



AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program Report - Year Five

October 1, 2024

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Executive Summary

The Aspirational Institutional Match Helping Illinois Grow Higher Education (AIM HIGH) Grant Pilot Program was designed to help achieve several state goals, including increasing overall Illinois college student retention, improving Illinois college affordability and reducing student loan debt, and slowing student outmigration, as well as enhancing enrollment (and revenue) at Illinois public universities. Beginning with the 2019-20 academic year, AIM HIGH provided merit-based, means-tested student financial aid to first-time, full-time undergraduate students (including transfer students) who are Illinois residents attending any of the 12 Illinois public four-year universities.

AIM HIGH contains several statutory components that make this pilot unique among state financial aid programs. First, the State gave the institutions flexibility to customize their own programs and determine criteria for AIM HIGH recipients within broad guidelines established in law. Institutions are also required to guarantee renewability and predictability for recipients [i.e., an institution is awarding the grant for four years (it can be less for a transfer student), and requirements for renewal must be made clear at the time of the initial award]. Finally, participating universities are required to match AIM HIGH state funds expended each year with non-loan financial aid above the lesser of institutional aid distributed in academic year 2017-18 or 2021-22. The option to use the FY22 MOE allocation as baseline was included in Public Act 103-0516 (HB 301) during the 2023 Illinois Spring Legislative Session to address struggles for some schools to meet the MOE requirement due to downward trends in enrollment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors. The state matching funds are meant to supplement and not supplant existing commitments to financial aid through this Maintenance of Effort (MOE) component; schools are meant to also have “skin in the game”.

For the first year of awarding, academic year 2019-20, each school was required to match the state AIM HIGH funded awards dollar-for-dollar in the year the funds were awarded. Some institutions found this challenging, though, and advocated for reduced matching rates so that they could accept and award more of the state AIM HIGH funds available to their institution. In the fall 2020 Illinois Legislative “Lame Duck” Session, PA 101-654 (HB 2170) passed, replacing the existing AIM HIGH dollar-for-dollar matching requirement with a tiered approach based on the percentage of each school’s student body that received a Pell Grant over the previous three academic years, resulting in a match rate of either 20 percent (49% or higher Pell recipients) or 60 percent (less than 49% Pell recipients) beginning in academic year 2020-21. During the 2023 Illinois Spring Legislative Session, the Higher Education Working Group worked with schools to revise the AIM HIGH match rates so that they are more closely aligned with the original intent. The passing of Public Act 103-0516 increases the 20 percent match rate to 35 percent, and it increases the 60 percent match rate to 70 percent, effective with the FY24 AIM HIGH allocations (which are awarded in AY24-25).

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) was charged with administering the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program and completing an evaluation of the Program after each academic year through the end of the Pilot (the FY23 allocations to award in AY23-24). The public universities were charged with designing, implementing, and refining their individual AIM HIGH Program(s) on their campuses. Shortly after AIM HIGH was signed into law, ISAC formed an AIM HIGH Advisory Committee consisting of ISAC staff, financial aid directors from all 12 universities, and several enrollment management staff representatives. This committee works together to implement the Program, develop rules and procedures that weren’t made explicit in the law, and address any barriers that might impede its efficiency and effectiveness.

Schools are afforded a great deal of flexibility to design their campus-level AIM HIGH Program(s) to address the desired goals of the state Program. Additional awarding flexibility is allowed with AIM HIGH matching funds. Although matching fund recipients must meet the basic eligibility criteria [e.g., initial income requirement, full-time attendance (unless in their final semester effective with FY23

allocations/AY23-24 awarding as passed in Public Act 103-0516 during the 2023 Illinois Legislative Session)] as well as any additional institution-specific criteria, schools are able to award students at any undergraduate class level regardless of whether they are first-time enrollees, and they have the option to renew those awards if they choose. This additional flexibility makes it possible for institutions to award (and match) more of their state AIM HIGH allocation. Schools determine how much of the state funds will be allocated to a new cohort each year and may determine award amounts on an individual or broad basis. They must match the AIM HIGH funds that they actually award in a given academic year with financial aid from non-state funds. They can take their full allocation and not immediately spend it all. They are allowed to carry over unused funds at the end of the year to use on the same cohort of students in another year or on a different cohort of students in any year. This flexibility resulted in several creative approaches that are detailed in the report.

- The FY23 state budget included level funding of \$35 million for AIM HIGH to award on a fifth or later cohort (academic year 2023-24) of students. Allocations were made to schools based on previous year Illinois undergraduate 12-month unduplicated headcount enrollment. Final allocations ranged from \$562,000 at CSU (representing 2% of the appropriation) to \$8,113,000 at UIUC (representing 23% of the appropriation). Eight of the 12 universities received less than 10 percent of the appropriation, and the remaining four received between 10 and 23 percent.
- Nearly \$31 million of state AIM HIGH funding was expended in the fifth awarding year (AY23-24), which represented eighty-eight percent of the fifth year \$35 million AIM HIGH appropriation. More than 90 percent of these AIM HIGH state funds expended were matched dollar-for-dollar. Three of the 12 public universities matched AIM HIGH state funds expended at more than 100 percent, 2 schools matched close to 90 percent (both SIUC and WIU matched at 89%), and the remaining 7 schools matched at or above their required match rate – CSU at 54 percent, NEIU at 71 percent, NIU and SIUE at 71 percent, UIC at 35 percent, UIS at 60 percent, and UIUC at 70 percent. This resulted in Illinois undergraduate students receiving nearly \$59.1 million in AIM HIGH non-loan financial aid in academic year 2023-24.
- There were a number of reasons universities might have expended less than their full allocation in the fifth awarding year of the Program, including not being able to afford to match their entire fifth year allocation, concerns around budgeting for renewals and whether funds for existing or new cohorts would be forthcoming, or whether students offered new or renewal grants would not enroll and claim their grant. Notably, match rates were lowered in the fall of the second year of the Program (after first semester awards were already made) and going forward.
- All schools reported they met or exceeded their statutory match requirement for state AIM HIGH funds, and they also met their Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements in academic year 2023-24 (their FY24 spending on non-loan financial aid was more than their baseline MOE – the lesser of FY18 or FY22). The provision which allowed universities to use the lesser of the two benefitted SIUC and UIS.
- The number of AIM HIGH recipients at each school was dependent on the allocation they received, how much of that allocation the school chose to expend (and match) in the fifth year of the Program, how they designed their program(s), and their yield (how many newly awarded students decided to enroll and claim the grants, as well as how many year previous years’ recipients returned and were eligible for a renewal grant). Demographics of recipients were reflective of institutional demographics, required program criteria, and any additional institutionally set program criteria.

AIM HIGH Year Five (FY23 Appropriation for AY23-24 Award Year):

- Appropriation - \$35 million
- Expended - \$30.8 million
- Matched - \$28.3 million
- Total AIM HIGH Grant Aid to Illinois Undergraduate Students - \$59.1 million

AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Programs for Year Five – Key Takeaways:

- The Program spurred the 12 public universities to create or enhance 44 scholarship programs, with 15 fully funded by AIM HIGH state funds, 15 fully funded by AIM HIGH matching funds, and 14 funded with both AIM HIGH state and matching funds.
- Universities established an average of 3.7 programs per school, ranging from 2 (GSU, UIC, and UIS) to 5 programs (CSU, ISU, NEIU, NIU, and SIUC).
- All schools offered an AIM HIGH Program(s) for first-time, full-time freshman students at their institutions, and 11 of the 12 also offered a program(s) for first-time, full-time transfer students.

- Some programs offered tiered award amounts based on level of achievement, while others offered a flat award amount to applicants who achieved a specific GPA and/or test score or higher.

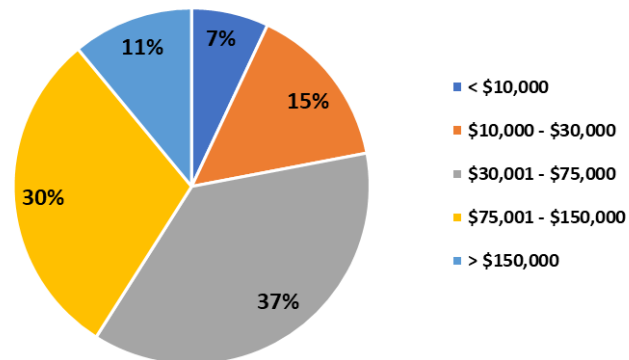
- There was a total of 14,490 AIM HIGH recipients (representing nearly 11 percent of all Illinois public university degree/certificate seeking undergraduates) with an overall average grant of \$4,076. Grant amounts ranged from less than \$250 to a maximum of \$28,172 - nearly covering the full cost of college for a student who very likely would not otherwise have attended. Of the 14,490 recipients, 5,382 (37%) received grants funded with only state funds (average grant \$3,179), 4,582 (32%) received grants funded with only matching funds (average grant \$2,847), and 4,526 (31%) received grants funded with both state and matching funds (average grant \$5,747). A similar number of AIM HIGH recipients received grants made with only matching funds (32%) or with both state and matching funds (31%), but the average award amount was lower for grants made with only matching funds - \$2,847 versus \$5,747. A larger number of awards was made with only state funds, 5,382 awards, with an average award amount of \$3,179.

AIM HIGH Year Five:

- 44 Scholarship Programs Across the 12 Public Universities
- 14,490 AIM HIGH Recipients, representing nearly 11% of all public university certificate- and degree-seeking undergraduates
- Average Grant of \$4,076

- Matching programs and the recipients who received AIM HIGH grants funded only with matching funds looked somewhat different than state-funded programs and programs funded with both state and matching funds, and their respective recipients. That is most likely due to the additional flexibility schools had when designing their match (only) program(s). Recipients receiving AIM HIGH grants only with matching funds were more likely than recipients who received AIM HIGH grants only with state funds or with both state and matching funds, to be Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino, have smaller family sizes, be transfer students, have lower incomes, and to have lower GPAs and standardized test scores.

AIM HIGH Recipients by Income Level



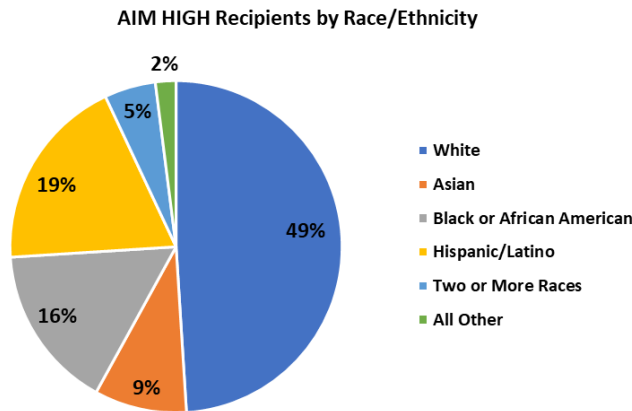
- Fifty-nine percent of all AIM HIGH recipients had family incomes of \$75,000 or less (including nearly 37% with incomes between \$30,001 and \$75,000, 15% with incomes between \$10,000 and \$30,000, and 7% with incomes less than \$10,000). A little more than half of AIM HIGH recipients were eligible for a need-based Pell Grant (58%) and/or MAP grant (57%). If a student is Pell eligible, they receive a Pell Grant. For comparison, 36 percent of all public university undergraduates received a Pell Grant in

2021-22, meaning that AIM HIGH recipients were significantly more likely than the overall student population to be Pell recipients.

- About one-fourth of all AIM HIGH recipients (26%) in the fourth year of the Program were freshmen, 21 percent sophomores, 23 percent juniors, and 30 percent seniors. Nearly seventeen percent of AIM HIGH recipients were transfer students. Seventy percent of all AIM HIGH recipients were age 20 or younger, and the remaining 30 percent were 21 years old or older.
- For first-time freshmen AIM HIGH recipients, 91 percent had a GPA of 3.01 to 4.00 (about 34% had a GPA of 3.01 to 3.50, 40% had a GPA of 3.51 to 3.99, and nearly 17% had a 4.00 GPA). For non-freshmen recipients, the GPAs were lower; about 18 percent had a 3.00 GPA or lower and about 80 percent had a GPA of 3.01 to 4.00.
- Standardized test scores, either ACT or SAT, were reported on 58 percent of all AIM HIGH recipients. About half of scores (48%) were ≤ 1150 SAT / ≤ 23 ACT and about half (52%) were ≥ 1160 SAT / ≥ 24 ACT. More than one-fifth of all AIM HIGH recipients (23%) fell within the lowest standardized score range (≤ 1020 SAT / ≤ 19 ACT), while about 11 percent fell within the highest test score range (≥ 140 SAT / ≥ 32 ACT).

AIM HIGH Year Five:

- 91% of first-time freshmen recipients and 81% of non-freshman recipients had GPAs between 3.01-4.00
- About half of recipients had a SAT score ≥ 1160 or an ACT score ≥ 24



- The race/ethnicity breakdown of AIM HIGH recipients looked a lot like the overall Illinois public university breakdown. The race/ethnicity breakdown of AIM HIGH grant recipients was 49 percent white, 9 percent Asian, 16 percent Black or African American, 19 percent Hispanic/Latino, and 5 percent two or more races. For comparison, the most recent race/ethnicity breakdown for all Illinois public university

undergraduates is 47 percent white, 11 percent Asian, 12 percent Black or African American, 18 percent Hispanic/Latino, 3 percent two or more races, and 6 percent non-resident alien.

- Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services was the college program of study for the most AIM HIGH grant recipients with one in eight (12.5%) reporting this program of study. This was followed Health Professions and Related Programs (11%). Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities and Education each represented approximately nine percent. No other program of study was listed by more than six percent of recipients.
- The 2023-24 academic year marked continued efforts to rebound college enrollments following the COVID-19 pandemic while still facing declining high school graduating classes and continued challenges around perceptions of the value of a college degree and media attention on student loan debt. Overall, fall 2023 enrollment at Illinois public universities was up 0.3 percent year-over-year. First-time, full-time undergraduate enrollment at Illinois' public universities increased by 1.5 percent compared to the fall semester of the 2022-23 academic year. Half of Illinois' 12 public universities, however, reported a decrease in freshmen enrollment.¹

¹ As reported by the Illinois Board of Higher Education at https://www.ibhe.org/DataPoints/2024/IBHE_Public_University_Fall_Enrollment_Final_2023_24_FINAL.pdf.

