested Award Amount for Term	9(05)V99	X		X
62	62	11	ING Certified	X(01)			
63	64	12	Transaction Number	9(02)	X		X
65	65	13	Continuing Student	X(01)		X	X
66	66	14	Paid Previous Year	X(01)		X*	X
67	67	15	Dependent Residency Override	X(01)	Opt*		
68	68	16	Payment Result Code	X(01)			X
69	75	17	Payment Results Amount Paid for Term	9(05)V99			X
76	82	18	Adjusted Amt from Previous Payment Results	S9(05)V99			X

MAP – Certificate Programs

An **indicator in the MAP** system for schools to use to identify students who are receiving MAP due to enrollment in a **Short-Term Certificate Program** at a public institution.

- To request payment for a student in an eligible certificate program, schools should report the number of credit-based hours in which the student is enrolled for the term.
 - If the student is enrolled in additional coursework, the number of enrollment hours reported should be the combination of the certificate program hours and other coursework the student may be enrolled in.
 - The certificate box should be checked even if the hours are mixed (a combination of traditional and certificate program courses).
 - Help text is provided to clarify when the indicator should be checked.
- For payment requests submitted via FTP, a “Y” indicator should be provided in Field #21 in the FTP file, per the file specifications.

Check this box if some or all of the term MAP award will be used for a credit-based Occupational or Career and Technical Certificate program at a public institution, and it is a program that is not currently eligible for federal Title IV financial aid.

MAP – Eligibility Issue – Graduate Flag Issue

Issue:

- The student selected “First Bachelor’s Degree Before 2026-27 School Year” on their FAFSA incorrectly
 - or answered the question incorrectly about their grade level.
- From the Student Detail: Eligibility page a Disqualify code 4 is shown (see image right)
- The student resubmits their FAFSA with the correct answer but continues to be ineligible (disqualified) for the MAP grant.

Resolution:

- If schools have identified a student who has made a correction to their FAFSA regarding the above issue but is still showing they are ineligible for the MAP grant, the schools may resubmit the correction through the FAFSA Partner Portal.
- This should fix the issue, and the new ISIR transaction should remove the disqualification code 4 and indicate eligibility for the MAP grant.

Update Type
U
As Of Date
05/22/2026
Disqualify
4
MAP Suspend
MAP Paid Credit Hours
000
Paid Previous
0
Continuing
N
ING Certified
IVG Benefits
N

MAP Resources

- For information on eligibility see the [MAP Eligibility User Guide](#)
- For information on payment see the [MAP Payment User Guide](#) and the [MAP Payment](#) section of the [ISAC Gift Assistance Programs](#) area.
- **Note:** Both the MAP Eligibility and MAP Payment User Guides will be updated in the coming weeks to reflect the 2026-27 payment cycle. Eventually, these guides will be combined into a single MAP User Guide.

Certifications Open

ECACE

Early Childhood Access
Consortium for Equity

NES

Nursing Education
Scholarship

SETTW

Special Education Teacher
Tuition Waiver

SSWS

School Social Work
Scholarship

TI

Teachers of Illinois
Scholarship

All Certification records must be completed, regardless of whether the school certifies a student as eligible or ineligible and regardless of whether the student is currently enrolled.

SETTW Certification Screen

To complete certification, from the Home tab in the SETTW system:

1. Select the current academic year.
2. Click on the Certification Tab.
3. Certifying a student's record starts with indicating if the student is eligible or ineligible for SETTW by selecting either Y (yes) or N (no) in the Certified column. The other certification items will remain grayed out until a Y or N is selected.

The screenshot shows the 'GAP ACCESS' header with the Illinois state logo and the text 'ISAC Gift Assistance Programs'. Below this is a navigation bar with tabs: 'Person', 'Administration', 'School', and 'Programs'. The main content area is titled 'SETTW'. Below the title is a row of tabs: 'Home', 'Student', 'Certification', and 'Enrollment Status Verification'. The 'Certification' tab is highlighted with a red box and a green box containing the number '2'. Below the tabs, there is a light blue box containing the following text: 'Welcome to the internet application for processing the Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver (SETTW) Program.', 'Verify Enrollment Status – select the previous academic year (20XX-XX)', and 'Certify Eligibility – select the current academic year (20XX-XX)'. Below this text is a dropdown menu labeled 'Academic Year' with the value '20XX-20XX' and a downward arrow. This dropdown is highlighted with a red box and a green box containing the number '1'.

SETTW Certification - Eligible

To certify a student as eligible, Y is selected. Here are the steps to certify a student as eligible:

- 1. Select Y from the Certified column.
- 2. The Academic Level column will be activated, and you must then select the appropriate option to complete the certification for a student record.
- 3. After you've certified the record(s), click on the Save/Submit button at the bottom of the page. Once you've saved your entries, they are considered submitted and certification is complete.

