

ISAC Operational Update and Program News

February 25, 2026



Agenda

- 2024-2025 Enrollment Verification
- 2025-2026 Operational Update
- 2026-2027 Operational Update
- Important Dates & Contact Information
- Questions

2024-25 Award Year Fiscal Year (FY) 2025

Program Service Requirements: Enrollment Verification

- Enrollment verification due date was **February 20, 2026**.
- If a recipient fails to meet the applicable requirements, **the award converts to a loan that must be repaid**.
- Outside of the main enrollment verification window, requests are primarily sent by the ISAC Program Service Requirements Enrollment Verification Department:



isac.proreq@illinois.gov

- Example requests include:
 - Providing the award amount,
 - the last date of attendance in the qualifying program,
 - providing the current enrollment status and effective date.

2025-26 Award Year Fiscal Year (FY) 2026

MAP Payment Processing – Late Claims

Payment of Late Claims:

- Based on our current analysis, payment has been approved for 2025-26 MAP late initial claims & increases **received from December 6, 2025, through (including) February 10, 2026, will be paid.**

Next Steps:

- ISAC is continuing to accept fall-term claims; however, **initial claims and upward adjustment amounts for the fall term submitted after February 10 will be held as late**, to be considered for payment later in the year.
- ISAC will continue to monitor institutions' claims and adjustments and the remaining appropriations and decisions will be made regarding whether additional 2025-26 MAP term-one late claims will be paid.

MAP Payment Processing – Suspense Release

- Based off current analysis of MAP appropriations and claims received to date it has been determined that ISAC released the following:
 - **Applications received between June 6, 2025, and July 1, 2025, were released from suspense and have become payable.**
 - Applications received on or after July 2, 2025, will continue to be held in suspense.
 - ISAC will continue to monitor the appropriation and claims to see if an additional release can be made in the future.
 - The deadline date for submitting first-term claims for these records, as well as second-term claims, is **Friday, March 27, 2026.**
- For more information and updates and information on MAP suspense, see:
isac.org/isac-gift-assistance-programs/map/suspense/

MAP Payment Processing - Spring

- Payment Processing for Spring term began on **January 5, 2026**.
 - The 2nd semester MAP Payment Claim Deadline date is **March 27, 2026**.
 - Payment requests may be submitted through the MAP system in GAP Access or via the File Transfer Protocol process.
 - Payment requests are processed on a nightly basis, and results are provided the next business day.
- August 21 e-Message: isac.org/e-library/partner-e-messages-and-newsletters/faa-e-messages/eLibrary-FAA-2025-0821-2.html

Teachers of Illinois Scholarship Program

- The Application is currently available in the Student Portal.
 - Priority Application Consideration date was **February 16, 2026**.
- MTI applicants have been notified and encouraged to review the eligibility requirements before applying.
 - MTI recipients that were awarded in the previous year will be treated as Renewal Applicants if they are found eligible for the Teachers of Illinois Scholarship.
- ISAC plans to open both terms for claims at the same time –**TBD**.
 - Payment screens will be presented in a future webinar once available.

Teachers of Illinois: Awarding

- Eligible applicants may qualify for an annual award of up to \$7,500 for the regular academic year (fall and spring terms),
 - not to exceed the total cost of attendance at the institution at which the student is enrolled.
 - Because of the timing of this year's award, institutions may, in the best interest of students and to assist with administration of the award, either:
 - package the award across the fall and spring terms or;
 - disburse the award as a lump-sum payment in the spring term.
 - Regardless of the disbursement method, the award shall be considered an annual award, and the recipient will still be required to one full year of service obligation.
- ISAC will be drafting Teachers of IL rules for the 26-27 year and will determine at that time if this flexibility will carry forward in subsequent academic years.

Teachers of Illinois – Q & A

- **Can a student that graduated in Fall 2025 receive a full year award and have it dispersed for the fall term when requesting payment?**
 - Yes. This is considered an annual award that is split between terms; however, schools can request the full amount in one term if it is in the best interest of the student and does not exceed the cost of attendance.
- **Can a student in a Master's Degree program apply?**
 - For an applicant's initial teaching license, the statute does not seem to differentiate between a student enrolled in a BA or a Master's program, **as long as it is "a course of study leading to teacher licensure, including alternative teacher licensure, to be a preschool, elementary, or secondary school teacher."**
- **Can a student that is already a certified teacher apply?**
 - For a student already certified, the statute grants eligibility to students seeking a "master's degree in an academic field in which he or she is teaching." Or to seek an additional teaching endorsement.

Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE)

- Colleges have completed the certification process and awarding was completed August 28, 2025.
 - The priority claim deadline date for the *second-term* (*spring for semester schools; winter for quarter schools*) is **Monday, March 30, 2026**.
- Although the *first-term* priority claim deadline date was **December 31, 2025**, colleges may continue submitting first-term claims.

Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver (SETTW) Program

- Functionality to certify eligibility for 2025-26 SETTW Program is available in the SETTW system.
- If subsequent 2025-26 SETTW awards are announced, ISAC will send e-mail messages to impacted institutions.
 - We ask that you certify each student's eligibility via the SETTW system within 60 days of the date on which the e-mail is received.

Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program

- Application processing, eligibility certification and awarding is performed by the Golden Apple Foundation goldenapple.org/scholars.
- Second-term payment requests (i.e., claims) are being accepted.
 - Timely requests must be submitted on or before **Monday, March 30, 2025**.
 - We encourage claims to be submitted as soon as you can do so.
- See [2025-26 Golden Apple Updates \(September 29, 2025\)](#), [2025-26 Claims and Benefit Usage Data Updates and Reminders \(December 3, 2025\)](#) and [Submit 2025-26 Claims and Benefit Usage Data for Second Term \(January 16, 2026\)](#) e-Messages for more information.

2025-26 Academic Year – Comparison of Teacher Programs (1/4)

| | Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Scholarship | Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois | Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver | Teachers of Illinois Scholarship | TEACH Grant Program (Federal program) |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| Priority Application Date | May 19, 2025 | April 1, 2025 | March 1, 2025 | February 16, 2026 | No set date |
| Maximum Award (cannot exceed the cost of attendance) | Up to \$7,500 per academic year | Up to \$2,500 during the first or second year as a Golden Apple Scholar and up to \$5,000 during the third, fourth, or fifth year as a Scholar | Exemption from paying tuition and mandatory fees for up to 4 calendar years | Up to \$7,500 per academic year, maximum of 8 semesters or 12 quarters | Up to \$4,000 per academic year |
| Eligible Expenses Covered | Up to the total cost of attendance after other financial aid. Cannot exceed cost of attendance. | Tuition, mandatory fees, room and board (or commuter allowances), Cannot exceed cost of attendance when combined with other aid. | Tuition and mandatory fees | Up to the total cost of attendance after other financial aid. Cannot exceed the cost of attendance. | Up to the total cost of attendance after other financial aid. Cannot exceed cost of attendance. |

2025-26 Academic Year – Comparison of Teacher Programs (2/4)

| | Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Scholarship | Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois | Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver | Teachers of Illinois Scholarship | TEACH Grant Program (Federal program) |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| Eligible Institutions | Gateways-entitled and ECACE-member public or non-profit private 2- or 4-year institutions | Golden Apple Foundation-approved Illinois public and private colleges | ISAC-approved Illinois public 4-year colleges offering a concentration in special education | ISAC-approved Illinois public or private colleges | Institutions participating in the TEACH Grant Program |
| Eligible Program of Study | Associate of Applied Science degree (or related certificate) in early childhood education, associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education, or a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, with or without a Professional Educator License. Students who already hold a bachelor's degree in early childhood education are not eligible. | Postsecondary course of study leading to an initial teacher licensure or taking additional courses needed to gain Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) approval to teach, including alternative teacher licensure | Coursework required for initial licensure in any area of special education as determined by the university | Coursework required for initial teaching licensure including alternative teacher licensure, teaching endorsement or master's degree, or teacher licensure after receiving a College and Career Pathway Endorsement | Undergraduate and/or post-baccalaureate coursework necessary to begin a career in teaching |

2025-26 Academic Year – Comparison of Teacher Programs (3/4)

| | Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Scholarship | Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois | Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver | Teachers of Illinois Scholarship | TEACH Grant Program (Federal program) |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| Teaching Commitment | Recipients are expected to continue or return to teaching or providing direct services in the early childhood care and education field in the State of Illinois after completion of their program of study | Recipients must sign a promissory note and commit to teaching full time for at least 5 years at an eligible school, beginning within 2 years of completion of their program of study | Recipients commit to teaching full time for at least 2 of the 5 years immediately following completion of their education, beginning within 1 year of completion of their studies | Recipients commit to teaching full time at an eligible school for at least 1 year per year they received scholarship assistance, beginning within 1 year of completion of their studies | Recipients commit to teaching full time for at least 4 years in a highneed field in a qualifying school or educational service agency within 8 calendar years after completion of their studies |
| Repayment (if teaching commitment is not fulfilled) | None | 5% interest accrues from the repayment date if teaching commitment is not fulfilled | 5% interest accrues from the repayment date if teaching commitment is not fulfilled | 5% interest accrues from repayment date if teaching commitment is not fulfilled | Conversion to a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan with interest rate equal to current loan rate accrues from disbursement date if teaching commitment is not fulfilled |