- Each public university was required to provide a statement on the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program’s impact on tuition revenue, enrollment goals, access, and affordability for the fifth year of the Program.
 - Although one public university mentioned they are still facing enrollment challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic and are not seeing increased tuition revenue resulting from AIM HIGH, 9 of the 12 schools (75%) reported AIM HIGH has been important in recruiting/attracting students as well as increasing enrollments. One of the universities indicated AIM HIGH has been critical in rebounding from the pandemic and saw an increase in enrollments for AY23-24. Two of the 12 schools (17%) specifically indicated they saw increased tuition revenue this past academic year due to AIM HIGH.
 - Seventy-five percent (9 schools) indicated that AIM HIGH had a positive impact on student affordability (reduced student loan debt, unmet need, or out-of-pocket costs for students, etc.).
 - Seventy-five percent (9 schools) reported that AIM HIGH supported long-term success or improved student retention/persistence.
 - Seven of the 12 the public universities (58%) reported that AIM HIGH allowed scholarship expansion that assisted with recruitment of new and/or transfer students overall or of other students they have been trying to attract and/or new groups of students they would like to attract: talented/high-achieving/performing students (4 schools, 1 of which coupled this with financial need), students ready for college academically but struggling to afford it (1 school), students who may not have thought attending was possible (1 school), and/or students just above the thresholds for receiving federal and/or state need-based aid (1 school).
 - One-third (4 of the 12 schools) indicated AIM HIGH increased access for Illinois students.
 - One of the 12 public universities indicated that AIM HIGH is the centerpiece of their scholarship budget and plays a major role in their strategic enrollment planning; one reported AIM HIGH is helping to reduce achievement gaps and that their AIM HIGH match-funded programs were specifically focused on diversity, inclusion, and community; and one university indicated AIM HIGH allowed them to provide the full “college experience” to students by assisting with room and board costs.
- For AIM HIGH grants that were required to be renewed if eligibility criteria were met (those made from only State funds and/or from both State and matching funds), 11 of the 12 public universities had retention rates (awarded in year four and returned in year five *and* received a grant) for freshman, sophomore, and junior recipients that were higher than their most recent overall undergraduate retention rates.

AIM HIGH Year Five:

- Of Illinois’ 12 public universities, half reported an increase in freshmen enrollment in the fall of 2023. Schools described numerous positive impacts of AIM HIGH in the fifth year of the Program.
- Nine of the 12 schools (75%) reported AIM HIGH has been important in recruiting/attracting students as well as increasing enrollments, nine indicated that AIM HIGH had a positive impact on student affordability, and nine schools reported that AIM HIGH supported long-term success or improved student retention/persistence. Another seven of the 12 schools reported that AIM HIGH allowed scholarship expansion that assisted with recruitment of new (or more) students they would like to attract.

AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program Year Five Report

Illinois Public Universities Award a Fifth Cohort of Students and Provide Renewal Grants to those Who Returned

Background

Public Act 100-587, creating the Aspirational Institutional Match Helping Illinois Grow Higher Education (AIM HIGH) Grant Pilot Program, was signed into law in August 2018. AIM HIGH is an initiative of the General Assembly's Higher Education Working Group designed to help achieve several state goals, including increasing overall Illinois college student retention, improving Illinois college affordability and reducing student loan debt, and slowing student outmigration, as well as enhancing enrollment (and revenue) at Illinois public universities. Beginning with the 2019-20 academic year, this program provided merit-based, means-tested student financial aid to first-time, full-time undergraduate students (including transfer students) – up to cost of attendance (COA) – attending any of the 12 Illinois public four-year universities for the fall and/or spring terms/semesters who met the basic program requirements outlined in Table 1 as well as any other school-specific program requirements. Note that schools can award part-time undergraduates in their final semester effective with FY23 allocations/AY23-24 awarding as passed in Public Act 103-0516 (House Bill 301) during the 2023 Illinois Spring Legislative Session. Each university determines its own award criteria related to merit and selects its own AIM HIGH recipients.

Additionally, all AIM HIGH-participating universities are required to provide matching funding for institutional awards for students who meet certain basic eligibility requirements, as well as those established by each individual university. The percentage match required is based on the school's student body that received a Pell Grant over the previous three academic years. New institutional aid is defined as non-loan aid above the lesser of the academic year 2017-18 (FY18) level or 2021-22 (FY22) level of non-loan aid to Illinois students (the institution's "Maintenance of Effort" or MOE) that universities reported to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). The addition of the option to use the FY22 MOE allocation as baseline was included in the passing of Public Act 103-0516 during the 2023 Illinois Spring Legislative Session to address struggles for some

Table 1: AIM HIGH Basic Program Requirements:

- have attended an Illinois high school*
- be engaged in a program of study that will be completed by the end of the school year*
- apply to be enrolled for the first time at the public university campus where the award will be used*
- be a resident of Illinois
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen, or meet the undocumented student criteria of the RISE Act
- file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) or the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid and demonstrate financial need, with a household income no greater than eight times the poverty guideline established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**,***
- meet the minimum cumulative grade point average or ACT or SAT college admissions test score, as determined by the university
- be enrolled in a participating public university as an undergraduate student on a full-time basis, or part-time basis if in final semester (effective with FY23 allocations/AY23-24 awarding)
- have not yet received a bachelor's degree (the equivalent of 135 semester credit hours)
- not be incarcerated
- not be in default on any student loan, or owe a refund on any state or federal grant
- meet any other criteria established by the university

*Students applying only for a university's matching funding may not need to meet these eligibility requirements.

**The means test applies only to the *initial* year the student receives the grant(s).

***Income cap increased from six times the poverty guideline effective with the FY23 allocations/AY23-24 awarding with the passing of Public Act 103-0008 (HB 3817) during the 2023 Illinois Spring Legislative Session.

schools to meet the MOE requirement due to downward trends in enrollment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors. This funding may or may not be available to the same students who receive the AIM HIGH state-funded grant(s), depending on how the matching program is designed by the university.

AIM HIGH Grants are available for up to four years (eight semesters) for incoming freshmen and for up to two years (four semesters) for transfer students. Subject to renewal eligibility established by institution, each renewed award may not be less than the amount awarded to the eligible student in his or her first year attending the public university campus. Exceptions may be made if the student takes fewer (but still full-time) hours or switches to a program with a lower tuition rate. These eligibility and renewal criteria must be made explicit at the time of awarding the first grant and remain in place for the life of the grant. Grants made with matching dollars can be renewable but are not required to be, and they may be renewed for varied lengths of time. However, in the same fashion as awards made with state dollars, the renewal criteria must be made explicit with the offer of the grant and must remain constant through the life of the grant. Funding for subsequent academic years is subject to the annual state appropriations process.

Public Act 100-587, which created the Aspirational Institutional Match Helping Illinois Grow Higher Education (AIM HIGH) Grant Pilot Program, had the Program sunset on October 1, 2024, with the FY23 budget year the last year of an appropriation for the program to fund new cohorts of student grants in the 2023-24 academic year. In addition to several modifications made to AIM HIGH, and outlined in this report, during the 2023 Illinois Spring Legislative Session via Public Act 103-0008 (HB 3817) and Public Act 103-0516 (HB 301), the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program was made permanent. This report on academic year 2023-24 recipients includes the last new cohort under the Pilot and is the final statutorily required report on the AIM HIGH Pilot Program.

Shortly after the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program was signed into law, ISAC staff formed an AIM HIGH Advisory Committee consisting of ISAC staff, financial aid directors from all 12 universities, and several enrollment management staff representatives. This committee has worked together to implement the Program, develop rules and procedures that weren't made explicit in the law, and address any barriers that may impede its efficiency and effectiveness.

FY23 AIM HIGH Appropriation and Allocations to Schools

The FY23 state budget included \$35 million for the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program to award in the 2023-24 academic year (AY23-24). Prior year Illinois Undergraduate 12-Month Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment was used by ISAC to determine the initial allocation of the \$35 million appropriated for AIM HIGH among the 12 Illinois public universities. ISAC determined each public university campus' proportionate allocation of FY23 appropriated funds by multiplying the appropriation by the ratio of each school's enrollment to total enrollment and rounding to the nearest \$1,000. Schools could accept none, some, or all their allotment. If applicable, funds not accepted were redistributed through a second allocation process in which the schools that wanted additional funds indicated the maximum dollars they would accept. The enrollment numbers were adjusted to include only second-round participants and the remaining dollars were distributed as in the initial allocation, subject to the maximums the schools indicated.

All schools accepted their full initial AIM HIGH allocations in FY23. Those allocations, as illustrated in Table 2, ranged from \$562,000 at CSU (representing 2% of the appropriation) to \$8,113,000 at UIUC (representing 23% of the appropriation). Eight of the 12 universities received less than 10 percent of the appropriation, and the remaining four received between 10 and 23 percent.

Additional flexibility with the university matching dollars, which allowed awarding to students at any class level for one or more semesters/terms, the ability to carry over state AIM HIGH funds, reduced match rates that went into effect during the second year of the Program, as well as allowing transfer students to be part of the AIM HIGH state-funded program(s), likely made it easier for all of the initial AIM HIGH dollars to be claimed by universities in FY23.

Table 2: FY23 AIM HIGH Appropriation and Allocations to Schools

School	Initial Allocation	Accepted Initial Allocation	% Allocation Accepted	Initial Allocation Balance	Participate in Second Allocation	Final Allocation	% Final Allocation
Chicago State University (CSU)	\$562,000	\$562,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$562,000	2%
Eastern Illinois University (EIU)	\$1,364,000	\$1,364,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$1,364,000	4%
Governors State University (GSU)	\$932,000	\$932,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$932,000	3%
Illinois State University (ISU)	\$5,427,000	\$5,427,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$5,427,000	16%
Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU)	\$1,399,000	\$1,399,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$1,399,000	4%
Northern Illinois University (NIU)	\$3,663,000	\$3,663,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$3,663,000	10%
Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC)	\$2,116,000	\$2,116,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$2,116,000	6%
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE)	\$2,818,000	\$2,818,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$2,818,000	8%
University of Illinois Chicago (UIC)	\$5,974,000	\$5,974,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$5,947,000	17%
University of Illinois Springfield (UIS)	\$778,000	\$778,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$778,000	2%
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC)	\$8,113,000	\$8,113,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$8,113,000	23%
Western Illinois University (WIU)	\$1,854,000	\$1,854,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$1,854,000	5%
Total	\$35,000,000	\$35,000,000	100%	\$0	\$0	\$35,000,000	100%

FY23 AIM HIGH Funds Expended, Matched, and Carried Over

Each school determines how much of the Program funding will be allocated to a new cohort each year. Schools are required to match the AIM HIGH funds that are actually paid in a given academic year. For the first year of awarding, academic year 2019-20, each school was required to match the state AIM HIGH funded awards dollar-for-dollar in the year the funds were awarded. Schools advocated for reduced matching rates so that they could accept and award more of the state AIM HIGH funds available to their institution. In the fall 2020 Illinois Legislative “Lame Duck” Session, PA 101-654 (HB 2170) passed, replacing the existing AIM HIGH dollar-for-dollar matching requirement with a tiered approach based on the percentage of each school’s student body that received a Pell Grant over the previous three academic years. If the (most recent) three-year average was 49 percent or higher, the school was required to match at least 20 percent of the amount of state funds awarded in a given academic year for financial aid for eligible students; if less than 49 percent, the school was required to match at least 60 percent of the amount of state funds awarded in a given academic year for financial aid for eligible students. This change was effective immediately, so schools were given the chance to amend their FY20 (year 2, AY20-21) grant agreement to reflect the possibility of matching at the lower rate. Based on the most recent three years of data on Pell recipients, four schools, CSU, GSU, UIC, and WIU were required to match at least 20 percent of state AIM HIGH funds expended in AY23-24, and the other eight schools were required to match at least 60 percent of the state funds expended. During the 2023 Illinois Legislative Session, the Higher Education Working Group worked with schools to revise the AIM HIGH match rates so that they are more closely

aligned with the original intent. The passing of Public Act 103-0516 increases the 20 percent match rate to 35 percent, and it increases the 60 percent match rate to 70 percent, effective with the FY24 AIM HIGH allocations (to award in AY24-25).

The full allocation (including any additional round(s)) can be accepted but does not need to be immediately spent in its entirety. Unused funds at the end of the year may be carried over to use on the same cohort of students in another year or on a different cohort of students in any year. It was understood that not accepting funds that may be difficult to match resulted in those funds being made available to another school to award to students.

As Table 3 shows, nearly \$31 million of state AIM HIGH funding was expended in the fifth awarding year (AY23-24), which represented 88 percent of the fourth year \$35 million AIM HIGH appropriation. The AIM HIGH funds expended by institution, however, varied greatly. More than 90 percent of these AIM HIGH state funds expended were matched dollar-for-dollar. Three of the 12 public universities matched AIM HIGH state funds expended at more than 100 percent, 2 schools matched close to 90 percent (both SIUC and WIU matched at 89%), and the remaining 7 schools matched at or above their required match rate – CSU at 54 percent, NEIU at 71 percent, NIU and SIUE at 71 percent, UIC at 35 percent, UIS at 60 percent, and UIUC at 70 percent. This resulted in Illinois undergraduate students receiving nearly \$59.1 million in AIM HIGH non-loan financial aid in academic year 2023-24.

Notably, as Table 3 illustrates, all 12 institutions had AIM HIGH state funds that were not expended in the first five years of the Program (AY19-20 through AY23-24) to use in the sixth year of the Program or beyond. Six of the 12 public universities spent between 65 to 85 percent of their fourth year AIM HIGH appropriation, UIUC spent 100 percent, and the remaining 5 schools (CSU, EIU, GSU, SIUC, and UIS) spent more than 100 percent of their fifth-year appropriation, utilizing carry-over funds from the first four years of the Program. This was most likely made possible through decreased match rate requirements. At the end of the fifth year of the AIM HIGH Program, about 73 percent, or about \$121 million of the total \$165 million from the year one through five combined appropriations, was expended, and the remaining funds (nearly \$44 M) were carried over to use in future awarding years.

Table 3: FY23 AIM HIGH Funds Expended, Matched, and Carried Over

School	FY23 Final Allocation	FY19-FY22 Carried Over	Expended	% Expended of Final Allocation	Matched	% Matched to Expended	FY23 Carried Over	% Carried Over of Final Allocation	FY19 - FY23 Carried Over
CSU	\$562,000	\$350,745	\$759,850	135%	\$409,150	54%	(\$197,850)	-35%	\$152,895
EIU	\$1,364,000	\$2,106,965	\$1,386,367	102%	\$1,668,086	120%	(\$22,367)	-2%	\$2,084,598
GSU	\$932,000	\$6,831	\$938,072	101%	\$972,526	104%	(\$6,072)	-1%	\$759
ISU	\$5,427,000	\$2,126,951	\$4,594,000	85%	\$10,024,649	218%	\$833,000	15%	\$2,959,951
NEIU	\$1,399,000	\$389,235	\$1,136,000	81%	\$811,144	71%	\$263,000	19%	\$652,235
NIU	\$3,663,000	\$3,812,175	\$2,363,735	65%	\$1,668,348	71%	\$1,299,265	35%	\$5,111,440
SIUC	\$2,116,000	\$4,207,647	\$2,425,077	115%	\$2,153,189	89%	(\$309,077)	-15%	\$3,898,571
SIUE	\$2,818,000	\$5,264,400	\$2,241,514	80%	\$1,588,600	71%	\$576,486	20%	\$5,840,886
UIC	\$5,974,000	\$8,377,620	\$4,628,241	77%	\$1,619,884	35%	\$1,345,759	23%	\$9,723,379
UIS	\$778,000	\$570,781	\$813,982	105%	\$488,389	60%	(\$35,982)	-5%	\$534,799
UIUC	\$8,113,000	\$12,746,279	\$8,136,041	100%	\$5,695,783	70%	(\$23,041)	0%	\$12,723,238
WIU	\$1,854,000	(\$4,838)	\$1,350,957	73%	\$1,201,506	89%	\$503,043	27%	\$498,205
Total	\$35,000,000	\$39,829,744	\$30,773,835	88%	\$28,301,254	92%	\$4,226,165	12%	\$44,180,956

There were a number of reasons universities might have expended less than their full allocation in the fifth year of the Program, including:

- Statute specifically allows schools to carry over unused funding for qualified students to use in any year, on an existing or new cohort of students.
- Budgeting for renewals; schools were unsure how much funding will be appropriated to AIM HIGH in later years of the pilot, or if funds for AIM HIGH would be appropriated for later years of the pilot at all. Reserving some funds helps schools ensure that they can award AIM HIGH as a four-year grant despite relying on year-by-year appropriations.
- Schools that couldn't immediately afford to match their entire allocation could accept the full allocation, spend what could be matched, and carry any unspent funds over to use (and to match) in later years on an existing or future cohort of students. Notably, all match rates were lowered in the second year of the Program (after first semester awards were already made) and going forward.
- Schools may have "awarded" a certain amount of AIM HIGH funds to new students in year five and expected to award a certain amount of funds to returning previous years' students in year five, but all of those students may not have enrolled or returned.