Entries displayed 100

SSN	Last Name	First Name	School Code	Dual Awarded MTI	Dual Awarded GA	Certified	Academic Level	Disqualified Reason	Transfer Indicator	Transfer Start Term
xxx-xx						Y	Graduate	- Select -		
xxx-xx						N	- S			

1

2

3

Save/Submit

SETTW Certification – Ineligible (1/2)

To certify that a student is ineligible, N is selected. Here are the steps to certify a student as ineligible:

1. Select N from the Certified column.
2. The Disqualified Reason information box will be activated, and you will need to provide the reason for the student's ineligibility by choosing the appropriate option from the drop-down list:
 - The recipient did not enroll within ten days after the beginning of the term for which ISAC had initially awarded the waiver
 - The recipient is enrolled at this school but is not seeking an initial special education teacher licensure
 - The recipient accepted the Minority Teachers of Illinois (MTI) Scholarship Program or the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program rather than the SETTW Program
 - Recipient declined the tuition waiver
 - Recipient is not an Illinois resident
 - Recipient is not a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen
 - Recipient is not making satisfactory academic progress
 - Recipient is in default on a student loan, or owes a refund on any state or federal grant

SETTW Certification – Ineligible (2/2)

3. After you've certified the record(s), click on the Save/Submit button at the bottom of the page. Once you've saved your entries, they are considered submitted and certification is complete.

Entries displayed 100 ▾

SSN	Last Name	First Name	School Code	Dual Awarded MTI	Dual Awarded GA	Certified	Academic Level	Disqualified Reason	Transfer Indicator	Transfer Start Term
xxx-xx	🔒					N ▾	- Select - ▾	The recipient is enrolled at t ▾		
xxx-xx	🔒					Y ▾	Graduate ▾	- Select - ▾		

3

Save/Submit

✓

School Social Work Program (SSWS) – Certification (1/4)

Certification is available in GAP for the School Social Work Program (**SSWS**).

• **NOTE NEW NAME:** Formerly know as the Post-Master of Social Work School Social Work Professional Educator License Scholarship Program (SWSP).

To complete certification:

- 1. Log into GAP and Select **SSWS** from the programs drop-down.
- 2. Select the current academic year.
- 3. Click on the Certification Tab.
- 4. Click on a student’s name to open the certification pop-up.

SSWS

Home Student **Certification** Payment Reports

Welcome to the Internet application for processing School Social Work Scholarship Program.

To view the Student List for SSWS recipients whose Enrollment Status must be verified, select the previous academic year (i.e., 2024-2025) from the drop-down menu.

Academic Year
2026-2027 View Student List

Student SSN
Submit

SSWS 20XX-20XX: Certification List: View

Home Student **Certification** Payment Reports

List Filter

Entries displayed 100

#	Current SSN	Last Name	First Name	Date of Birth	School Code	Applicant Category	Eligible	Transfer
1	XXX-XX-	Last Name	First Name			Timely New		

School Social Work Program (SSWS) – Certification (2/4)

5. Complete the required fields based on the student's eligibility:
 - a. **Eligible** – select either Yes (complete b – f below) or No (complete g on next slide)
 - b. **Anticipated terms** – select the terms that the student is eligible for the award. Based on the terms selected, the corresponding Term Eligible Amount fields will become active. Complete C-E based on your selection.
 - c. **Term 1 Eligible Amount** – provide the amount the student is eligible for term 1.
 - d. **Term 2 Eligible Amount** – provide the amount the student is eligible for term 2.
 - e. **Term 3 Eligible Amount** – provide the amount the student is eligible for term 3.
 - f. **Anticipated Date of Program Completion** – provide the month and year the student is estimated to complete the program in the MM/YYYY format.

Certification Data **Eligible**

CISERO, KEYYONA

A valid Illinois Social Work License or Clinical Social Work License is a program eligibility requirement. If the applicant does not hold one of the required licenses, set the "Eligible" field to No and select the applicable Ineligible Reason.

The scholarship is applicable only toward tuition and mandatory fees.

Eligible: Yes ▾

Anticipated Term(s): 1 & 2 & 3 ▾

Term 1 Eligible Amount: 1000

Term 2 Eligible Amount: 1000

Term 3 Eligible Amount: 1000

Anticipated Date of Program Completion: 05/2027

Ineligible Reason: ▾

5. a-f

School Social Work Program (SSWS) – Certification (3/4)

g. Ineligible Reason – Select the appropriate ineligible reason from the list:

- Enrolled less than 3 credit hours
- Not enrolled in required Social Work courses
- Reached max number of terms allowed
- Student declined award
- No remaining unmet cost
- No Valid IL Social Work License
- Has not been continuously enrolled
- Not a U.S. citizen/eligible noncitizen
- Defaulted student loan
- Not making satisfactory academic progress

Certification Data

Ineligible

CISERO, KEYYONA

A valid Illinois Social Work License or Clinical Social Work License is a program eligibility requirement. If the applicant does not hold one of the required licenses, set the "Eligible" field to No and select the applicable Ineligible Reason.

