

2025-2026 Academic Year - Comparison of Teacher Education Programs

	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.
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

2025-2026 Academic Year - Comparison of Teacher Education Programs

	Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Scholarship	Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program	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 high-need 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
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.	