Academic Year 2023-24 AIM HIGH Programs and Criteria

The AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program offered schools the flexibility to design programs to achieve the desired goals set out for AIM HIGH at each of their individual campuses. As required by law, each public university posted information about its AIM HIGH funded programs on the university website, and both ISAC and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) provide those links via agency websites. Below are highlights of the program details that schools provided on all AIM HIGH Programs they offered in academic year 2023-24. Table 1 in the Appendix provides all AIM HIGH Program criteria in detail by institution.

AY23-24 Illinois AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Programs

44 Scholarship Programs

across the 12 public universities, with 15 fully funded by AIM HIGH state funds only, 15 fully or partially funded by AIM HIGH matching funds only, and 14 fully funded with both AIM HIGH state and matching funds

Average of 3.7 Programs Per School

ranging from two (GSU, UIC, and UIS) to five programs (CSU, ISU, NEIU, NIU, and SIUC)

All Schools Offered an AIM HIGH Program(s)

for first-time, full-time freshman students at their institutions, and 11 of the 12 also offered a program(s) for first-time, full-time transfer students

Grants Were Based in Some Way on Merit

A mix of programs that offered tiered award amounts based on merit components and programs that offered a single award amount based on a specific GPA and/or test score or higher

Award Amounts Ranged from Less Than \$250 to Covering All Unmet Need

Summary of University-Determined Criteria

3.28 Average High School GPA

or cumulative transfer GPA, ranging from 2.00 to 4.00, on 4-point scale

2.74 Average GPA for Renewal

ranging from 2.00 to 3.50, on a 4-point scale

Minimum ACT Scores ranging from 18 to 33

Minimum SAT Scores ranging from 960 to 1,450

12 Programs Included an Additional Income Component

that may be more stringent than the initial basic requirement that the student's household income is no greater than 8 times (for AY23-24 awarding) the federal poverty guidelines.

Creative Approaches to Attract and Retain Illinois Students

Universities took advantage of the flexibility offered by the pilot and experimented with interesting program components, such as:

- Requiring participation in a support program
- Covering all of tuition and fees (after all other aid) for those under a certain income level – allowing the offer of a type of last-dollar college “promise” program
- Matching cost or matching out-of-pocket cost of attendance at a bordering state school
- Targeting awards to traditionally underrepresented or first-generation freshman students
- Specifically targeting students in MAP grant suspense (“waiting list”) or ineligibility status
- Providing an award allowance for books, online book voucher, or textbook rental grant
- Focusing aid on students with an expected family contribution (EFC) between 0-\$9,000 (the same range for MAP eligibility)
- Awarding students from the City Colleges of Chicago’s Star Scholarship Program and/or other partnering local county, high school, or community college students

Academic Year 2023-24 AIM HIGH Recipients and Grants

Each public university campus may determine the AIM HIGH award amounts for eligible students on an individual or broad basis. In the fifth year of the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program, more than \$59 million was awarded to 14,490 undergraduate students at Illinois public universities, representing nearly 11 percent of all public university degree/certificate seeking undergraduates (see Table 7). The overall AIM HIGH average grant was \$4,076 with a minimum grant of \$8 and a maximum grant of \$28,172.

Of the 14,490 recipients, 5,382 (37%) received grants funded with only state funds, 4,582 (32%) received grants funded with only matching funds, and 4,526 (31%) received grants funded with both state and matching funds. The average grant funded with only state funds was \$3,179, with a minimum grant of \$36 and a maximum grant of \$14,051. The average grant funded with only matching funds was \$2,847, with a minimum grant of \$8 and a maximum grant of \$28,172. The average grant funded with both state and matching funds was \$5,747, with a minimum grant of \$375 and a maximum grant of \$20,438. A similar number of AIM HIGH recipients received grants made with only matching funds (32%) or with both state and matching funds (31%), but the average award amount was lower for grants made with only matching funds - \$2,847 versus \$5,747. A larger number of awards was made with only state funds, 5,382 awards, with an average award amount of \$3,179.

The number of recipients by each school was dependent on the allocation they received, how much of that allocation the school chose to expend and match in the fifth year of the Program, how program(s) were designed, and their yield (how many newly awarded students decided to enroll and claim the grants, as well as how many year one, two, three, and four recipients returned and were eligible for a renewal grant). ISU awarded the most dollars – about \$14.6 million to 2,153 recipients with an average grant of \$6,790, while UIUC awarded the most students – about \$13.8 million to 3,102 recipients with an average grant of \$4,459. EIU awarded the lowest average grant at \$1,833 (providing nearly \$3.1 million to 1,666 recipients), and CSU awarded the fewest dollars to the fewest students – \$1,169,000 to 250 students (with average grants of \$4,676). Note that CSU has the smallest undergraduate enrollment amongst the 12 Illinois public universities. The average grant across all funding sources ranged from \$2,847 to \$5,747.

Table 4: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients and Grants

RECIPIENTS	Total Amount Awarded (AIM HIGH State + Matching)		Total #*	Average Grant	Minimum Grant	Maximum Grant
TOTAL	\$59,075,089	TOTAL	14,490	\$4,076	\$8	\$28,172
		State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,382	\$3,179	\$36	\$14,051
		Matching fund dollars only	4,582	\$2,847	\$8	\$28,172
		Both State and matching dollars	4,526	\$5,747	\$375	\$20,438
CSU	\$1,169,000	State AIM HIGH dollars only	-	-	-	-
		Matching fund dollars only	-	-	-	-
		Both State and matching dollars	250	\$4,676	\$500	\$6,000
		Total Award from All Sources	250	\$4,676	\$500	\$6,000
EIU	\$3,054,453	State AIM HIGH dollars only	909	\$1,017	\$36	\$13,530
		Matching fund dollars only	369	\$2,026	\$377	\$3,000
		Both State and matching dollars	388	\$3,561	\$635	\$13,530
		Total Award from All Sources	1,666	\$1,833	\$36	\$13,530
GSU	\$1,910,598	State AIM HIGH dollars only	208	\$3,469	\$103	\$6,000
		Matching fund dollars only	214	\$3,541	\$1,280	\$6,000
		Both State and matching dollars	92	\$4,686	\$4,000	\$6,000
		Total Award from All Sources	514	\$3,717	\$103	\$6,000
ISU	\$14,618,649	State AIM HIGH dollars only	307	\$2,161	\$1,000	\$3,000
		Matching fund dollars only	-	-	-	-
		Both State and matching dollars	1,846	\$7,560	\$2,000	\$12,000
		Total Award from All Sources	2,153	\$6,790	\$1,000	\$12,000
NEIU	\$1,947,144	State AIM HIGH dollars only	91	\$3,670	\$2,000	\$4,000
		Matching fund dollars only	-	-	-	-
		Both State and matching dollars	203	\$7,947	\$3,390	\$20,437
		Total Award from All Sources	294	\$6,623	\$2,000	\$20,437
NIU	\$4,032,082	State AIM HIGH dollars only	1,042	\$2,115	\$200	\$11,900
		Matching fund dollars only	586	\$2,536	\$118	\$5,000
		Both State and matching dollars	68	\$5,035	\$1,285	\$12,500
		Total Award from All Sources	1,696	\$2,306	\$138	\$10,700
SIUC	\$4,578,265	State AIM HIGH dollars only	501	\$3,309	\$146	\$14,051
		Matching fund dollars only	496	\$3,286	\$8	\$28,172
		Both State and matching dollars	188	\$6,863	\$2,189	\$18,060
		Total Award from All Sources	1,185	\$3,864	\$8	\$28,172
SIUE	\$3,830,114	State AIM HIGH dollars only	-	-	-	-
		Matching fund dollars only	7	\$2,750	\$2,750	\$2,750
		Both State and matching dollars	1,010	\$3,773	\$446	\$7,000
		Total Award from All Sources	1,017	\$3,786	\$446	\$7,000
UIC	\$6,248,125	State AIM HIGH dollars only	544	\$8,508	\$319	\$10,000
		Matching fund dollars only	510	\$3,176	\$681	\$3,700
		Both State and matching dollars	-	-	-	-
		Total Award from All Sources	1,054	\$5,928	\$319	\$10,000
UIS	\$1,302,371	State AIM HIGH dollars only	-	-	-	-
		Matching fund dollars only	-	-	-	-
		Both State and matching dollars	383	\$3,400	\$375	\$12,000
		Total Award from All Sources	383	\$3,400	\$375	\$12,000
UIUC	\$13,831,824	State AIM HIGH dollars only	1,658	\$4,907	\$1,250	\$5,000
		Matching fund dollars only	1,444	\$3,944	\$1,000	\$4,168
		Both State and matching dollars	-	-	-	-
		Total Award from All Sources	3,102	\$4,459	\$1,000	\$5,000
WIU	\$2,552,463	State AIM HIGH dollars only	122	\$6,143	\$2,103	\$7,000
		Matching fund dollars only	956	\$1,138	\$16	\$2,500
		Both State and matching dollars	98	\$7,295	\$3,078	\$9,500
		Total Award from All Sources	1,176	\$2,170	\$16	\$9,500
		Missing = 0	There were 7 AIM HIGH students with State awards of less than \$250.			

AIM HIGH “Maintenance of Effort” (MOE)

To be eligible to receive funds under the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program, a public university is required to meet a “Maintenance of Effort”, or “MOE”. The campus may not decrease the total amount of non-loan financial aid for undergraduate students to an amount lower than the total non-loan financial aid amount given by the public university campus to undergraduate students in academic year 2017-18 (FY18) or academic year 2021-22 (FY22), not including any funds received from ISAC for AIM HIGH or any funds used to match AIM HIGH grant aid. The addition of the option to use the FY22 MOE allocation as baseline was included in Public Act 103-0516 (HB 301) during the 2023 Illinois Spring Legislative Session to address struggles for some schools to meet the MOE requirement due to downward trends in enrollment due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors. (If enrollment is less than in academic year 2017-18 or 2021-22, not including the summer term, the MOE level is that total amount calculated on a per student basis.)

In consultation with the AIM HIGH Advisory Committee, six primary categories were identified that schools had been reporting on the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Student Financial Aid Survey (references included below) that would make up each institution’s total Illinois non-loan financial aid for the MOE:

- Partial Waivers for Children of University Employees;
- Total Scholarships, Grants, Fellowships, and Traineeships;
- Talent Waivers - Academic;
- Talent Waivers - Other Talent;
- Other Waivers - Financial Aid Waivers; and
- Other Waivers - Special Program Waivers.

To be eligible for a subsequent allocation of AIM HIGH funding, an institution must demonstrate that it met its MOE in the previous academic awarding year. In any academic year the public university fails to make its entire MOE, it must demonstrate that it made a good faith effort to make it eligible for:

- A) 100% of its allocation of AIM HIGH funds in the next allocation distribution if, in the preceding academic year, the public university campus made its entire MOE;
- B) 90% of its allocation of AIM HIGH funds in the next allocation distribution if it is the second consecutive academic year the public university campus fails to make its entire MOE; and
- C) an amount in the next allocation determination that is necessary to fund only renewal AIM HIGH funded awards when it is the third or more consecutive academic year that the public university campus fails to make its entire MOE.

When making the determination to reduce an award, or suspend a university campus from AIM HIGH for not meeting its matching requirement or MOE, ISAC is able to consider the circumstances that may have contributed to this failure, such as, but not limited to:

- 1) a reduction in State appropriations to fund the public university campus in that academic year;
- 2) the number of matching requirements or MOE qualifying awards offered by the public institution, but not accepted by students in that academic year;
- 3) the matching award commitments already made to students for the academic year for which the AIM HIGH funds will be used; and
- 4) the commitment demonstrated by the public university campus to maintaining level tuition and mandatory fees for Illinois residents over multiple academic years.

As Table 5 shows, all the universities met their MOE in academic year 2023-24, though two universities, SIUC and UIS, benefitted from using the lesser of the FY18 or FY22 MOEs as baseline.

Table 5: FY23 AIM HIGH MOE Compared to Lower of FY18 or FY22 MOE Baseline

School	Baseline FY18 MOE	Year 1 FY20 MOE*	Year 2 FY21 MOE*	Year 3 FY22 MOE* (Optional Baseline)	Year 4 FY23 MOE*	Year 5 FY24 MOE*	Lowest Baseline- FY24 Difference
CSU	\$903,643	\$1,260,094	\$2,387,884	\$2,171,608	\$5,361,982	\$8,611,600	\$7,707,957
EIU	\$33,909,855	\$34,791,602	\$39,304,695	\$43,833,819	\$41,687,164	\$43,780,510	\$9,870,655
GSU	\$336,416	\$374,314	\$474,069	\$424,562	\$357,249	\$577,542	\$241,126
ISU	\$26,092,180	\$32,851,660	\$35,165,975	\$41,834,394	\$47,563,150	\$54,005,252	\$27,913,072
NEIU	\$26,219,519	\$26,264,210	\$25,917,816**	\$27,428,782**	\$27,427,147	\$29,561,354	\$3,341,835
NIU	\$18,605,724	\$20,366,044	\$21,490,079	\$24,854,921	\$27,787,654	\$27,775,693	\$9,169,969
SIUC	\$23,913,376	\$20,122,269	\$21,563,180	\$17,799,502	\$18,758,155	\$18,880,008	\$1,080,506
SIUE	\$12,816,587	\$13,734,134	\$14,020,147	\$16,536,233	\$14,868,232	\$17,581,000	\$4,764,413
UIC	\$50,889,713	\$52,380,438	\$53,588,720	\$51,452,524	\$52,406,386	\$51,591,000	\$701,287
UIS	\$5,631,221	\$5,231,157	\$4,386,037	\$4,306,233	\$4,224,289	\$4,351,000	\$44,767
UIUC	\$109,829,520	\$124,688,091	\$135,295,823	\$147,167,339	\$144,319,783	\$156,478,768	\$46,649,248
WIU	\$10,583,011	\$9,258,095	\$10,431,173	\$14,825,940	\$20,332,242	\$23,852,372	\$13,269,361
Total	\$319,730,765	\$341,322,108	\$364,557,973	\$391,098,519	\$403,044,083	\$437,046,099	\$124,754,196

* AIM HIGH matching aid has been deducted from year one and two MOEs so amounts can be compared to baseline FY18 MOEs. As directed, MOEs reported in year three and four did not include AIM HIGH matching aid.