The scholarship is applicable only toward tuition and mandatory fees.

Eligible:

Anticipated Term(s):

Term 1 Eligible Amount:

Term 2 Eligible Amount:

Term 3 Eligible Amount:

Anticipated Date of Program Completion:

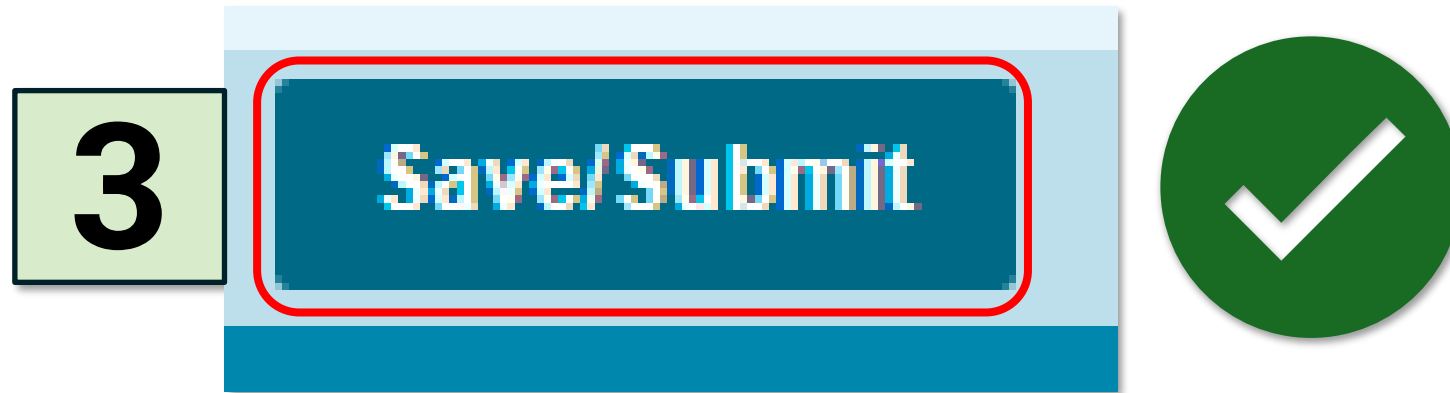
Ineligible Reason:

5. g

- Enrolled less than 3 credit hours
- Not enrolled in required Social Work courses
- Reached max number of terms allowed
- Student declined award
- No remaining unmet cost
- No Valid IL Social Work License
- Has not been continuously enrolled
- Not a U.S. citizen/eligible noncitizen
- Defaulted student loan
- Not making satisfactory academic progress

School Social Work Program (SSWS) – Certification (4/4)

3. After you've certified the record(s), click on the Save/Submit button at the bottom of the page. Once you've saved your entries, they are considered submitted and certification is complete.



For more information see the [SSWS User Guide](#) (note – the program name will be updated in this user guide soon)

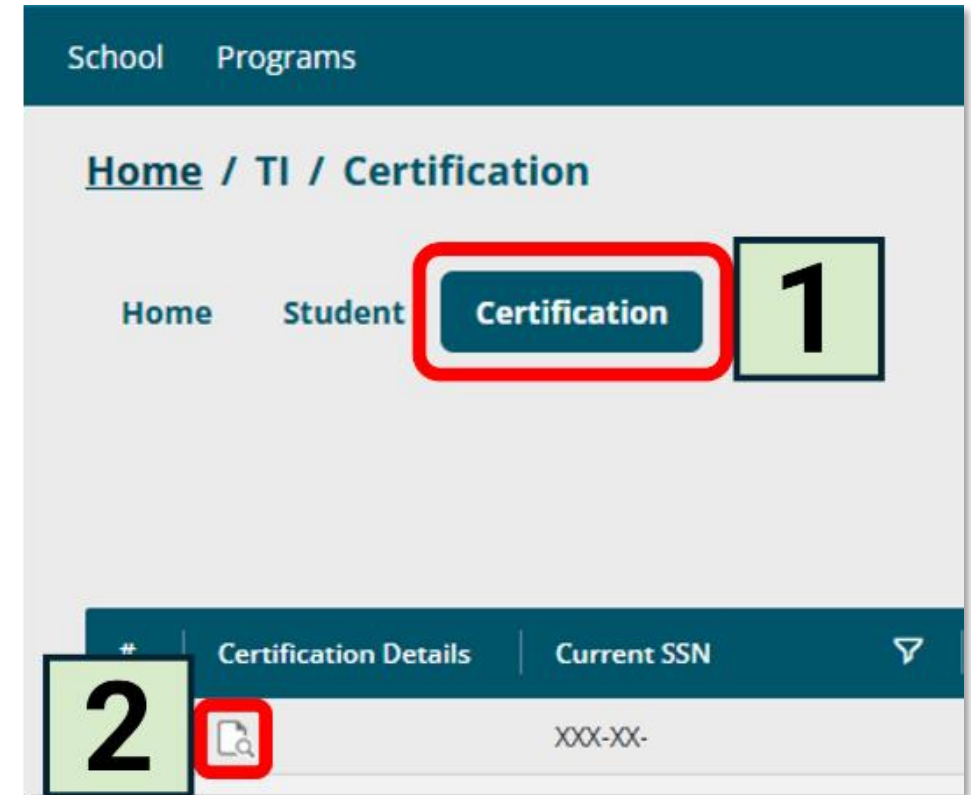
Teachers of Illinois – Certification (1/7)

Certification for the Teachers of Illinois Program is available in GAP access as of August 10, 2026.

