

Illinois High School Equivalency Certificate Renamed In 2023 To Accurately Recognize Equal Value For Graduates

by Matt Berry

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SPRINGFIELD - A new law in 2023 will remove a long-standing stigma for people that earn an Illinois High School Equivalency Certificate. Starting January 1, 2023, that certificate will become the State of Illinois High School Diploma to more accurately

reflect the equal value of that diploma and traditional diplomas earned at high schools across Illinois.

Last year, in a bi-partisan effort, Illinois lawmakers passed and Governor J.B. Pritzker signed SB3792 which amended the code of multiple acts and agencies to replace references to ‘high school equivalency certificate’ with ‘State of Illinois High School Diploma’. The change will help Illinois graduates establish reciprocity with educational requirements in other states.

“Students that earn a State of Illinois High School Diploma must possess the same level of knowledge and meet the same expectations as graduates from an Illinois high school. In fact, the two efforts are the same and should be considered as such in Illinois or any other state when applying for post-secondary careers or schooling,” said Illinois Community College Board Executive Director Brian Durham.

“I have the pleasure of giving out diplomas to candidates that have completed the requirements to earn a high school equivalency. The pride on the candidates' faces and the joy of accomplishment is like a graduation day. Changing the name to the State of Illinois High School Diploma honors the hard work it takes to return to getting an education and taking the critical steps needed to engage in higher education or employment,” said Beth Crider, Peoria County Regional Superintendent.

Requirements to achieve the diploma remain the same as the certificate. Candidates must complete their high school equivalency through GED® or HiSET® testing, or through Alternative Methods of Credentialing. Candidates must also meet the Illinois Constitution requirement either obtained in high school or by using the online Constitution module at <https://ilconstitution.org>.

No action is required for those who currently hold a High School Equivalency credential that remains valid. Any valid certificate holder wishing to receive new copies to reflect the updated language may do so, though it is not necessary. Updated copies can be obtained through the appropriate Regional Office of Education (ROE).

About the Illinois Community College Board

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is the state coordinating organization for the Illinois Community College System - the third largest in the country and the leading public workforce development trainer in the state. The ICCB has statutory responsibility for administering state and federal grants to community college districts and adult education providers and managing high school equivalency testing for Illinois. Illinois community colleges serve over 600,000 residents each year in credit, noncredit, and continuing education courses. Illinois is home to 48 colleges in 39 community college

districts which provide high quality, accessible, cost-effective educational opportunities to the entire state.