2025-26 Academic Year – Comparison of Teacher Programs (4/4)

| | Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Scholarship | Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois | Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver | Teachers of Illinois Scholarship | TEACH Grant Program (Federal program) |
|------------------------|--|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Special Considerations | | Recipients who accept a Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program award may not accept an Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver or Teachers of Illinois Scholarship for the same academic period. | Recipients who accept a Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver award may not accept a Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program award or Teachers of Illinois Scholarship award for the same academic period. | Recipients who accept a Teachers of Illinois Scholarship award may not accept an Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver or Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program award for the same academic period. | |

To view a PDF of this chart, see [2025-2026 Academic Year – Comparison of Teacher Education Programs](#)

Nursing Education Scholarships (NES)

- The priority claim deadline date for the *second term* (*spring for semester schools; winter for quarter schools*) is **Monday, March 30, 2026**.
- Although the *first-term* priority claim deadline was **December 31, 2025**, colleges may continue submitting first-term claims.
- For more information see:
 - [Submit 2025-26 Claims and Benefit Usage Data for Second Term](#)

Illinois Veteran (IVG) & National Guard (ING) Grants

IVG

- ISAC is accepting IVG Grant benefit usage data for the winter quarter and spring term (semester and quarter).
- Timely submission for winter- & spring-term is **Friday, May 29, 2026**.

ING

- ISAC is accepting ING Grant benefit usage data for the winter quarter and spring term (semester and quarter).
- Timely submission for winter- & spring-term is **Friday, May 29, 2026**.
- For more information see these e-Messages:
 - [Submit 2025-26 IVG & ING Grant Benefit Usage Data \(August 21, 2025\)](#)
 - [2025-26 Claims and Benefit Usage Data Updates and Reminders \(December 3, 2025\)](#)
 - [Submit 2025-26 Claims and Benefit Usage Data for Second Term \(January 16, 2026\)](#).

Post-Master of Social Work School Social Work Professional Educator License Scholarship Program (SWSP)

- The 2025-26 online application is currently available.
- Certification is available in the SWSP system via GAP Access as of September 19, 2025
- Second term priority claim deadline is **Monday, March 30, 2026**.
- See the [2025-26 Claims and Benefit Usage Data Updates and Reminders \(December 3, 2025\)](#) and [Submit 2025-26 Claims and Benefit Usage Data for Second Term \(January 16, 2026\)](#) e-Messages for more information.

PFC Payment

- Priority payment request deadline dates are established for each term:
 - Although *first-term* (fall for semester and quarter schools) priority claim deadline was **January 23, 2026**, colleges may continue submitting first-term claims.
 - The *second-term (spring)* priority claim deadline is **TBD**. Claims for second-term are not currently being accepted.
- Claims submitted after a term's priority claim deadline date will be paid only if funds remain after all timely claims have been paid.
- For more payment information see:
 - [December 30 "2025-26 PFC Processing via GAP Access" e-Message](#)