To complete certification:

Log into GAP and Select **TI** from the programs drop-down.

1. Click on the certification tab within the TISP program in GAP.
2. Click on the document magnification icon in the Certification Details column.



Teachers of Illinois – Certification (2/7)

3. Complete each of the prompts:

a. Eligible

- Yes – Then the red highlighted sections must be completed (b – g see on following slides).
- No – Must complete the Ineligible Reason section only (h see on following slides).

3.a

Eligible - Yes

Eligible	Yes
Academic Level	
Is the student bilingual	
Bilingual Type	
Bilingual program	
Career Pathway Endorsement	
SAI	
Ineligible Reason	

Eligible - No

Eligible	No
Academic Level	
Is the student bilingual	
Bilingual Type	
Bilingual program	
Career Pathway Endorsement	
SAI	
Ineligible Reason	

Teachers of Illinois – Certification (3/7)

b. Academic Level

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate

c. Is the student bilingual

- Yes – If selected, must complete sections d & e.
- No – If selected, continue to section f to complete certification.

3.c

Bilingual – Yes

Eligible	Yes
Academic Level	--Select--
Is the student bilingual	Yes
Bilingual Type	
Bilingual program	
Career Pathway Endorsement	
SAI	
Ineligible Reason	

Bilingual – No

Eligible	Yes
Academic Level	--Select--
Is the student bilingual	No
Bilingual Type	
Bilingual program	
Career Pathway Endorsement	
SAI	
Ineligible Reason	

Teachers of Illinois – Certification (4/7)

d. Bilingual Type

- State Seal of Biliteracy
- Passed educator licensure proficiency test
- All of the above

e. Bilingual program

- Bilingual educator preparation program
- Other

f. Career Pathway Endorsement

- Yes
- No

g. SAI – Input the numerical value of a students calculated SAI.

Teachers of Illinois – Certification (5/7)

If “No” was selected for Eligible, then an Ineligible Reason must be provided:

h. Ineligible Reason

- Not a US Citizen/eligible non-citizen
- Not an Illinois resident
- Not a HS grad/no GED
- Defaulted student loan
- Conflicting scholarship
- Not making satisfactory academic progress
- Reached max number of years allowed
- GPA not at least a 2.5 on 4.0 scale (soph or above)
- Not enrolled at least half time
- Student is not accepting TI
- Not enrolled in participating school
- Not enrolled
- Not enrolled in teacher program

Teachers of Illinois – Certification (6/7)

4. After selecting the appropriate options for the student, click **Save Certification Details** in the bottom right corner of the screen
5. “**Successfully saved changes!**” message will appear in the upper right of the screen.

The screenshot displays a web interface for the Teachers of Illinois Certification process. At the top, a green notification banner with a warning icon and the text "Successfully saved changes!" is highlighted with a red box and labeled with a green square containing the number 5. Below this, there are two dropdown menus: "Change Program" with "TI" selected and "Academic Year" with "20XX-20XX" selected. In the bottom right corner, there are two buttons: "Discard" and "Save Certification Details". The "Save Certification Details" button is highlighted with a red box and labeled with a green square containing the number 4.

Teachers of Illinois – Certification (7/7)

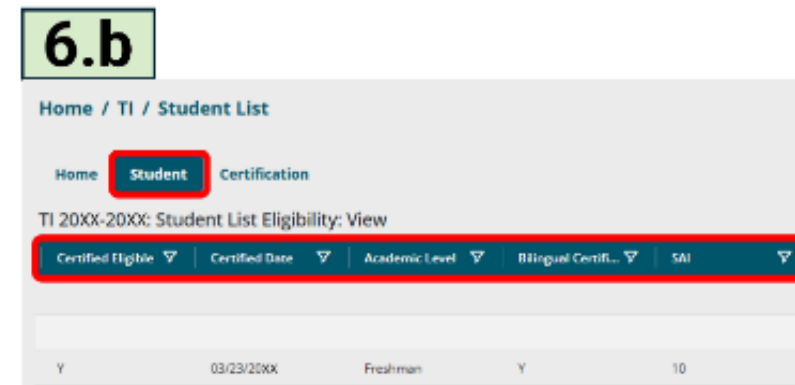
6. Students marked as eligible will now appear on other screens in GAP:

a. Certification List Eligibility: View screen

- the Eligible column will populate as either a Y or N

b. Student List Eligibility: View screen

- The Certified Eligible, Certified Date, Academic Level, Bilingual Certification, and SAI columns will populate the information from the completed certification.



