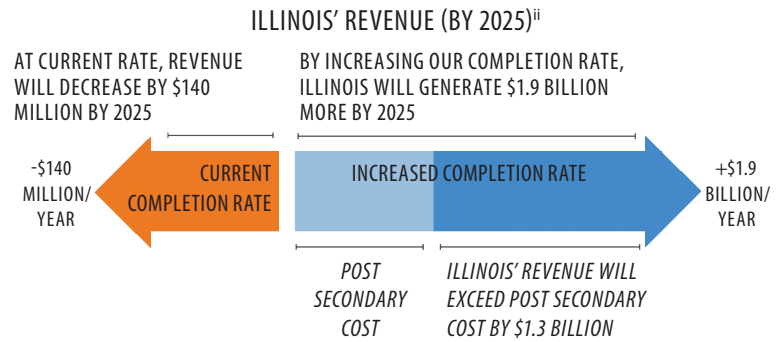
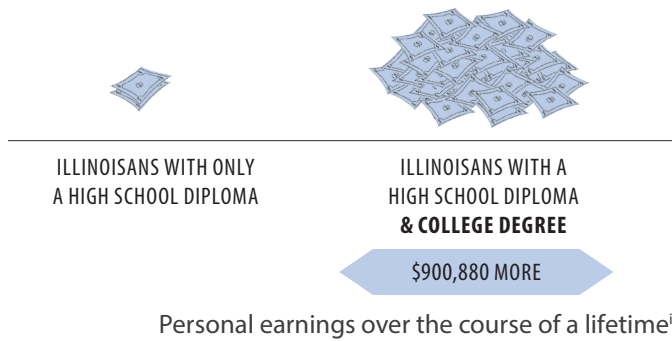


# BREAKING WITH TRADITION:

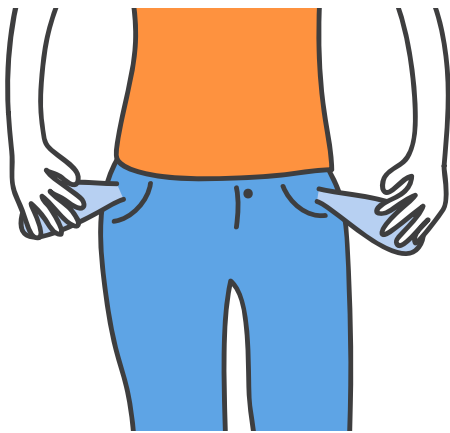
## Keeping Adult Students on the MAP

We all benefit from a better-educated Illinois: from workers who can earn more, to businesses who can find better-trained employees, to our state, which benefits from higher tax revenues.



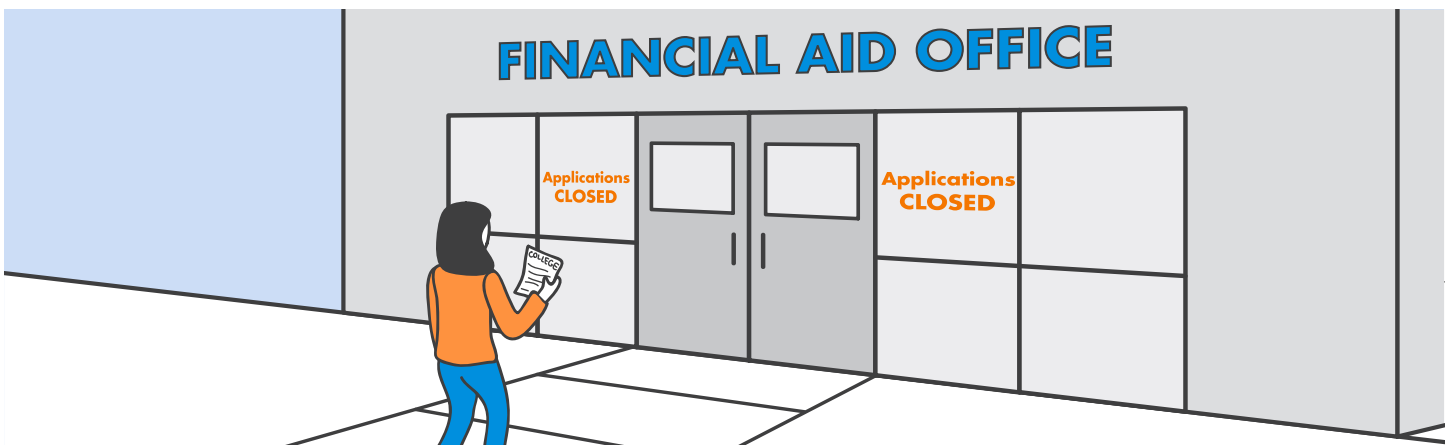
Illinois has a laudable goal: that 60 percent of Illinoisans will have a college degree by 2025. Meeting that goal would go a long way toward improving the future of our state.