** NEIU restated their MOEs for year 2 (FY21) and for year 3 (FY22); note that these restatements result in not meeting the MOE in year 2 and meeting the MOE in year 3.

ISAC is required to report on the percentage of total non-loan financial aid distributed that the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program (in total – both state and matching funds) represents at each public university. Total non-loan financial aid for this purpose is defined as the MOE institutional aid total plus State and matching AIM HIGH funds expended. As Table 6 illustrates, the AIM HIGH state and matching funds expended in AY23-24 represent about 12 percent of the total institutional financial aid that make up the MOE (including all AIM HIGH spending) distributed by the public universities for academic year 2023-24. Percentages, however, varied considerably by institution, from 6 percent to 77 percent. For 3 universities the percentage was less than 10 percent (EIU, NEIU, and UIUC), for 8 it was between 10 and 23 percent (CSU, ISU, NIU, SIUC, SIUE, UIC, UIS, and WIU), and for GSU, it was 77 percent.

Table 6: Percentage of Total Financial Aid Distributed (MOE) Under the AY23-24 AIM HIGH Program by the Public University Campus

School	AY23-24 Non-Loan Grant Aid to Undergrads (MOE) plus all AH	AY23-24 AIM HIGH State Funds Expended	AY23-24 AIM HIGH Matching Funds Expended	AY23-24 AIM HIGH State + Matching Funds Expended	AIM HIGH as a Percentage of Financial Aid (MOE) Distributed
CSU	\$9,780,600	\$759,850	\$409,150	\$1,169,000	12%
EIU	\$46,834,963	\$1,386,367	\$1,668,086	\$3,054,453	7%
GSU	\$2,488,140	\$938,072	\$972,526	\$1,910,598	77%
ISU	\$68,623,901	\$4,594,000	\$10,024,649	\$14,618,649	21%
NEIU	\$31,508,498	\$1,136,000	\$811,144	\$1,947,144	6%
NIU	\$31,807,775	\$2,363,735	\$1,668,348	\$4,032,082	13%
SIUC	\$23,458,273	\$2,425,077	\$2,153,189	\$4,578,265	20%
SIUE	\$21,411,114	\$2,241,514	\$1,588,600	\$3,830,114	18%
UIC	\$57,839,125	\$4,628,241	\$1,619,884	\$6,248,125	11%
UIS	\$5,653,371	\$813,982	\$488,389	\$1,302,371	23%
UIUC	\$170,310,592	\$8,136,041	\$5,695,783	\$13,831,824	8%
WIU	\$26,404,835	\$1,350,957	\$1,201,506	\$2,552,463	10%
Total	\$496,121,188	\$30,773,835	\$28,301,254	\$59,075,089	12%

Academic Year 2023-24 AIM HIGH Recipient Demographics

Table 7 provides available overall Illinois public university demographics to help provide some context for the AIM HIGH recipient demographics. When these data are not available, AIM HIGH recipient demographics may be compared to overall Illinois population demographics to provide context. AIM HIGH recipient overall demographics are impacted by the number of awards by institution, based on both its allocation, the amount the institution chose to award the first through fifth years, and their yield (how many awarded students decided to enroll as well as how many year one and two recipients returned and were eligible for a renewal), and those institutions' student demographics, as well as the criteria set for the various AIM HIGH Programs. It is also important to keep in mind that demographics will also be impacted by the fact that AIM HIGH is a merit-based, means-tested program. AIM HIGH recipient demographic data is shown in this section in total, by funding source (state only, matching only, or both state and matching), and by institution.

Table 7: AY2021-22/2022-23 Illinois Public University Undergraduate Demographics

Illinois Public University Undergraduate Demographics	TOTAL #	TOTAL %	CSU	EIU	GSU	ISU	NEIU	NIU	SIUC	SIUE	UIC	UIS	UIUC	WIU
Undergraduate Enrollment	140,994	--	1,860	8,239	3,221	19,077	5,399	12,969	9,016	11,257	24,130	2,920	36,800	6,106
Undergraduate Enrollment (Degree/certificate seeking)	133,781	--	1,835	5,185	3,162	18,982	5,204	12,882	8,776	11,032	23,309	2,797	34,666	5,951
Female	74,314	53%	69%	59%	64%	57%	58%	53%	48%	57%	53%	53%	45%	56%
Male	66,680	47%	31%	41%	36%	43%	42%	47%	52%	43%	47%	47%	55%	44%
American Indian or Alaska Native	149	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	15,547	11%	1%	4%	2%	3%	9%	6%	2%	2%	20%	4%	21%	1%
Black or African American	17,573	12%	74%	14%	39%	10%	11%	20%	16%	14%	8%	13%	6%	21%
Hispanic or Latino	25,367	18%	9%	16%	18%	12%	41%	22%	10%	6%	35%	11%	13%	12%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	96	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	65,797	47%	2%	58%	30%	70%	23%	46%	66%	69%	24%	63%	39%	59%
Two or more races	4,671	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%	2%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%
Race/ethnicity unknown	3,154	2%	8%	4%	5%	1%	12%	0%	0%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Nonresident alien	8,640	6%	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%	3%	8%	3%	14%	2%
Disability	**	**	3%	6%	<3%	8%	4%	5%	6%	<3%	5%	12%	6%	7%
Awarded Pell Grants	46,675*	36%	60%	31%	53%	30%	51%	45%	36%	32%	50%	36%	25%	44%
Awarded MAP Grants	48,791	37%	46%	43%	49%	31%	46%	44%	31%	25%	54%	35%	28%	37%
ACT Composite 75th percentile score	**	**	19	23	22	27	21	25	27	26	30	27	34	24
ACT Composite 25th percentile score	**	**	15	17	16	21	15	19	19	19	24	20	29	18
Full-Time Retention Rate (Fall to Fall)	**	**	55%	71%	56%	80%	63%	65%	70%	71%	78%	76%	93%	67%
BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, AND RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES Program of Study	16,567	14%	17%	13%	18%	21%	12%	17%	8%	10%	14%	20%	10%	15%
EDUCATION Program of Study	8,366	7%	12%	13%	7%	17%	9%	9%	7%	4%	4%	3%	3%	7%
ENGINEERING Program of Study	11,502	9%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	8%	4%	4%	11%	0%	22%	2%
BIOLOGICAL AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES Program of Study	7,277	6%	7%	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	7%	4%	10%	7%	6%	4%
PHYSICAL SCIENCES Program of Study	2,309	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	3%
MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS Program of Study	2,085	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	4%	1%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and ISAC Data Book. Most recent data available used.
 * Denominator used for calculating % with Pell Grant is a cohort comprised of those who could be considered for federal aid.
 ** Not available.

Differences in the number of recipients and the average grant size by funding source (state only, matching only, or both state and matching), as well as the differences in those recipients’ demographics (again) were reflective of how many awards were made by each institution and the way they designed their program(s) in each of the program years. Matching programs, and the recipients who received AIM HIGH grants from only matching funds looked somewhat different than only state funded programs and programs funded with both state and matching funds, and their respective recipients. This is most likely due to the additional flexibility schools had when designing their match (only) program(s) – awards could go to recipients at any class level regardless of whether they were a first-time student or not, and awards could be renewable, but were not required to be. CSU, for example, chose to award both types of all of its AIM HIGH funding to all the same students, which means that the demographic characteristics of its recipients are weighted heavily in this category of AIM HIGH awards and absent from the other two. ISU (and a couple of other schools) chose to meet their match by awarding grants through programs funded by both state and matching funds, resulting in their recipients’ demographic characteristics being weighted heavily in this category.

Fourteen of the 44 AIM HIGH Programs were funded with only matching funds, nearly 32 percent of recipients were funded with only matching funds (4,582 of the total 14,490), and the average grant funded by only matching funds was less than the overall average (\$2,847 compared to \$4,076 overall). Recipients receiving AIM HIGH grants with only matching funds were more likely than recipients who received AIM HIGH grants with only state funds or with both state and matching funds to be Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino (52% compared to 27% and 29%, respectively), to have smaller family sizes (1-2) (27% compared to 21% and 17%), to be a transfer student (27% compared to 17% and 6%), to have incomes of \$30,000 or less (33% compared to 16% and 19%), and to have lower GPAs (both freshmen entering with HS GPAs and current recipients with college GPAs) and standardized test scores.

The gender breakdown of AIM HIGH grant recipients was approximately 63 percent female and 37 percent male with 0.2 percent identifying as Other. Females received grants at higher rates regardless of the funding source of their grant(s) – state funded, matching funded, or funded by both state and matching funds – and at every university, although that varies from nearly 58 percent female at UIC to 69 percent female at CSU and ISU. The most recent gender breakdown for all Illinois public university undergraduates is 53 percent female and 47 percent male.

Table 8: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Gender

GENDER	Total #*	Male	Female	Other
TOTAL	14,482	36.5%	63.3%	0.2%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,380	36.3%	63.6%	0.1%
Matching fund dollars only	4,581	40.3%	59.7%	0.0%
Both State and matching dollars	4,521	32.9%	66.5%	0.6%
CSU	250	30.4%	69.6%	0.0%
EIU	1,666	32.5%	67.4%	0.0%
GSU	514	35.2%	64.8%	0.0%
ISU	2,153	29.6%	69.2%	1.2%
NEIU	294	38.1%	60.2%	1.7%
NIU	1,696	40.5%	59.5%	0.0%
SIUC	1,183	38.0%	62.0%	0.0%
SIUE	1,014	35.5%	64.5%	0.0%
UIC	1,054	42.4%	57.6%	0.0%
UIS	381	32.8%	67.2%	0.0%
UIUC	3,101	39.7%	60.3%	0.0%
WIU	1,176	37.4%	62.6%	0.0%
*Missing = 8				

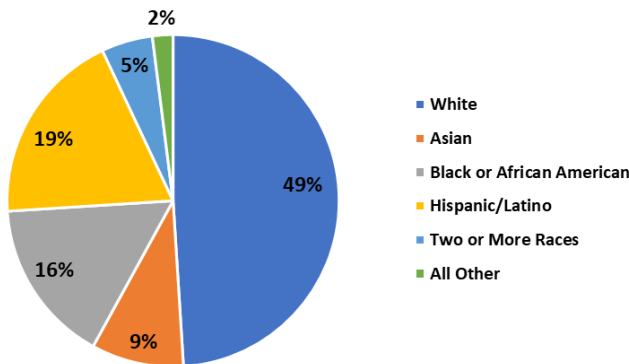
Nearly 44 percent of AIM HIGH grant recipients were from the collar counties [DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, Will, and Cook (outside of Chicago)], 20 percent were from Chicago, and about 36 percent from all other areas in Illinois. According to Census Bureau data, the current breakdown for the entire Illinois population is 25 percent collar area (excluding Cook County), 41 percent Cook County (including Chicago), and 34 percent all other counties in Illinois.² As expected, the AIM HIGH recipient geographic percentage breakdown by institution is reflective of the school’s geographic location, and the breakdown by funding source is reflective of how many awards were made by each institution and the way they funded their program(s). Eight of the 12 Illinois public universities are located outside the Chicago and collar area, three are located in Chicago, and one is located in the collar area. Schools do, however, draw students from surrounding areas and from across the State.

Table 9: AY22-23 AIM HIGH Recipients by Geographic Area

GEOGRAPHIC AREA	Total #*	Chicago	Collar Area	All Other
TOTAL	14,154	20.4%	43.6%	36.0%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,223	13.4%	54.6%	32.0%
Matching fund dollars only	4,542	33.0%	40.3%	26.8%
Both State and matching dollars	4,389	15.8%	33.9%	50.3%
CSU	250	68.8%	27.2%	4.0%
EIU	1,583	8.8%	23.6%	67.7%
GSU	514	10.9%	80.9%	8.2%
ISU	2,003	11.9%	51.2%	36.9%
NEIU	294	71.8%	27.2%	1.0%
NIU	1,696	31.3%	52.3%	16.5%
SIUC	1,185	13.8%	24.1%	62.2%
SIUE	1,017	2.2%	7.2%	90.7%
UIC	1,054	47.2%	49.3%	3.4%
UIS	383	7.0%	21.4%	71.5%
UIUC	2,999	21.5%	64.1%	14.4%
WIU	1,176	16.2%	37.1%	46.8%
*Missing = 336				

The race/ethnicity breakdown of AIM HIGH grant recipients was 49 percent white, 19 percent Hispanic/Latino, 16 percent Black or African American, 9 percent Asian, and 5 percent two or more races. The remaining 2 percent of recipients were American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-resident alien, or race/ethnicity unknown.

Figure 1: AIM HIGH Recipients by Race/Ethnicity



The remaining 2 percent of recipients were American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-resident alien, or race/ethnicity unknown. The breakdown of AIM HIGH recipients by race/ethnicity looked a lot like the breakdown of Illinois public university undergraduates overall; AIM HIGH recipients were somewhat more likely to be White,

² “Population of Counties in Illinois (2023).” *World Population Review*, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/states/illinois/counties>.

Black or African American, or two or more races and less likely to be Asian, Hispanic, or a non-resident alien. For comparison, the most recent race/ethnicity breakdown for all Illinois public university undergraduates is 47 percent white, 18 percent Hispanic/Latino, 12 percent Black or African American, 11 percent Asian, 6 percent non-resident alien, 3 percent two or more races, and 3 percent the remaining categories identified above.

Compared to the race/ethnicity breakdown of all AIM HIGH recipients, students who identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino or Black or African American received grants at higher rates when funded by only matching funds and at lower rates when funded by only state funds or funded by both state and matching funds. This may be due to the criteria of the various AIM HIGH Programs and/or higher numbers of AIM HIGH recipients at universities that serve more minority students.

A comparison of the race/ethnicity breakdown of AIM HIGH recipients by university to the overall university breakdown in Table 7 shows that for 10 of the 12 universities, the percentage of people of color represented in their AIM HIGH recipients is higher than the percentage represented in their overall undergraduate population. For the other 2 universities, the percentage of people of color awarded AIM HIGH was similar or lower than the percentage of undergraduate people of color at their institution. The Public Act creating AIM HIGH instructed universities to use their best efforts to delegate grant funds amongst a racially diverse range of students.