Illinois Veterans Grant (IVG) and Illinois National Guard Grant (ING) – Benefit Reporting

- ISAC is accepting benefit usage data for the 2026-27 [Illinois Veteran Grant \(IVG\)](#) summer and fall terms and the 2026-27 [Illinois National Guard \(ING\) Grant](#) fall term.
- The **benefit usage data deadlines for IVG and ING** are as follows:

IVG Summer Term

On or before:

September 30, 2026

IVG & ING Fall Term

On or before:

December 31, 2026

Any 2026-27 benefit usage data that was **submitted** via File Transfer Protocol (FTP) **prior to August 24, 2026, will not be processed**, and must be resubmitted by the college.

To prevent having to resubmit data in the future, never submit benefit usage data via FTP until after ISAC announces it is accepting the data for that academic year.

IVG & ING Grant Benefit Usage Data Reminders (1/2)

- Even though ISAC may not be able to fully reimburse institutions for 2026-27 IVG & ING Grant awards, reporting of enrollment hours must still take place so that benefit usage (i.e., eligibility units) can be accurately assessed to students' accounts.
 - As announced in a [July 1, 2026 e-Message](#), fiscal year 2027 funds have been appropriated for ISAC to reimburse public universities for some of the tuition and fees that they waive on behalf of eligible veterans and Illinois National Guard members.
 - Details regarding the disbursement of these funds will be provided once they have been determined.
- Benefit usage data for the [IVG](#) and [ING Grant](#) programs is submitted to ISAC by colleges via the benefit usage functionality within each program's system.
 - Colleges report enrollment hours and dollar amounts for initial, in-district and out-of-district benefit usage by students, as well as adjustments to previously-submitted data.

IVG & ING Grant Benefit Usage Data Reminders (2/2)

- Colleges are encouraged to regularly check their Benefits Results report for each program.

Further details are provided in:

- [IVG User Guide](#)
- [ING Grant User Guide](#)
- For more details on the 160-byte File Transfer Protocol (FTP), specifications see: [IVG File Layout](#) and [ING Grant File Layout](#).

GEAR UP – New ISAC Program

- Students have received letters indicating their eligibility.
- The program is not currently available in GAP.
- ISAC will provide further guidance once the program is available.

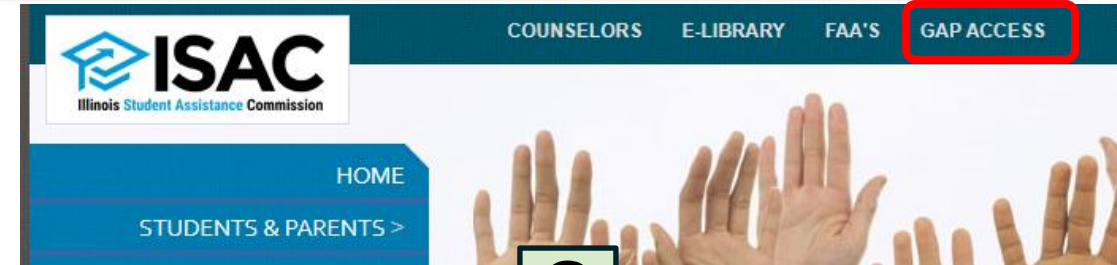
**No action is
currently
required from
schools.**

GAP Access Program User Guides

1

To access a list of all the most current versions of ISAC's Program User Guides from isac.org:

1. From the homepage, click the GAP Access Tab.
2. Scroll down to the GAP Access User Guides Section.
 - The User Guides are listed with the GAP Access User Guide first followed by individual program guides alphabetically.



2

GAP Access User Guides

User Guides for all GAP Access functionality are below. General questions, user name and password maintenance, and technical information about GAP Access are answered in the Activating and Authentication User Guides.

- [GAP Access Portal User Guide](#)
- [AIM HIGH Data Collection](#)
- [Budget Reporting Process User Guide](#)
- [Deceased, Disabled, and MIA-POW Veterans' Dependents Scholarship](#)
- [ECACE Scholarship Program User Guide](#)
- [Enrollment Status Verification for the Teacher Programs User Guide](#)
- [Golden Apple Scholars User Guide](#)
- [ING Grant User Guide](#)
- [IVG Program User Guide](#)
- [MAP Advising Data Collection User Guide](#)
- [MAP Eligibility User Guide](#)
- [MAP Payment User Guide](#)
- [MTI User Guide](#)
- [Nursing Education Scholarship \(NES\) User Guide](#)
- [PFC User Guide](#)
- [School Social Work Scholarship User Guide](#)
- [SETTW Certification Process User Guide](#)
- [Teachers of Illinois Scholarship Program User Guide](#)

Important Dates & Contact Information



Debit Letters – Past Due

Debit letters for returning funds to ISAC were emailed to the primary administrators at each school.

