



## The Illinois DREAM Act

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On August 1, 2011, the Governor signed the **Illinois DREAM Act** into law. This law does not affect the immigration status of students as discussed in the proposed federal DREAM legislation; however, it provides students who qualify for assistance with the means to afford college tuition. The law creates a privately financed fund that will offer college scholarships to undocumented immigrant students.

Specifically, the Illinois DREAM Act provides for the following:

- Allows anyone with a valid social security number or taxpayer identification number, including undocumented students, to participate in the **State Treasurer's College Savings Pool** and the **Illinois Prepaid Tuition Plan**. These programs allow families of DREAM youths to plan, invest, and save for their children's college education.
- Public school counselors are required to be better trained and prepared to address the needs of serving students who are the children of immigrants, including opportunities for higher education for undocumented immigrant students.
- Requires the Illinois Student Assistance Commission to establish an Illinois DREAM Fund Commission administered by Governor appointed members who represent the geographic and ethnic diversity in Illinois including students, higher education administrators and faculty, and other individuals committed to advancing the educational opportunities of the children of immigrants.
- The Illinois DREAM Fund Commission will be responsible:
  1. to raise funds from private donors and establish scholarships for qualified undocumented students;
  2. to select the recipients of the scholarships funded through the Illinois DREAM fund;
  3. to research issues relating to the availability of assistance with the costs of higher education for the children of immigrants and other issues regarding access for and the performance of the children of immigrants within higher education; and
  4. to establish and administer training programs for public high school counselors and public higher education counselors, admissions officers, and financial aid officers.

To qualify, student recipients of the Illinois DREAM scholarships must demonstrate that they:

- have resided with his or her parents or guardian while attending a public or private high school in Illinois;
- have graduated from a public or private high school or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in Illinois;



- have attended school in Illinois for at least 3 years as of the date he or she graduated from high school or received the equivalent of a high school diploma; and
- have at least one parent who immigrated to the United States.

This law becomes effective immediately.

#### **More Information**

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