Table 10: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Race/Ethnicity

RACE/ ETHNICITY	Total #*	Hispanic/ Latino	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Two or more races	Non- resident Alien	Race/ ethnicity unknown
TOTAL	14,490	19.3%	0.2%	8.8%	16.2%	0.1%	48.9%	5.3%	0.1%	1.1%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,382	15.9%	0.1%	15.4%	10.7%	0.1%	49.9%	6.5%	0.0%	1.4%
Matching fund dollars only	4,582	29.0%	0.1%	6.9%	23.4%	0.1%	34.4%	5.4%	0.2%	0.5%
Both State and matching dollars	4,526	13.7%	0.2%	2.9%	15.6%	0.0%	62.3%	3.8%	0.1%	1.4%
CSU	250	5.6%	0.4%	1.6%	79.6%	0.0%	2.4%	3.6%	0.0%	6.8%
EIU	1,666	11.3%	0.2%	1.7%	14.4%	0.2%	65.3%	3.5%	0.0%	3.4%
GSU	514	22.0%	0.2%	2.7%	35.4%	0.2%	33.1%	4.3%	0.4%	1.8%
ISU	2,153	13.7%	0.1%	3.2%	7.7%	0.0%	71.4%	3.4%	0.1%	0.4%
NEIU	294	55.1%	0.0%	14.6%	9.9%	0.0%	14.3%	1.4%	0.0%	4.8%
NIU	1,696	14.4%	0.5%	5.0%	27.3%	0.0%	35.1%	17.0%	0.1%	0.6%
SIUC	1,185	14.4%	0.0%	1.9%	23.6%	0.1%	55.7%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%
SIUE	1,017	6.2%	0.3%	2.9%	12.7%	0.0%	71.5%	4.4%	0.0%	2.0%
UIC	1,054	39.8%	0.0%	25.7%	7.7%	0.2%	22.0%	3.3%	0.7%	0.7%
UIS	383	17.5%	0.3%	2.6%	12.8%	0.0%	60.6%	6.0%	0.0%	0.3%
UIUC	3,102	28.8%	0.0%	22.3%	8.5%	0.0%	35.5%	4.5%	0.0%	0.4%
WIU	1,176	14.5%	0.2%	0.7%	23.1%	0.1%	58.8%	1.9%	0.0%	0.7%

*Missing = 0

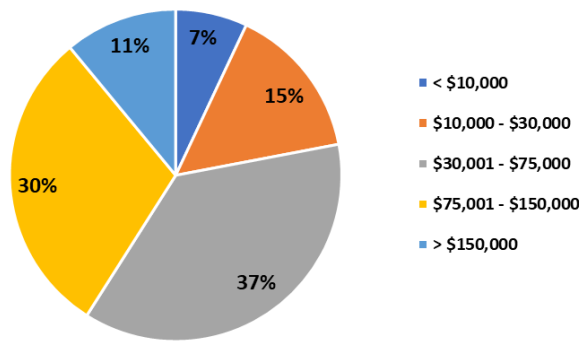
About one-fourth of AIM HIGH recipients have a family size of 3 (24%), a little more than one-fourth of AIM HIGH recipients have a family size of 4 (29%), and about 10 percent have a family size of 6 or more. About one in seven (14%) had a family size of 2 and a little more than one in six (18%) had a family size of 5. Recipients of AIM HIGH grants made with only matching funds were more likely to have a family size of 1 or 2 (27%) than recipients of AIM HIGH grants made with only state funds or recipients of AIM HIGH grants made with both state and matching funds (20% and 17%, respectively). Recipients of AIM HIGH grants made with only state funds or made with both state and matching funds were somewhat more likely to report a bigger family size (5 or more) than recipients of AIM HIGH grants made with only matching funds – 29 percent each compared to 23 percent, respectively. CSU was much more likely than schools overall to have reported a smaller family size (1 or 2), and less likely than schools overall to have reported a larger family size (4 or more) – 46 percent (compared to 20% overall) and 35 percent (compared to 56% overall), respectively. NEIU and GSU were also more likely than schools overall to have reported recipients with a smaller family size.

Table 11: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Family Size

FAMILY SIZE	Total #*	1	2	3	4	5	6 or more
TOTAL	12,716	5.9%	14.8%	24.3%	28.5%	17.2%	9.4%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,012	4.1%	13.2%	24.3%	30.2%	18.5%	9.8%
Matching fund dollars only	4,401	9.4%	17.9%	24.6%	25.3%	14.1%	8.7%
Both State and matching dollars	3,303	4.2%	13.1%	23.6%	30.1%	19.3%	9.7%
CSU	118	11.9%	23.7%	18.6%	22.0%	12.7%	11.0%
EIU	1,583	6.1%	14.3%	24.3%	28.9%	16.5%	10.0%
GSU	137	59.9%	15.3%	13.1%	5.1%	4.4%	2.2%
ISU	2,003	1.3%	11.1%	21.5%	33.5%	23.0%	9.5%
NEIU	294	15.0%	14.6%	21.8%	21.8%	15.0%	11.9%
NIU	1,661	9.3%	17.7%	24.9%	23.9%	15.0%	9.2%
SIUC	1,185	0.8%	24.0%	27.5%	25.2%	13.8%	8.8%
SIUE	144	0.7%	8.3%	24.3%	35.4%	17.4%	13.9%
UIC	1,053	21.7%	9.6%	18.6%	24.5%	14.2%	11.3%
UIS	382	9.9%	15.4%	20.7%	26.2%	17.3%	10.5%
UIUC	2,988	0.7%	14.6%	27.3%	30.8%	18.4%	8.1%
WIU	1,168	3.1%	13.4%	25.6%	31.8%	16.4%	9.8%
Missing = 1,774							

All newly awarded AIM HIGH recipients in academic year 2023-24 were required to file the FAFSA or the Alternative Application and demonstrate financial need, with an initial household income no

Figure 2: AIM HIGH Recipients by Income Level



greater than eight times the poverty guideline established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The poverty guideline at time of awarding for a family of four was \$26,500; eight times that amount for use in the AIM HIGH Program was about \$212,000. Larger families have larger thresholds. Nearly one-quarter of all AIM HIGH recipients had family incomes of \$30,000 or less (7% had incomes less than \$10,000), 37 percent had incomes

between \$30,001 and \$75,000, and nearly 30 percent had family incomes of \$75,001 to \$150,000. The remaining 11 percent of recipients had family incomes more than \$150,000. AIM HIGH grants made with only matching funds were much more likely to be awarded to lower-income students (those making less than or equal to \$30,000) than grants made with only state funds or grants made with both state and matching funds – 33 percent compared to 16 percent and 19 percent, respectively.

Table 12: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Income Range

INCOME	Total #*	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$30,000	\$30,001 - \$75,000	\$75,001 - \$150,000	More than \$150,000
TOTAL	13,111	7.4%	15.3%	36.5%	29.7%	11.3%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,196	5.1%	11.3%	33.2%	38.5%	12.0%
Matching fund dollars only	4,526	10.2%	22.5%	45.1%	14.1%	8.1%
Both State and matching dollars	3,389	7.0%	11.6%	30.0%	37.0%	14.4%
CSU	119	21.8%	23.5%	36.1%	14.3%	4.2%
EIU	1,583	8.7%	11.4%	31.6%	36.4%	12.0%
GSU	514	13.0%	21.2%	29.4%	28.4%	8.0%
ISU	2,003	4.3%	8.8%	21.5%	44.8%	20.6%
NEIU	294	16.0%	31.3%	48.0%	4.8%	0.0%
NIU	1,661	9.8%	17.8%	38.6%	28.6%	5.2%
SIUC	1,185	7.6%	19.0%	50.5%	18.3%	4.6%
SIUE	144	4.2%	6.9%	34.0%	46.5%	8.3%
UIC	1,054	11.6%	25.2%	31.8%	24.6%	6.8%
UIS	383	10.4%	14.6%	30.0%	36.6%	8.4%
UIUC	2,999	3.2%	14.2%	50.3%	22.4%	10.0%
WIU	1,172	7.3%	11.7%	23.1%	34.8%	23.1%
*Missing =1,379						

The breakdown of family income for AIM HIGH recipients by institution could be reflective of the population it serves and the income criteria of the Program, but also may be reflective of additional criteria schools set for their program(s). Four universities awarded more than one-third of its AIM HIGH awards to recipients having family incomes of \$30,000 or less – CSU (45%), GSU (44%), NEIU (47%), and UIC (37%). The proportion of recipients having family incomes of \$30,000 or less was lower at the other nine universities. A good indicator of the percentage of low-income students at an institution is the percentage who are eligible for a federal Pell Grant and/or the percentage who are eligible for an Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant.

Both grants are need-based, with grants based on a formula that calculates a family’s (or individual’s) ability to contribute to the cost of their education [the expected family contribution (EFC)]. Both Pell and MAP have an EFC cap to target aid to the students who have the fewest family resources available to pay for college. MAP grants are awarded to undergraduate Illinois students who attend MAP-approved Illinois institutions, which includes all Illinois public universities, community colleges, the majority of private non-profit institutions, and a handful of proprietary schools. MAP grants are applied to tuition and mandatory fees only and cannot exceed the equivalent of 135 semester credit hours. Pell Grants cover a wider range of college costs at a broader group of Illinois institutions, and they can be used for the equivalent of six years of full-time enrollment. The mean taxable income of a MAP-eligible dependent student’s parents in FY23 was \$35,000, and \$19,463 for an independent student (among those whose income was greater than zero). Among the AIM HIGH recipients for whom Pell and MAP data were reported, more than half were Pell eligible (58%) and/or MAP eligible (57%). In comparison, 36 percent of all Illinois undergraduates at public universities received Pell Grants and 37 percent received MAP grants.

AIM HIGH recipients with awards funded with AIM HIGH matching funds were more likely to have been Pell Grant eligible (77%) than recipients with awards funded with AIM HIGH state funds or recipients with awards funded with both AIM HIGH state and matching funds (49% each). Schools with 57 percent or more of their AIM HIGH recipients Pell eligible included CSU (86%), GSU (60%), NEIU (92%), NIU (66%), SIUC (77%), UIC (68%), and UIUC (64%). As Table 7 shows, 5 of these 7 schools also have a higher proportion of their overall undergraduate population receiving Pell Grants compared to public universities overall.

Table 13: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Pell Grant Eligibility

PELL GRANT ELIGIBILITY	Total #*	No	Yes
TOTAL	13,534	41.8%	58.2%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,346	51.2%	48.8%
Matching fund dollars only	4,535	23.3%	76.7%
Both State and matching dollars	3,653	51.0%	49.0%
CSU	250	14.0%	86.0%
EIU	1,583	48.0%	52.0%
GSU	514	39.3%	60.7%
ISU	2,153	66.0%	34.0%
NEIU	294	8.5%	91.5%
NIU	1,696	34.1%	65.9%
SIUC	1,185	22.8%	77.2%
SIUE	144	52.8%	47.2%
UIC	1,054	32.5%	67.5%
UIS	383	45.7%	54.3%
UIUC	3,102	35.6%	64.4%
WIU	1,176	56.8%	43.2%
*Missing = 956			

More than three fourths (77%) of AIM HIGH recipients awarded with matching funds were MAP grant eligible, compared to nearly half of AIM HIGH recipients funded with state funds (49%) and AIM HIGH recipients funded with both state and matching funds (49%). Ten of the 12 universities reported at least half of their recipients were MAP eligible (ranging from 50% at SIUE to 86% at CSU), and the remaining 2 reported between 0 percent (UIC) to 40 percent (ISU) of recipients were MAP eligible.

Table 14: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by MAP Grant Eligibility

MAP GRANT ELIGIBILITY	Total #*	No	Yes
TOTAL	13,513	42.8%	57.2%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,342	50.4%	49.6%
Matching fund dollars only	4,519	31.3%	68.7%
Both State and matching dollars	3,652	46.0%	54.0%
CSU	250	14.0%	86.0%
EIU	1,583	44.9%	55.1%
GSU	514	31.3%	68.7%
ISU	2,153	60.3%	39.7%
NEIU	294	6.5%	93.5%
NIU	1,696	26.5%	73.5%
SIUC	1,164	15.6%	84.4%
SIUE	144	50.0%	50.0%
UIC	1,054	99.9%	0.1%
UIS	383	42.0%	58.0%
UIUC	3,102	31.6%	68.4%
WIU	1,176	56.8%	43.2%
*Missing = 977			

Only 3 of the 12 public universities, representing about one-quarter (26%) of the AIM HIGH recipients, reported whether or not recipients reported a disability. Notably, unlike the K-12 level, students at the college level self-report disabilities to their institutions. The percentage of recipients reporting a disability in total, by award funding source, and by institution all were in the zero to nine percent range, which is consistent with the disability percentages reported for all undergraduate students by individual Illinois public universities as shown in Table 7.

Table 15: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Disability Status

DISABILITY STATUS	Total #*	No	Yes
TOTAL	2,655	97.7%	2.3%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	714	97.1%	2.9%
Matching fund dollars only	1,451	98.4%	1.6%
Both State and matching dollars	490	94.3%	5.7%
CSU	-		
EIU	-		
GSU	-		
ISU	-		
NEIU	294	100.0%	0.0%
NIU	-		
SIUC	1,185	90.8%	9.2%
SIUE	-		
UIC	-		
UIS	-		
UIUC	-		
WIU	1,176	99.1%	0.9%
*Missing = 11,835			

Among other criteria, institutions were required to either initially award first-time, full-time freshmen who recently graduated high school or first-time (at their institution), full-time transfer students, with AIM HIGH state funds, but could award full-time existing or transfer students at any class level with AIM HIGH matching funds. It is possible that a first-time student coming to the institution directly from high school could be at a sophomore grade level due to AP and/or dual credit coursework.

According to IPEDS data, 24,903 of all undergraduates at Illinois public universities are full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students. About one-fourth of all AIM HIGH recipients (26%) in the fifth year of the Program were freshmen, 20 percent sophomores, 23 percent juniors, and 30 percent seniors. Assuming all individual freshmen AIM HIGH recipients, regardless of funding source, were first-time freshmen (they did not have to be using matching funding, but are likely to be) results in nearly one-sixth of all public university full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates receiving an AIM HIGH grant in the fifth awarding year.

Class level of AIM HIGH recipients varied by institution and depended on how the institution designed their AIM HIGH Program(s), as well as how many AIM HIGH recipients from previous years returned in year five of the Pilot. More than one-third (and up to 56%) of AIM HIGH grants were made to freshmen at 4 of the 12 public universities (CSU, NEIU, NIU, and UIUC), and another 4 universities awarded less than one-eighth of their scholarships or grants to freshmen (SIUE, UIC, UIS, and WIU). About one-fourth of AIM HIGH recipients at the remaining 4 universities (EIU, GSU, ISU, and SIUC) were freshmen. Nearly 67 percent and 42 percent of AIM HIGH recipients at UIC and UIS, respectively, were seniors, compared to 19 percent at NEIU and 15 percent at UIUC.

Table 16: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Grade Level

GRADE LEVEL	Total #*	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
TOTAL	14,488	26.3%	20.6%	23.2%	29.9%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,382	27.0%	20.9%	23.5%	28.6%
Matching fund dollars only	4,580	27.0%	17.5%	23.3%	32.2%
Both State and matching dollars	4,526	24.8%	23.4%	22.6%	29.1%
CSU	250	46.0%	14.4%	17.6%	22.0%
EIU	1,666	29.5%	25.0%	20.1%	25.3%
GSU	514	28.8%	19.5%	25.1%	26.7%
ISU	2,153	25.3%	22.2%	23.1%	29.4%
NEIU	294	55.8%	12.9%	12.6%	18.7%
NIU	1,696	38.4%	9.2%	26.9%	25.5%
SIUC	1,185	28.9%	21.4%	20.0%	29.7%
SIUE	1,017	10.9%	28.1%	28.9%	32.1%
UIC	1,052	10.3%	13.7%	9.2%	66.8%
UIS	383	11.7%	19.8%	26.4%	42.0%
UIUC	3,102	33.4%	25.9%	25.6%	15.2%
WIU	1,176	5.0%	17.1%	28.6%	49.3%
*Missing = 2					

Nearly 17 percent of AIM HIGH recipients were transfers, and that percentage was higher for grants made with AIM HIGH matching funds (27%) than the percentage for those made with AIM HIGH state funds (17%). A smaller percentage of awards made with both AIM HIGH state and matching funds were given to transfer students (6%). Transfer status varied by institution and depended on how the institution designed their AIM HIGH Program(s). Some schools awarded little to no transfer students (EIU, ISU, SIUE, and UIUC) and one school, GSU, provided nearly two-thirds (63%) of their awards to transfer students.