- The due date for these letters was **August 19, 2026**.
- A check along with a [Gift Assistance Refund Check Form](#) should be completed and sent to ISAC.
- [Check Refund Explanation Form](#) may be completed to explain any additional refund information.

All refund checks must be accompanied by a Gift Assistance Programs Check Return Form, and the specific term(s) and program(s) for each refund must be identified.

Please make all checks payable to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

The address for checks and the Check Return Form to be sent is:

Illinois Student Assistance Commission

Attn: Cash Receipts

1755 Lake Cook Road

Deerfield, IL 60015-5209



August 2026

Director of Financial Aid
ABC COLLEGE
123 Street
Lincoln, IL, 62656

Dear Colleague:

As of today's date, our records indicate that your institution has an outstanding amount due to ISAC for the Monetary Award Program (MAP) for the 2025-26 academic year in the amount(s) listed below. **The outstanding amount(s) due to ISAC, with proper documentation, should be returned to ISAC on or before August 19, 2026.**

TOTAL amount due to ISAC - MAP \$3,007.00

Please do not send refund checks to ISAC without providing the appropriate adjustment data. All refund checks must be accompanied by a Gift Assistance Programs Check Return Form, and the specific term(s) and program(s) for each refund must be identified. The check return form can be found at:

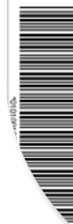
www.isac.org/faas/processes/documents/Check_Return_Form.pdf. **Please make all checks payable to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.** The address for checks and the Check Return Form to be sent is:

Illinois Student Assistance Commission
Attn: Cash Receipts
1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL 60015-5209

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact ISAC's School Services Department by calling 888.247.2172 or by sending an e-mail message to isac.schoolservices@illinois.gov.

School Services Department
Illinois Student Assistance Commission



Due on or before August 19, 2026

MAP CODE: 000

Federal Update – Fraud Detection Technical Issue

Updated on Aug. 21, 2026:

- From June 29 to July 6, 2026, a technical issue prevented fraud evaluation results from being included in certain FAFSA forms processed by FSA.
- The Department corrected the issue on July 6, after which fraud evaluations resumed as normal.
- A one-time fraud evaluation was conducted on the transactions received during this period and those transactions were reprocessed under reprocessing reason code 18.
- Reprocessing was completed on the morning of Monday, Aug. 24, 2026.
- For more information on Real-Time Fraud Detection see [Electronic Announcement APP-25-16](#) and [Electronic Announcement GENERAL-25-36](#).

Federal Update – DHS-SAVE Eligible Noncitizen Page

The Department of Education has updated the *DHS-SAVE Instructions for School Users* guide to provide instructions related to the transition to Login.gov for system access.

- **Financial aid administrators should replace prior versions of the document with version 5.0 to stay up to date with procedures.**
- The [DHS-SAVE, Eligible Noncitizen page](#) serves as a repository for all Electronic Announcements; DHS-SAVE system instructional documents; and other information related to eligible noncitizen issues.

Contact Information

- If you have questions, contact: applicationsystemsdivision@ed.gov.

Attachments

- [DHS-SAVE System Instructions for U.S. Department of Education \(School\) Users Version 5.0 in PDF Format](#)

U.S. Department of Education – Letter from Secretary McMahon (1/3)

On August 3, U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon issued a national call to action to university presidents and governing boards, urging them to reaffirm higher education’s foundational commitments to academic excellence, pathbreaking research, and national service. Secretary McMahon **called on every postsecondary institution to publish, by the end of 2026, a clear public statement outlining its commitment to implementing reforms that will help restore public trust in higher education.**

For nearly four centuries, American higher education has shaped the leaders, institutions, and ideas that fortified the nation’s civic life, powered scientific advancement, and cultivated immense economic opportunity. Yet, as many institutions have drifted from these principles, confidence in higher education has eroded. **Recent polling demonstrates that public trust in higher education has reached historic lows across political parties and demographic groups.**

In her letter, Secretary McMahon expressed confidence that bold university leadership will help usher in a renewed era of academic excellence, economic opportunity, scientific discovery, and American leadership.

Click [here](#) to read the full letter.

U.S. Department of Education – Letter from Secretary McMahon (2/3)

To this end, she urged universities to begin a “forthright conversation with the American people” guided by seven central questions:

- 1. Transparency and Merit in Admissions:** How will your institution ensure that admissions criteria are transparent and wholly described to prospective applicants? And how will your institution ensure admissions decisions are based on merit, achievement, and your university’s educational purpose?
- 2. Free Speech and Open Inquiry:** How will your institution protect the free exchange of ideas, wide-ranging debate, and openminded campus discourse? And how will you guarantee that unruly and violent protestors do not harass students or disrupt classes, research, public lectures, and campus operations?
- 3. Intellectual Pluralism and Academic Vitality:** How will your institution encourage intellectual pluralism in all its academic units? How will your faculty hiring and evaluation practices support academic vitality and ensure that all relevant perspectives are taken seriously? And how will your institution ensure the research enterprise is dedicated to advancing knowledge, deepening understanding, and serving the American people who fund it?
- 4. Affordability, Value, and Student Outcomes:** How will your institution ensure that families can access affordable, high-return, degrees? And what will your institution do to contain costs, improve pricing transparency, and ensure that every academic program equips students to repay their loans?