Ensuring that adults currently in the workforce—along with traditional-age students—can succeed in college will determine whether Illinois will be able to meet this 60x25 goal.



**But without increasing our financial aid investment in low-income adult students, we cannot expect them to complete college.** Students consistently rank college and living costs as top reasons for dropping out of school.<sup>iii</sup>

That makes sense! About 75 percent of independent students eligible for Illinois' need-based financial aid grant, the Monetary Award Program (MAP), cannot afford to contribute anything out of pocket toward their college costs. **The average annual income of MAP-eligible students is just \$14,682.** How do we expect them to make ends meet and pay for college at the same time without financial aid?

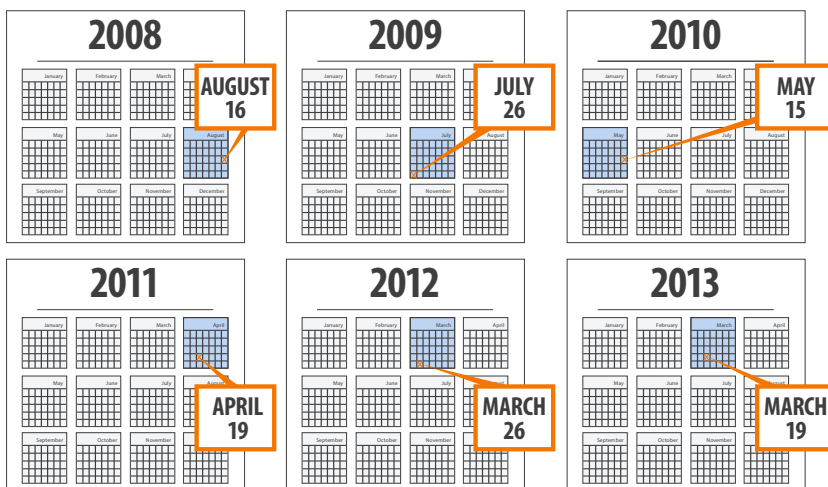


## The first-come, first-serve financial aid model we have fails adult Illinoisans who want to return to school.



Adult learners tend to apply for admission and enroll for classes later than traditional-age students—they have to balance family responsibilities and financial concerns and often cannot make the decision to apply until later.

Suspension dates have been getting earlier every year.



Illinois' adult students are getting a

**RAW DEAL**

even though the percentage of adults

**ELIGIBLE**

for MAP is

**RISING,**

**A SMALLER PERCENTAGE**

gets it every year.

### We need to change the policy.

1. **Set real deadlines** instead of relying on ever changing dates that are based on forecasting when the money will run out.
2. **Extend or expand the deadlines** to include more adult students who apply later.
3. **Focus our resources** on the lowest income students who cannot afford college—any college—without financial aid.

Only then will Illinois be able to meet the 60x25 challenge, and compete in a global economy.



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<sup>1</sup> Complete College America. 2011. *Illinois 2011*. Retrieved October 2012 from: <http://www.completecollege.org/docs/Illinois.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Center for Law and Social Policy. 2012. *Illinois: The Return on Investment to Increasing Postsecondary Credential Attainment*. Retrieved May 2012 from: [http://www.clasp.org/postsecondary/publication?id=1452&list=publications\\_states](http://www.clasp.org/postsecondary/publication?id=1452&list=publications_states).

<sup>3</sup> Center for Community College Student Engagement. 2012. *A Matter of Degrees: Promising Practices for Community College Student Success (A First Look)*. Retrieved September 2013 from: <http://www.ccsse.org/center/resources/publications.cfm>.