Table 17: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Transfer Status

TRANSFER STATUS	Total #*	No	Yes
TOTAL	14,490	83.4%	16.6%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,382	83.3%	16.7%
Matching fund dollars only	4,582	73.3%	26.7%
Both State and matching dollars	4,526	93.6%	6.4%
CSU	250	74.8%	25.2%
EIU	1,666	99.3%	0.7%
GSU	514	36.6%	63.4%
ISU	2,153	98.7%	1.3%
NEIU	294	80.6%	19.4%
NIU	1,696	51.0%	49.0%
SIUC	1,185	80.8%	19.2%
SIUE	1,017	100.0%	0.0%
UIC	1,054	69.9%	30.1%
UIS	383	60.3%	39.7%
UIUC	3,102	92.0%	8.0%
WIU	1,176	87.4%	12.6%
*Missing = 0			

In line with about one-third of AIM HIGH recipients being freshmen, and the criteria that AIM HIGH state funds be used for first-time freshmen who recently graduated high school or to first-time

transfer students, nearly 70 percent of all AIM HIGH recipients were age 20 or younger. One-fourth (25%) were 21 to 22 years old, and a little over 3 percent were 23 to 24 years old, and another 3 percent were older than 24. AIM HIGH recipients awarded with AIM HIGH state funds or awarded both AIM HIGH state and matching dollars were more likely to be younger than recipients awarded with AIM HIGH matching funds – nearly 72 percent each were 20 years of age or younger compared to 66 percent, respectively.

Age of recipients varied by institution and depended on how the institution designed their AIM HIGH Program(s). It may have also been reflective of the age of the students that the institution serves overall. Two schools, ISU and SIUC did not report the age of their recipients, so ages were missing for more than one-fourth of the recipients (28%). Some universities were much more likely to have awarded older students (23 years of age or older) than the other schools – 22 percent at CSU, 59 percent at GSU, and 27 percent at NEIU. Notably, the 59 percent of GSU, who were at least 23 years of age, were all at least 24. For the other nine schools, the percentage in that age range varied from less than one percent (ISU, SIUE, and UIUC) to 12 percent (UIS).

Table 18: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Age

AGE	Total #*	<=18	19-20	21-22	23-24	>24
TOTAL	13,757	26.5%	43.2%	24.9%	2.7%	2.6%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	5,118	30.2%	41.0%	24.8%	1.8%	2.2%
Matching fund dollars only	4,386	24.0%	41.8%	25.0%	5.5%	3.7%
Both State and matching dollars	4,253	24.5%	47.4%	25.2%	0.9%	2.0%
CSU	250	28.4%	29.2%	20.4%	6.8%	15.2%
EIU	1,666	34.7%	43.6%	18.6%	1.0%	2.0%
GSU	22	36.4%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	59.1%
ISU	2,153	25.4%	45.3%	29.2%	0.0%	0.1%
NEIU	102	32.4%	32.4%	17.6%	3.9%	13.7%
NIU	1,696	35.4%	23.5%	29.5%	5.7%	5.9%
SIUC	1,185	30.0%	42.3%	26.0%	1.6%	0.1%
SIUE	968	14.9%	62.9%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
UIC	1,054	26.1%	19.6%	26.9%	16.6%	10.8%
UIS	383	22.2%	42.3%	23.2%	4.4%	7.8%
UIUC	3,102	26.9%	51.5%	20.9%	0.6%	0.1%
WIU	1,176	9.4%	56.3%	32.3%	0.9%	1.1%
*Missing = 733						

For first-time freshmen, which represented 30 percent of AIM HIGH recipients, universities used high school GPA for awarding. About 10 percent of first-time freshmen had a 3.00 GPA or lower, and about 90 percent had a GPA of 3.01 to 4.00 (34% had a GPA of 3.01 to 3.50, 40% had a GPA of 3.51 to 3.99, and nearly 17% had a 4.00 GPA). GPAs for first-time freshmen receiving grants funded by state AIM HIGH dollars were higher than grants funded by matching funds or by both state and matching funds. GPA percentage breakdowns also varied by university due to the students that each school serves as well as the criteria they set for their program(s).

Table 19: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Freshman Recipients by High School GPA

GPA	Total #*	<=2.00	2.01-3.00	3.01-3.50	3.51-3.99	4.00
TOTAL	3,666	0.2%	8.8%	34.0%	40.2%	16.8%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	1,420	0.1%	5.5%	22.6%	45.6%	26.1%
Matching fund dollars only	1,169	0.3%	14.3%	34.5%	36.4%	14.5%
Both State and matching dollars	1,077	0.0%	7.1%	48.6%	37.2%	7.1%
CSU	114	0.0%	53.5%	32.5%	13.2%	0.9%
EIU	491	0.0%	7.5%	40.3%	36.7%	15.5%
GSU	82	2.4%	4.9%	52.4%	32.9%	7.3%
ISU	544	0.0%	0.0%	58.6%	35.1%	6.3%
NEIU	164	0.0%	0.0%	57.3%	31.1%	11.6%
NIU	634	0.0%	16.2%	39.3%	25.1%	19.4%
SIUC	337	0.0%	23.7%	46.9%	29.1%	0.3%
SIUE	111	0.0%	6.3%	19.8%	46.8%	27.0%
UIC	108	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	83.3%	15.7%
UIS	45	0.0%	11.1%	51.1%	37.8%	0.0%
UIUC	977	0.4%	0.8%	9.2%	58.0%	31.5%
WIU	59	0.0%	27.1%	23.7%	45.8%	3.4%
*Missing = 148						

For all other AY23-24 AIM HIGH recipients (the other 70% of total recipients), universities used college GPA for awarding. The GPAs were similar for this group; about 18 percent had a 3.00 GPA or lower (nearly 17% between 2.01-3.00), and about 80 percent had a GPA of 3.01 to 4.00. GPAs for non-first-time freshmen receiving grants funded by state AIM HIGH dollars only or by both state and matching funds were somewhat higher than for students receiving grants funded by matching funds only. Again, GPA percentage breakdowns varied by university due to the students that each school serves as well as the criteria they set for their program(s).

Table 20: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Non-Freshman Recipients by College GPA

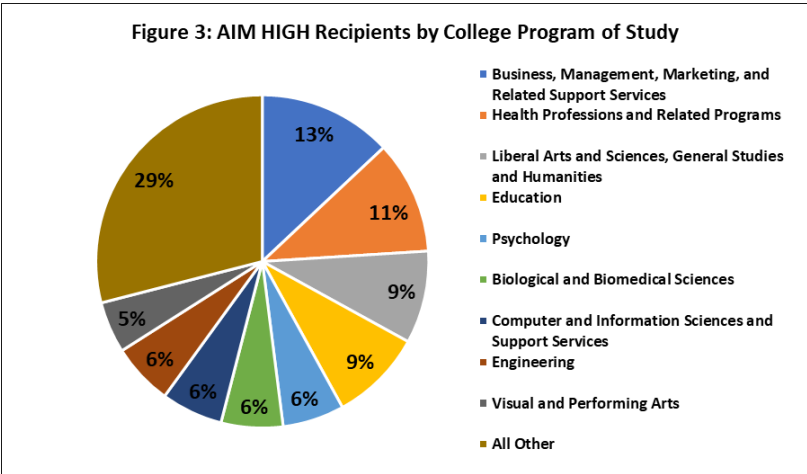
GPA	Total #*	<=2.00	2.01-3.00	3.01-3.50	3.51-3.99	4.00
TOTAL	10,606	1.7%	16.5%	25.6%	42.9%	13.3%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	3,893	0.6%	8.3%	19.8%	51.0%	20.2%
Matching fund dollars only	3,339	3.9%	28.2%	28.9%	32.7%	6.2%
Both State and matching dollars	3,374	0.9%	14.4%	28.9%	43.7%	12.2%
CSU	134	1.5%	35.1%	30.6%	26.9%	6.0%
EIU	1,161	0.3%	18.9%	25.1%	39.2%	16.5%
GSU	366	15.0%	14.5%	20.8%	44.3%	5.5%
ISU	1,609	0.0%	4.4%	23.2%	54.0%	18.5%
NEIU	130	0.8%	5.4%	31.5%	43.1%	19.2%
NIU	1,015	1.8%	9.5%	28.1%	45.4%	15.3%
SIUC	843	5.8%	16.7%	20.0%	26.9%	30.5%
SIUE	906	1.7%	24.3%	34.9%	33.0%	6.2%
UIC	946	0.8%	26.7%	25.8%	26.3%	20.3%
UIS	312	1.6%	9.6%	25.0%	46.2%	17.6%
UIUC	2,067	0.1%	13.0%	23.6%	57.5%	5.8%
WIU	1,117	2.2%	30.9%	27.8%	36.4%	2.7%
*Missing = 70						

Standardized test scores, either ACT or SAT, were reported on nearly 58 percent of all AIM HIGH recipients. About half of scores (48%) were ≤ 1150 SAT / ≤ 23 ACT and about half (52%) were ≥ 1160 SAT / ≥ 24 ACT. About one-fifth of all AIM HIGH recipients fell within the lowest standardized score range (≤ 1020 SAT / ≤ 19 ACT), while about 11 percent fell within the highest test score range (≥ 1440 SAT/ ≥ 32 ACT). AIM HIGH recipients with grants funded with AIM HIGH state funds had higher standardized test scores than recipients funded by only AIM HIGH matching funds or funded both AIM HIGH state and matching funds: 68 percent had a ≥ 1160 SAT/ ≥ 24 ACT compared to 37 percent and 45 percent, respectively. Standardized test scores for AIM HIGH recipients by institution varied greatly, just as they do for the entire undergraduate population by institution. Table 7 illustrates the variation of standardized test scores for all undergraduates (who took the test and submitted their scores) by institution through the ACT Composite 25th and 75th percentile scores, which range from 15 to 34.

Table 21: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by Standardized Test Score

SAT/ACT Score	Total #*	≤ 1020 SAT / ≤ 19 ACT	1030 - 1090 SAT / 20 - 21 ACT	1100 - 1150 SAT / 22 - 23 ACT	1160 - 1250 SAT / 24 - 26 ACT	1260 - 1410 SAT / 27 - 31 ACT	≥ 1440 SAT / ≥ 32 ACT
TOTAL	8,383	22.5%	13.0%	12.8%	19.3%	21.3%	11.2%
State AIM HIGH dollars only	3,112	13.8%	9.2%	8.0%	14.8%	28.7%	25.4%
Matching fund dollars only	2,284	34.0%	15.5%	13.6%	17.4%	16.0%	3.5%
Both State and matching dollars	2,987	22.8%	14.9%	17.1%	25.3%	17.6%	2.3%
CSU	52	78.8%	17.3%	1.9%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%
EIU	1,302	39.4%	18.8%	14.8%	18.0%	8.1%	0.8%
GSU	40	52.5%	22.5%	7.5%	17.5%	0.0%	0.0%
ISU	1,603	5.6%	9.4%	18.4%	33.3%	28.0%	5.4%
NEIU	13	76.9%	0.0%	23.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
NIU	125	44.8%	20.8%	12.8%	15.2%	6.4%	0.0%
SIUC	664	41.3%	18.5%	13.9%	14.8%	11.0%	0.6%
SIUE	891	31.4%	16.9%	14.5%	19.4%	15.3%	2.5%
UIC	773	18.9%	10.7%	10.2%	15.5%	29.5%	15.1%
UIS	157	29.3%	26.8%	14.0%	15.9%	11.5%	2.5%
UIUC	2,014	4.5%	6.2%	6.4%	14.3%	34.7%	34.0%
WIU	749	42.5%	16.6%	14.7%	15.6%	9.1%	1.6%
*Missing = 6,107							

As Table 22 and Figure 3 illustrates, Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services was the most prevalent college program of study for AIM HIGH grant recipients; about one in eight (12.5%) AIM HIGH recipients reported it as their program of study. It was followed by Health Professions and Related Programs (11%); Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities (9%); and Education (9%). No other area of study was identified by more than six percent of AIM HIGH recipients.



The Illinois Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reports on the breakdown of undergraduates in just six programs of study (included in Table 7). A comparison of the breakdown between these six areas of study with a breakdown of AIM HIGH recipients between these same six areas of study shows a similar percentage of recipients in the Business, Biological and Biomedical Sciences, and Physical Sciences in both groups. The

percentage of AIM HIGH recipients in Education (in the breakdown of these six areas) was somewhat higher than for undergraduates overall (9% to 7%), and the percentage of AIM HIGH recipients in Engineering was somewhat lower than for undergraduates overall (4% to 9%). Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services was the most popular area of study among these six program areas of study and was the same when looking at AIM HIGH recipients for 7 of the 12 public universities (CSU, GSU, ISU, NEIU, NIU, UIS, and WIU). For two schools, the most popular among the six areas of study was Biomedical Science (SIUC and UIC). The remaining schools each had a separate most popular area of study; at EIU, it was Education; at SIUE, it was Health Professions and Related Programs; and at UIUC, it was Engineering.

In total, as Table 23 shows, Business, and Health Professions, and Liberal Arts were the top three highest percentages of AIM HIGH recipients' programs of study whether the AIM HIGH grant was funded with only state funds, only matching funds, or funded with both AIM HIGH state and matching funds.