U.S. Department of Education – Letter from Secretary McMahon (3/3)

CONT. To this end, she urged universities to begin a “forthright conversation with the American people” guided by seven central questions:

5. **Academic Standards and Rigor in the Age of AI:** How will your institution incentivize rigor in the age of AI, combat grade inflation, and prioritize excellence in teaching and learning?
6. **Safeguarding Research Integrity from Malign Foreign Influence:** How will your institutions protect academic programs from foreign influence, and safeguard the integrity of the research enterprise?
7. **Prioritizing American Interests:** How will your institution answer this national call to action? How can your campus and faculty advance American security interests, deliver academic programs that meet urgent workforce needs, and contribute materially to the Nation’s prosperity?

Inside Higher Ed – “42% of Colleges Haven’t Fully Submitted Required Student Outcomes Data” (1/2)

The Education Department is giving the more than 1,900 colleges missing some or all Financial Value Transparency data one last chance. Noncompliance could bring consequences.

- Newly [released data](#) shows that of more than 4,640 colleges and universities with programs eligible for funding, about 1,930 are either missing or have underreported some or all of the data they are required to provide under federal accountability rules.
- That’s about 42 percent of the institutions in the database department officials attached to the warning. A deeper *Inside Higher Ed* analysis of the data shows that 578 of those institutions—or roughly 30 percent—haven’t properly submitted any of the seven required files, which span three academic years.
- “Colleges with missing data have until Jan. 15, 2027, to comply with the reporting requirements. After that, department officials say, “incomplete or inaccurate submissions may raise concerns about an institution’s administrative capability to continue participating in the [federal student aid] programs.”

Inside Higher Ed – “42% of Colleges Haven’t Fully Submitted Required Student Outcomes Data” (2/2)

Breaking Down the Data

- Michael Itzkowitz, who helped to develop the College Scorecard during the Obama administration, said it’s important to note the number of for-profit institutions that haven’t submitted some or all of their data. **Roughly 1,400 for-profit institutions** are listed in ED’s dataset, and 819 of them have at least one data file that wasn’t properly submitted—that’s nearly 60 percent.
- By comparison, **526 public institutions** are missing some data out of about 1,700 total—that’s about 30 percent.
- For the full article and see the database see [Inside Higher Ed – 42% of Colleges Haven’t Fully Submitted Required student Outcomes Data](#)

More Than Half of Colleges Are Either Missing or Underreporting One File or All Seven

About 30 percent haven’t submitted any data.



Chart: Inside Higher Ed • Source: Inside Higher Ed analysis of department data • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Resource: Illinois Education Watch – Federal Education Policy Tracker

“Helping Illinoisans understand federal changes affecting education and care—what's changing, why it matters, and key opportunities ahead to support every child and student.”

- Advance Illinois has collected information regarding current federal policies that affect Illinois students.
- See full site at: www.ilfededwatch.org
- Note – this site is subject to ongoing changes.

LAST UPDATED: 15 JUL 2026

Ongoing developments at the federal level are creating significant change for Illinois children, students, and families.



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FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS CASES FROM IL
RESOLVED (2025)



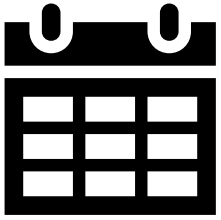
144+

DEPT. OF ED PROGRAMS MOVED



\$3.2 billion

HIGHER ED FUNDING CANCELLED OR AT
RISK



Upcoming Monthly Webinars

September

23rd

@ 2 p.m.

October

28th

@ 2 p.m.

November

18th

@ 2 p.m.

Student Engagement & Support Services

For inquiries from students, parents, and the general public:



800-899-ISAC (4722)



Isac.studentservices@illinois.gov

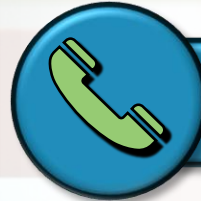
FAX

847-831-8549

**Spanish-speaking counselors are available
8 a.m. – 4: 30 p.m. CT**

Partner Services Department

Provides information, policy guidance, training and support to colleges, high schools and other ISAC partners:



866-247-2172



Isac.schoolservices@illinois.gov



847-831-8549

Partner Services Team

Hannah Castellanos Hannah.Castellanos@illinois.gov

Sarah Dulay Sarah.Dulay@illinois.gov

Hayle Mickelson Hayle.Mickelson@illinois.gov

Daniela Rios Daniela.Rios@illinois.gov

Sherry Schonauer Sherry.Schonauer@illinois.gov



ISAC E-Messaging Sign Up

Our e-Messaging service will keep you informed and up-to-date on the Illinois Student Assistance Commission's programs and services. Our messages share ISAC programmatic and operational information and are not marketing in nature.