Displaced Energy Worker Dependent Transition Scholarship

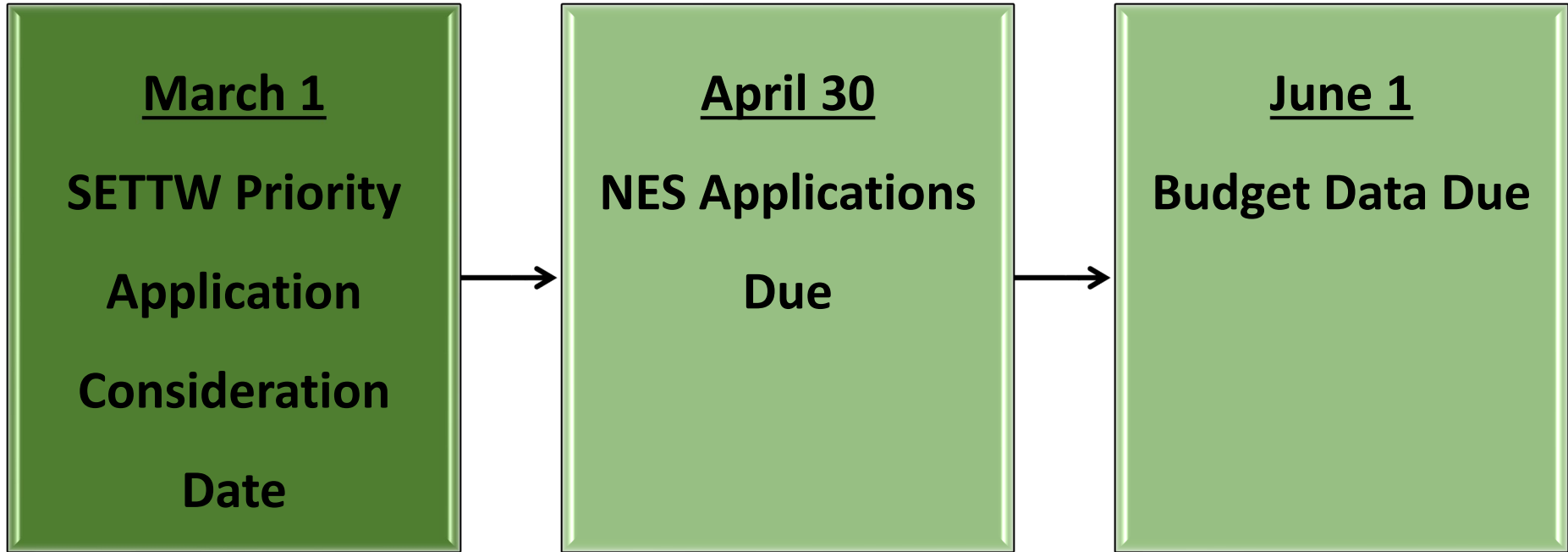
- The 2025-26 online application is available in the ISAC Student Portal
- The priority application consideration date for full-year and fall-only awards must have been completed by **October 1, 2025**
 - The date by which an application must be submitted is based on the first term for which the applicant is requesting funds. For the 2025-26 academic year:
 - **March 1, 2026** – 2nd semester (2nd/3rd quarter) only or 2nd semester (2nd/3rd quarter) and summer term consideration
 - **June 15, 2026** – summer term only consideration
- Students may use the 2025-26 application to apply for the fall 2025, spring 2026, and summer 2026 terms.

Grant Program for Exonerees and Their Dependents (GPE)

- The 2025-26 online application is available in the ISAC Student Portal.
- Applications are processed in date-received (i.e., "first come, first served") order.
 - For priority consideration each year, a complete application – including any supporting documentation – must be submitted as soon as possible after it becomes available.
- Funds can be applied only to tuition and mandatory fees and only for two semesters or three quarters in a regular school year.

2026-27 Award Year Fiscal Year (FY) 2027

Upcoming Important Dates – for 2026-27



****FAFSA and Alternative Application remain available. Students should complete these as soon as possible!****

Budget Data – 2026-27

- The [annual reporting of postsecondary institutions' budget information](#) is anticipated to begin in early April 2026.
- ISAC will notify colleges when this data is being accepted for the 2026-27 academic year.
- Colleges participating in the [Monetary Award Program \(MAP\)](#) and the [Illinois Veteran Grant \(IVG\)](#) and [Illinois National Guard \(ING\) Grant](#) programs must then submit 2026-27 budget data to ISAC **no later than Monday, June 1, 2026.**
- See e-messages for more details.

Important Dates & Contact Information

ILASFAA 2026 – Conference



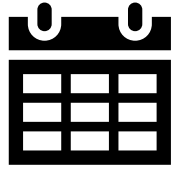
March 9th – 11th, 2026

**Registration is
available!**

ILASFAA will be hosting their annual conference at the Westin Hotel located in Lombard, IL.

This year's theme is "Navigating the Upside Down." – Stranger Things

For more information see: ilasfaa.org



ISAC Calendar

Webinars - Monthly Program & Operational Update

March

25th

@ 2 p.m.

April

29th

@ 2 p.m.

May

27th

@ 2 p.m.


Holiday Schedules

ISAC Staff will be unavailable:

- Memorial Day – Monday, May 25, 2026
- Juneteenth – Friday, June 19, 2026

ISAC's Student Engagement & Support Services

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

 : **800-899-ISAC (4722)**


 : [**isac.studentservices@illinois.gov**](mailto:isac.studentservices@illinois.gov)

Fax : 847-831-8549

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

ISAC's Partner Services Department

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

 : 866-247-2172

 : isac.schoolservices@illinois.gov

Fax : 847-831-8549

Partner Services Team

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Questions?





Thank you for attending today!