Table 22: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by College Program of Study (by Institution)

COLLEGE PROGRAM OF STUDY	Total #*	TOTAL %	CSU	EIU	GSU	ISU	NEIU	NIU	SIUC	SIUE	UIC	UIS	UIUC	WIU
BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, AND RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES	1,808	12.5%	14.3%	13.3%	11.9%	18.3%	10.2%	17.3%	8.1%	8.5%	13.2%	18.0%	7.5%	12.7%
HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND RELATED PROGRAMS	1,591	11.0%	18.0%	7.9%	6.2%	15.9%	1.4%	16.3%	13.2%	15.6%	8.3%	2.1%	7.4%	10.3%
LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, GENERAL STUDIES AND HUMANITIES	1,314	9.1%	3.7%	5.3%	40.7%	1.0%	54.4%	5.8%	5.4%	37.4%	7.5%	7.3%	4.9%	2.1%
EDUCATION	1,296	9.0%	23.0%	14.5%	4.1%	16.3%	5.1%	10.8%	5.8%	5.1%	3.1%	8.9%	4.8%	7.9%
PSYCHOLOGY	909	6.3%		6.2%	9.7%	5.7%	3.4%	8.4%	4.6%	6.3%	7.6%	10.2%	5.0%	7.5%
BIOLOGICAL AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES	879	6.1%	6.6%	5.4%	3.9%	5.2%	6.1%	2.9%	9.2%	3.6%	13.4%	9.7%	6.6%	3.6%
COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SCIENCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES	840	5.8%	6.1%	3.4%	7.8%	6.5%	4.8%	5.8%	3.6%	1.8%	15.0%	9.4%	6.0%	3.1%
ENGINEERING	828	5.7%		0.9%				6.7%	3.5%	2.5%	12.7%		15.7%	0.9%
VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	682	4.7%	8.6%	8.3%	1.6%	5.1%	2.4%	6.2%	5.6%	2.8%	1.8%	3.4%	2.8%	6.8%
SOCIAL SCIENCES	548	3.8%	0.8%	3.4%	2.5%	3.1%	1.0%	4.7%	6.5%	1.5%	2.4%	3.7%	5.4%	2.5%
PARKS, RECREATION, LEISURE, FITNESS, AND KINESIOLOGY	513	3.5%	1.6%	7.9%			2.8%		3.0%	3.7%	2.6%	2.8%	4.7%	3.3%
COMMUNICATION, JOURNALISM, AND RELATED PROGRAMS	512	3.5%	3.7%	7.4%	1.9%	2.3%	0.7%	1.9%	2.6%	2.2%	1.1%	3.7%	5.1%	4.0%
HOMELAND SECURITY, LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIREFIGHTING AND RELATED PROTECTIVE SERVICES	402	2.8%	7.8%	3.8%	2.9%	1.5%	1.7%			2.7%	2.0%	5.0%		16.9%
AGRICULTURAL/ANIMAL/PLANT/VETERINARY SCIENCE AND RELATED FIELDS	326	2.3%			3.3%	1.4%			4.1%				5.7%	4.4%
PHYSICAL SCIENCES	303	2.1%	3.3%	1.1%	0.4%	1.9%	0.3%	2.2%	0.9%	1.8%	1.8%	1.0%	2.8%	4.8%
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE/LETTERS	248	1.7%	0.4%	2.9%	0.4%	2.2%	0.7%	1.7%	0.8%	1.3%	1.1%	2.1%	1.9%	1.6%
HISTORY	210	1.5%	1.2%	2.9%	0.4%	2.6%	0.7%	0.8%	0.4%	1.3%	0.5%	1.6%	1.4%	1.0%
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS	198	1.4%			1.9%	1.1%	5.4%	0.1%	2.6%	0.6%	0.7%	4.4%	1.6%	3.1%
MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS	190	1.3%	0.8%	0.8%	0.4%	3.1%		0.6%	0.1%	0.6%	1.3%	0.8%	2.1%	0.4%
FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES/HUMAN SCIENCES	179	1.2%		2.2%		1.5%		2.1%	1.1%		0.8%		1.7%	0.3%
MULTI/INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES	150	1.0%		0.7%					0.3%	1.1%	0.9%	0.3%	3.6%	
ENGINEERING/ENGINEERING-RELATED TECHNOLOGIES/TECHNICIANS	106	0.7%		0.8%		0.5%		1.4%	3.4%					1.6%
ARCHITECTURE AND RELATED SERVICES	105	0.7%							1.9%		1.3%		2.2%	
NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION	93	0.6%				0.4%	1.0%	0.7%	2.0%	0.3%		1.6%	1.2%	
FOREIGN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND LINGUISTICS	86	0.6%		0.7%		0.7%	0.3%	0.4%	1.0%	0.6%	0.3%		0.7%	0.8%
TRANSPORTATION AND MATERIALS MOVING	77	0.5%							6.5%					
CULINARY, ENTERTAINMENT, AND PERSONAL SERVICES	29	0.2%							2.4%					
LEGAL PROFESSIONS AND STUDIES	22	0.2%				0.5%			0.3%			2.1%		
AREA, ETHNIC, CULTURAL, GENDER, AND GROUP STUDIES	20	0.1%					0.3%	0.1%			0.3%		0.5%	
PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES	11	0.1%		0.1%		0.0%		0.1%		0.2%		0.3%	0.1%	
COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES/TECHNICIANS AND SUPPORT SERVICES	<10	0.0%				0.2%								
TOTAL	14,480	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Missing = 10

Table 23: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Recipients by College Program of Study (by Funding Source)

COLLEGE PROGRAM OF STUDY	STATE #	STATE %	MATCH #	MATCH %	BOTH #	BOTH %	TOTAL #*	TOTAL %
TOTAL	5,379	100.0%	4,581	100.0%	4,520	100.0%	14,480	100.0%
BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, AND RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES	651	12.1%	507	11.1%	650	14.4%	1,808	12.5%
HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND RELATED PROGRAMS	508	9.4%	524	11.4%	559	12.4%	1,591	11.0%
LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, GENERAL STUDIES AND HUMANITIES	446	8.3%	210	4.6%	658	14.6%	1,314	9.1%
EDUCATION	436	8.1%	320	7.0%	540	11.9%	1,296	9.0%
PSYCHOLOGY	314	5.8%	324	7.1%	271	6.00%	909	6.3%
BIOLOGICAL AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES	425	7.9%	208	4.5%	246	5.44%	879	6.1%
COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SCIENCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES	374	7.0%	243	5.3%	223	4.93%	840	5.8%
ENGINEERING	530	9.9%	262	5.7%	36	0.80%	828	5.7%
VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	263	4.9%	204	4.5%	215	4.76%	682	4.7%
SOCIAL SCIENCES	191	3.6%	234	5.1%	123	2.7%	548	3.8%
PARKS, RECREATION, LEISURE, FITNESS, AND KINESIOLOGY	163	3.0%	207	4.5%	143	3.2%	513	3.5%
COMMUNICATION, JOURNALISM, AND RELATED PROGRAMS	167	3.1%	201	4.4%	144	3.2%	512	3.5%
HOMELAND SECURITY, LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIREFIGHTING AND RELATED PROTECTIVE SERVICES	71	1.3%	195	4.3%	136	3.0%	402	2.8%
AGRICULTURAL/ANIMAL/PLANT/VETERINARY SCIENCE AND RELATED FIELDS	97	1.8%	189	4.1%	40	0.9%	326	2.3%
PHYSICAL SCIENCES	103	1.9%	120	2.6%	80	1.8%	303	2.1%
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE/LETTERS	101	1.9%	78	1.7%	69	1.5%	248	1.7%
HISTORY	70	1.3%	53	1.2%	87	1.9%	210	1.5%
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS	31	0.6%	98	2.1%	69	1.5%	198	1.4%
MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS	87	1.6%	41	0.9%	62	1.4%	190	1.3%
FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES/HUMAN SCIENCES	64	1.2%	80	1.7%	35	0.8%	179	1.2%
MULTI/INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES	81	1.5%	56	1.2%	13	0.3%	150	1.0%
ENGINEERING/ENGINEERING-RELATED TECHNOLOGIES/TECHNICIANS	30	0.6%	53	1.2%	23	0.5%	106	0.7%
ARCHITECTURE AND RELATED SERVICES	52	1.0%	50	1.1%	<10	0.1%	105	0.7%
NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION	47	0.9%	24	0.5%	22	0.5%	93	0.6%
FOREIGN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND LINGUISTICS	24	0.4%	33	0.7%	29	0.6%	86	0.6%
TRANSPORTATION AND MATERIALS MOVING	31	0.6%	31	0.7%	15	0.3%	77	0.5%
CULINARY, ENTERTAINMENT, AND PERSONAL SERVICES	12	0.2%	14	0.3%	<10	0.1%	29	0.2%
LEGAL PROFESSIONS AND STUDIES	<10	0.1%	<10	0.0%	17	0.4%	22	0.2%
AREA, ETHNIC, CULTURAL, GENDER, AND GROUP STUDIES	<10	0.1%	15	0.3%	<10	0.0%	20	0.1%
PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES	<10	0.0%	<10	0.1%	<10	0.1%	11	0.1%
COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES/TECHNICIANS AND SUPPORT SERVICES	<10	0.0%	<10	0.0%	<10	0.1%	<10	0.0%

*Missing = 10

AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program Year Five Recipient Retention

In the fourth year of the program, academic year 2022-23, there were 15,657 AIM HIGH recipients. Thirty percent of those AIM HIGH recipients were freshmen (4,728) 20 percent sophomores (3,116), 24 percent juniors (3,726), and 26 percent seniors (4,087). Of the 15,657 recipients, 5,246 (33%) received grants funded with only state funds, 5,309 (34%) received grants funded with only matching funds, and 5,102 (33%) received grants funded with both state and matching funds. ISU awarded the most students (2,418), and CSU the fewest students (203). Again, institutions are required to guarantee renewability and predictability for recipients [i.e., an institution is awarding the State-funded AIM HIGH grant for four years (can be less for a transfer student)], and requirements for renewal must be made clear at the time of the initial award]. Schools have the option to renew awards made with only AIM HIGH matching funds if they choose but are required to be clear on that front when awarding.

Of the 15,657 AIM HIGH recipients in year four (AY22-23), 52 percent (8,208) received an AIM HIGH grant in year five (AY23-24), and 48 percent (7,449) did not receive a grant in year five. Although graduation status was not collected on year four recipients in year five (plans are underway to collect that status on year six recipients), it is likely that a main reason that a senior in year four did not continue to receive an AIM HIGH grant in year five was because they had graduated. Thus, year-four seniors were excluded from the retention analysis by funding source and demographics. Seventy-four percent (11,570) of the 15,657 AIM HIGH recipients in year three were freshmen, sophomores, or juniors. As Table 24 illustrates, of those 10,711 recipients, 63 percent (7,328) returned in the fifth year of the program **and received an AIM HIGH grant**. The status provided by each school for a student who did not continue to receive a grant in year five indicates that at least 83 percent of all freshmen, sophomore, and junior year-four grant recipients were retained into year five, although they did not all continue to receive an AIM HIGH Grant.

Table 24: Year Four (AY22-23) AIM HIGH Recipients in Year Five

	Total #*	Total %
TOTAL – All	15,657	100%
Retained in Program – All	8,208	52%
Not Retained in Program – All	7,449	48%
All Seniors	,	-
All Unclassified	-	-
TOTAL – Freshmen, Sophomores, and Juniors (F, S, J)	11,570	
Retained in Program Total – F, S, J	7,328	63%
Not Retained in Program Total – F, S, J	4,242	37%
Not Retained – F, S, J; Status Missing	8	<0.1%
Not Retained – F, S, J; Enrolled, eligible, unawarded	22	1%
Not Retained – F, S, J; Enrolled, non-eligible	2,263	53%
Not Retained – F, S, J; Not enrolled	1,562	37%
Not Retained – F, S, J; Not enrolled because graduated or		
Not Retained – F, S, J; Enrolled, eligible, not included in match ³	387	9%

As Table 25 points out, the retention rates for students awarded grants in year four from State AIM HIGH funds only or from both State and matching AIM HIGH funds were higher than the retention rate for year four students awarded grants from AIM HIGH matching funds only – 79 percent and 77 percent, compared to 38 percent. Retention rates for grants made by institution were lower for grants

³ Changes to the data collection instructions to differentiate these two categories were not uniformly interpreted this reporting year. These two categories will be differentiated in subsequent reports.

made from only matching funds than for the grants they made from only State funds or from both State and matching funds for every institution except for one instance; the retention at GSU for grants made with both State and matching funds (35%) was less than the 62% for recipients whose grants were funded with matching funds only. The retention rate for recipients who returned in year five and continued to receive an AIM HIGH grant made from only matching funds could have been lower for several reasons: the demographics of those receiving grants from AIM HIGH only matching funds differed from those receiving grants from only State funds or from both matching and State funds; grants made from only AIM HIGH matching funds did not have to be renewed (although the school could have chosen to do so); and/or, a school could have reported on a completely different group of students in year four in order to meet their matching requirement for the Program.

Due to the numerous reasons that retention rates could have been lower for recipients who received grants made from only matching AIM HIGH funds, the following analysis focuses on recipients who received only State-funded grants or grants made from both State and matching funds. Absent recipients who received only matching-funded grants, retention rates for AIM HIGH recipients ranged from 35 percent at GSU (for recipients paid with both State and matching funds) to 94 percent at UIUC (also for recipients paid with both State and matching funds). Table 7 (on page 19) includes the most recently available overall, full-time retention rates by institution (attended the school full time in the fall 2022 and returned in fall 2023 to the same school either full time or part time); those retention rates ranged from 55 percent at CSU to 93 percent at UIUC. For CSU, SIUE and UIS, those overall retention rates can only be compared to the AIM HIGH retention rates for grants made from both State and matching funds (neither institution awarded grants using State funds only), the retention rate for AIM HIGH recipients at CSU (61%) and SIUE (81%) exceeded the overall retention rate (55% and 71%, respectively); at UIS, however, the overall retention (76%) exceeded the retention rate for AIM HIGH recipients (56%). UIC did not award grants from both State and matching funds, but its retention rate for AIM HIGH recipients (93%) exceeded its overall retention rate (78%). For three institutions (ISU, SIUC, and WIU), the retention rate for AIM HIGH recipients exceeded the institution's overall retention rate, whether the grants were made with only State funds or with both State and matching funds. For another three institutions (EIU, GSU, and NIU), the retention rate for AIM HIGH recipients exceeded the institution's overall retention rate only when the grants were made with only State funds, but not when the grants were made with both State and matching funds. By contrast, the overall retention rate at UIUC (93%) exceeded the retention rate for AIM HIGH recipients whose grants were made with only State funds (90%) but was slightly less than retention rates when the grants were made with both State and matching funds (94%). For NEIU, neither the retention rate for AIM HIGH recipients whose grants were made with only State funds (45%), nor the retention rate for recipients of grants made with both State and matching funds (61%) exceeded the overall retention rate (63%).

AIM HIGH Year Five:

- For AIM HIGH grants that were required to be renewed if eligibility criteria were met (those made from only State funds and/or from both State and matching funds), 4 of the 12 public universities had retention rates (awarded in year three and returned in year four and received a grant) for freshman, sophomore, and junior recipients that were higher than their most recent overall undergraduate retention rates.

AIM HIGH year four retention rates reflect those who returned in year five *and* were eligible for an AIM HIGH grant in year five. It is possible that a year four recipient could have been retained at the institution but not included in the AIM HIGH retention rates because they were no longer eligible for a grant (for example, they could have dropped to part-time status).

Table 25: Year Four (AY22-23) AIM HIGH Recipients (Freshmen, Sophomores, and Juniors) Who Returned in Year Five (AY23-24) and Received an AIM HIGH Grant

	Total # Recipients	Total # Retained	Total % Retained	State AIM HIGH Awarded Only % Retained	Matching AIM HIGH Awarded Only % Retained*	Both State and Matching AIM HIGH Awarded % Retained
TOTAL	11,570	7,328	63%	79%	38%	77%
CSU	181	111	61%	-	-	61%
EIU	1,334	919	69%	80%	52%	62%
GSU	554	350	63%	67%	64%	35%
ISU	1,754	1,514	86%	90%	-	86%
NEIU	590	126	21%	45%	0%	61%
NIU	1,348	494	37%	69%	1%	39%
SIUC	627	439	70%	78%	66%	75%
SIUE	972	788	81%	-	40%	81%
UIC	354	181	51%	93%	12%	-
UIS	235	131	56%	-	-	56%
UIUC	1,925	1,556	81%	90%	65%	94%
WIU	1,696	719	42%	78%	40%	91%

* Retention rates for AIM HIGH grants made from only matching funds could have been lower for several reasons (as noted in the analysis above). UIUC used a different group of students to meet their AIM HIGH match in year five than they used in year four, which may understate their overall calculated retention percentages.