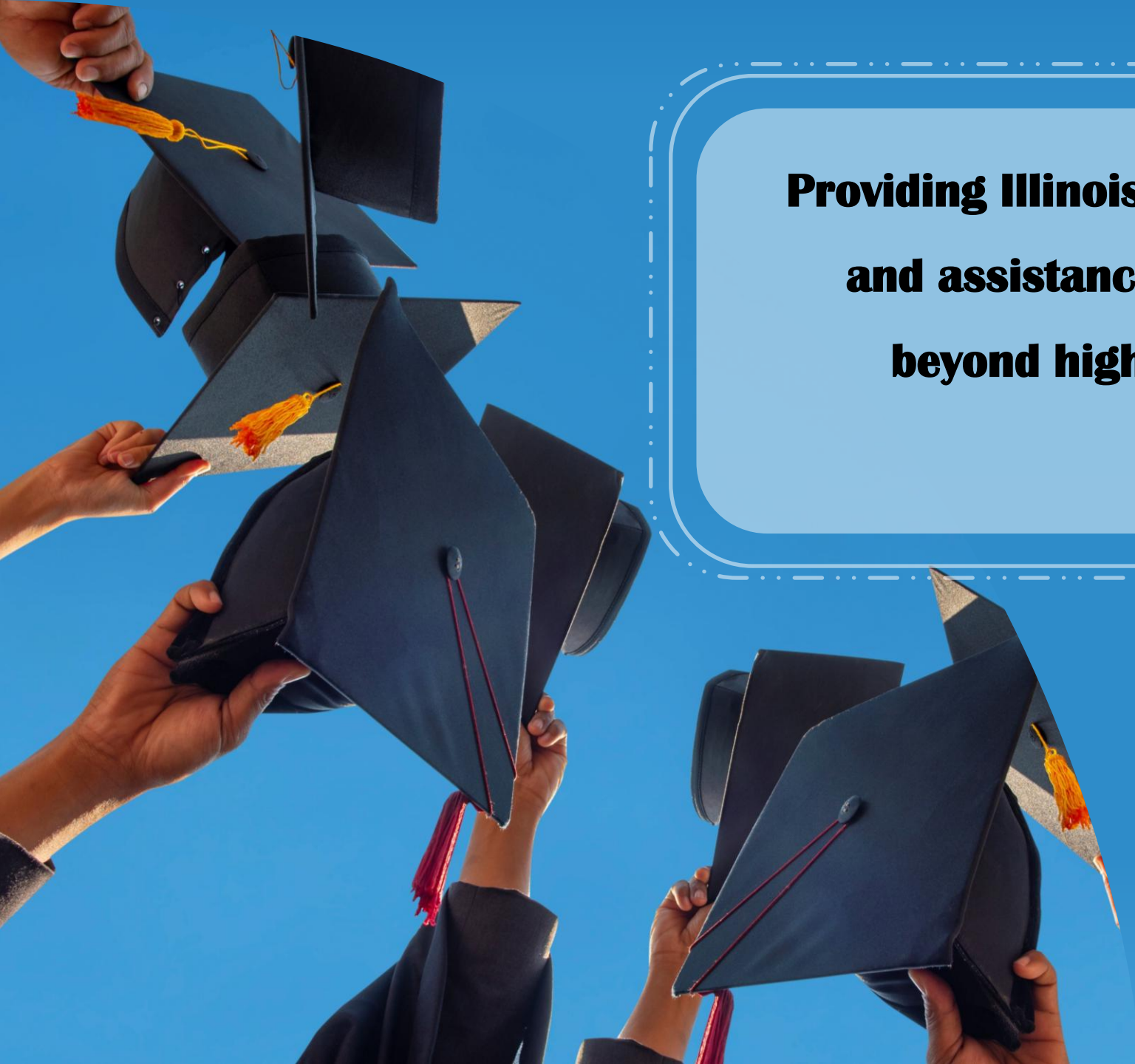
1. Choose the category from the list on the right that best describes you. Click on the link.
2. Fill in your Email, First Name, & Last Name.
3. Select one or more of the available Email Lists
4. Click "**Sign Up!**".

[Student/Parents](#)

[Counselors](#)

[Community Partners](#)

[Financial Aid
Administrators \(FAAs\)](#)

A low-angle shot of several hands holding up black graduation caps with tassels against a clear blue sky. The caps are arranged in a cluster, with some tassels being yellow and others maroon.

**Providing Illinois students with information
and assistance to help make education
beyond high school accessible and
affordable.**