Demographic breakdowns for year four AIM HIGH freshman, sophomore, and junior recipients who returned and received an AIM HIGH grant in year five and for those who did not return (or returned and were no longer eligible for a grant) are illustrated in Tables 26 and 27, respectively. Year four AIM HIGH recipients who did not continue to be AIM HIGH recipients in year five, compared to recipients who did continue to be AIM HIGH recipients in year five, were somewhat more likely to be male (41% compared to 35%), and more likely to be Hispanic/Latino (20% compared to 15%). Those not retained in the Program in year five were also much more likely to be Black or African American (34% compared to 15%), to be lower income (32% had incomes <= \$30,000 compared to 18%), and to be eligible for a Pell Grant (68% compared to 50%) or a MAP grant (68% compared to 53%). High school GPAs for year four freshman recipients who did not receive a grant in year five were more likely to be lower than those for those who continued to receive a grant (25% had a high school GPA of 3.00 or lower compared to 7%), and similarly for college GPAs of non-freshmen recipients (59% of those who did not continue to receive a grant in year two had a college GPA of 3.00 or lower compared to 20% of those who did continue to receive a grant). Finally, SAT/ACT scores for those who did not continue to receive an AIM HIGH grant were lower than for those who did continue to receive a grant (41% with a SAT <= 1020/ACT/<= 19 compared to 21%).

Table 26: Year Four (AY22-23) AIM HIGH Recipients (Freshmen, Sophomores, and Juniors) Who Returned in Year Five (AY23-24) and Received an AIM HIGH Grant by Various Demographics

	TOTAL #	TOTAL %	CSU	EIU	GSU	ISU	NEIU	NIU	SIUC	SIUE	UIC	UIS	UIUC	WIU
Male	2,530	35.2%	27.9%	31.0%	34.0%	28.8%	39.3%	40.5%	35.8%	35.7%	34.8%	30.8%	40.4%	38.9%
Female	4,659	64.8%	72.1%	69.0%	66.0%	71.2%	60.7%	59.5%	64.2%	64.3%	65.2%	69.2%	59.6%	61.1%
Hispanic or Latino	1,129	15.4%	7.2%	10.3%	22.0%	12.3%	44.4%	13.4%	16.9%	6.6%	30.4%	22.1%	20.3%	16.0%
Asian	614	8.4%	1.8%	1.6%	2.9%	2.8%	18.3%	6.5%	1.6%	2.8%	30.4%	2.3%	25.5%	0.8%
Black or African American	1,072	14.6%	80.2%	12.8%	37.1%	5.5%	9.5%	14.2%	22.1%	13.1%	6.6%	15.3%	6.7%	32.6%
White	4,073	55.6%	6.3%	67.8%	31.1%	75.6%	19.1%	47.2%	54.4%	71.7%	25.4%	55.7%	43.1%	47.2%
Less than \$10,000	498	6.8%	18.9%	6.6%	13.1%	9.6%	13.5%	4.8%	10.0%	5.6%	3.9%	7.6%	1.5%	8.7%
\$10,000 - \$30,000	838	11.4%	27.9%	9.7%	20.0%	6.9%	39.7%	10.8%	22.1%	11.2%	22.7%	14.5%	5.8%	16.2%
\$30,001 - \$75,000	2,668	36.4%	40.5%	35.1%	33.1%	20.9%	45.2%	46.4%	57.4%	30.8%	43.1%	37.4%	50.4%	30.9%
\$75,001 - \$150,000	2,474	33.8%	11.7%	38.8%	25.4%	44.7%	1.6%	35.4%	8.9%	45.1%	26.0%	35.9%	32.5%	28.6%
More than \$150,000	738	10.1%	0.9%	9.7%	8.3%	17.9%	0.0%	2.7%	1.6%	7.4%	4.4%	4.6%	9.9%	15.6%
Not Pell Grant eligible	3,654	49.9%	20.0%	53.2%	40.3%	70.7%	6.4%	48.6%	13.0%	55.9%	34.3%	47.3%	48.1%	46.3%
Pell Grant eligible	3,636	49.6%	80.0%	46.8%	59.7%	29.3%	93.7%	51.4%	87.0%	44.1%	65.8%	52.7%	51.9%	53.7%
Not MAP grant eligible	3,335	45.5%	12.7%	47.9%	34.0%	64.7%	11.9%	34.0%	9.8%	47.3%	100.0%	42.8%	43.3%	46.3%
MAP grant eligible	3,866	52.8%	87.3%	52.1%	66.0%	35.3%	88.1%	66.0%	90.2%	52.7%	0.0%	57.3%	56.8%	53.7%
Freshman	2,499	34.1%	27.0%	44.6%	41.1%	31.1%	38.9%	15.0%	35.1%	30.7%	8.3%	11.5%	48.1%	20.3%
Sophomore	2,388	32.6%	36.9%	26.9%	20.0%	32.4%	21.4%	23.1%	31.9%	37.3%	36.5%	45.8%	35.3%	40.3%
Junior	2,441	33.3%	36.0%	28.5%	38.9%	36.5%	39.7%	61.9%	33.0%	32.0%	55.3%	42.8%	16.6%	39.4%
Not a transfer	6,552	89.4%	69.4%	88.5%	50.6%	100.0%	67.5%	42.3%	95.9%	100.0%	95.0%	82.4%	96.1%	96.2%
A transfer	776	10.6%	30.6%	11.5%	49.4%	0.0%	32.5%	57.7%	4.1%	0.0%	5.0%	17.6%	3.9%	3.8%
HS GPA <2.00	2	0.1%	3.4%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
HS GPA 2.00-3.00	163	6.7%	48.3%	3.9%	17.8%	0.0%	10.4%	1.4%	29.4%	2.9%	6.7%	0.0%	0.7%	34.9%
HS GPA 3.01-3.50	726	30.0%	31.0%	32.4%	44.6%	57.1%	27.1%	40.3%	37.3%	21.9%	6.7%	57.1%	8.1%	34.9%
HS GPA 3.51-3.99	1,066	44.0%	6.9%	42.2%	31.7%	35.2%	37.5%	40.3%	30.7%	43.8%	73.3%	35.7%	60.4%	29.5%
HS GPA 4.00	463	19.1%	10.3%	21.5%	5.0%	7.6%	25.0%	18.1%	2.6%	31.4%	13.3%	7.1%	30.9%	0.7%
College GPA <2.00	328	4.5%	0.9%	1.4%	68.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	2.3%	2.0%	1.1%	0.9%	0.8%	4.2%
College GPA 2.00-3.00	1,195	16.4%	32.4%	19.5%	6.3%	4.8%	7.9%	12.0%	23.9%	29.4%	10.5%	12.0%	10.0%	40.8%
College GPA 3.01-3.50	1,804	24.7%	36.9%	25.3%	6.9%	26.2%	27.8%	30.3%	26.0%	35.0%	17.7%	32.5%	18.8%	24.6%
College GPA 3.51-3.99	2,892	39.6%	20.7%	33.8%	15.1%	45.0%	40.5%	44.3%	29.4%	26.3%	36.5%	46.2%	59.4%	24.9%
College GPA 4.00	1,080	14.8%	9.0%	19.9%	3.4%	24.0%	23.8%	12.8%	18.5%	7.3%	34.3%	8.5%	11.0%	5.6%
<= 1020 SAT / <= 19 ACT	1,023	20.9%	-	34.2%	58.6%	5.0%	70.0%	49.5%	38.7%	33.8%	7.2%	28.2%	2.7%	50.6%
1030 - 1090 SAT / 20 - 21 ACT	618	12.6%	-	20.5%	20.7%	8.6%	0.0%	22.3%	19.2%	17.7%	4.5%	26.9%	4.9%	15.2%
1100 - 1150 SAT / 22 - 23 ACT	655	13.4%	-	15.6%	3.5%	19.8%	30.0%	10.7%	16.8%	14.3%	7.2%	16.7%	4.6%	12.2%
1160 - 1250 SAT / 24 - 26 ACT	991	20.3%	-	20.1%	17.2%	34.2%	0.0%	12.6%	15.8%	18.5%	17.1%	15.4%	11.5%	12.9%
1260 - 1410 SAT / 27 - 31 ACT	1,039	21.2%	-	8.9%	0.0%	28.2%	0.0%	4.9%	8.9%	13.7%	41.4%	9.0%	35.7%	8.0%
>= 1440 SAT / >= 32 ACT	568	11.6%	-	0.8%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	2.1%	22.5%	3.9%	40.7%	1.2%

Percentages for individual measures may not add to 100 due to missing or omitted values. HS GPA is Freshmen only.

**Table 27: Year Four (AY23-24) AIM HIGH Recipients (Freshmen, Sophomores, and Juniors) Who Did Not Return in Year Five (AY23-24)
by Various Demographics**

	TOTAL #	TOTAL %	CSU	EIU	GSU	ISU	NEIU	NIU	SIUC	SIUE	UIC	UIS	UIUC	WIU
Male	1,743	41.4%	37.1%	35.6%	37.8%	42.4%	41.2%	46.0%	39.9%	34.8%	48.8%	36.5%	41.9%	41.3%
Female	2,467	58.6%	62.9%	64.4%	62.3%	57.6%	58.8%	54.0%	60.1%	65.2%	51.2%	63.5%	58.2%	58.8%
Hispanic or Latino	843	19.9%	11.4%	12.5%	21.6%	23.3%	42.2%	14.6%	13.8%	8.7%	44.5%	11.5%	31.2%	11.9%
Asian	195	4.6%	2.9%	1.2%	1.0%	2.5%	10.8%	3.3%	0.5%	1.1%	13.9%	4.8%	16.0%	1.1%
Black or African American	1,433	33.8%	82.9%	34.9%	52.9%	20.8%	15.3%	44.6%	41.0%	16.3%	15.6%	14.4%	12.2%	43.6%
White	1,360	32.1%	0.0%	46.0%	21.1%	47.9%	13.4%	16.7%	39.4%	63.6%	19.7%	64.4%	35.5%	39.2%
Less than \$10,000	518	12.2%	24.3%	13.9%	17.2%	9.6%	15.4%	11.2%	16.5%	8.2%	16.2%	7.2%	1.1%	15.7%
\$10,000 - \$30,000	855	20.2%	28.6%	21.4%	20.6%	15.4%	29.5%	24.9%	23.9%	14.7%	28.3%	14.4%	3.9%	20.8%
\$30,001 - \$75,000	1,715	40.4%	37.1%	37.1%	30.9%	30.4%	46.2%	42.5%	51.6%	36.4%	46.8%	29.9%	76.6%	33.6%
\$75,001 - \$150,000	759	17.9%	8.6%	19.7%	24.5%	34.2%	6.7%	19.1%	5.3%	35.3%	8.1%	41.2%	12.5%	19.4%
More than \$150,000	244	5.8%	1.4%	8.0%	6.9%	10.4%	2.2%	2.4%	2.7%	5.4%	0.6%	7.2%	5.9%	10.7%
Not Pell Grant eligible	1,330	31.4%	14.3%	32.8%	39.2%	50.0%	25.4%	26.8%	10.1%	46.7%	15.6%	50.0%	22.8%	38.2%
Pell Grant eligible	2,899	68.3%	85.7%	67.2%	60.8%	50.0%	74.6%	73.2%	89.9%	53.3%	84.4%	50.0%	77.2%	61.8%
Not MAP grant eligible	1,357	32.0%	12.9%	30.9%	30.4%	46.7%	27.8%	19.7%	7.5%	39.2%	98.8%	46.2%	21.1%	38.2%
MAP grant eligible	2,864	67.5%	87.1%	69.2%	69.6%	53.3%	72.2%	80.3%	92.6%	60.8%	1.2%	53.9%	78.9%	61.8%
Freshman	2,227	52.5%	57.1%	65.3%	42.2%	40.4%	37.5%	73.4%	54.8%	52.2%	27.8%	28.9%	30.6%	55.5%
Sophomore	732	17.3%	25.7%	14.2%	7.8%	10.8%	14.2%	5.5%	23.4%	23.9%	35.8%	31.7%	17.6%	25.8%
Junior	1,283	30.3%	17.1%	20.5%	50.0%	48.8%	48.3%	21.1%	21.8%	23.9%	36.4%	39.4%	51.8%	18.7%
Not a transfer	3,450	81.3%	85.7%	96.1%	49.0%	100.0%	58.8%	78.1%	86.7%	100.0%	74.0%	73.1%	93.5%	83.4%
A transfer	792	18.7%	14.3%	3.9%	51.0%	0.0%	41.2%	21.9%	13.3%	0.0%	26.0%	26.9%	6.5%	16.6%
HS GPA <2.00	7	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.2%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
HS GPA 2.00-3.00	527	24.2%	43.2%	10.0%	27.3%	1.0%	36.1%	15.0%	35.4%	11.5%	4.2%	6.9%	1.9%	47.8%
HS GPA 3.01-3.50	804	36.9%	32.4%	49.4%	42.4%	56.7%	32.5%	33.0%	42.4%	38.5%	39.6%	58.6%	18.9%	33.4%
HS GPA 3.51-3.99	612	28.1%	21.6%	28.0%	24.2%	36.1%	22.5%	30.0%	21.2%	36.5%	52.1%	34.5%	63.2%	17.5%
HS GPA 4.00	229	10.5%	2.7%	12.5%	6.1%	6.2%	8.3%	21.8%	0.0%	13.5%	4.2%	0.0%	16.0%	0.6%
College GPA <2.00	1,263	32.1%	2.9%	32.6%	52.9%	9.2%	17.9%	39.0%	50.5%	26.0%	22.0%	6.3%	8.4%	47.6%
College GPA 2.00-3.00	1,060	27.0%	55.7%	32.0%	11.3%	40.0%	27.2%	24.6%	20.7%	42.9%	39.3%	30.0%	22.8%	22.8%
College GPA 3.01-3.50	730	18.6%	18.6%	14.4%	14.7%	33.3%	21.3%	18.9%	12.2%	17.5%	21.4%	23.8%	23.6%	14.1%
College GPA 3.51-3.99	659	16.8%	17.1%	13.5%	14.7%	14.6%	22.4%	12.7%	11.2%	11.0%	14.5%	26.3%	40.1%	11.8%
College GPA 4.00	218	5.5%	5.7%	7.5%	6.4%	2.9%	11.2%	4.8%	5.3%	2.6%	2.9%	13.8%	5.1%	3.7%
<= 1020 SAT / <= 19 ACT	674	41.3%	-	50.0%	62.5%	8.3%	60.5%	37.8%	58.1%	42.6%	28.3%	41.2%	5.3%	68.6%
1030 - 1090 SAT / 20 - 21 ACT	223	13.7%	-	19.8%	12.5%	8.3%	18.6%	16.2%	13.3%	16.2%	15.0%	11.8%	9.1%	13.4%
1100 - 1150 SAT / 22 - 23 ACT	187	11.5%	-	13.2%	0.0%	26.7%	4.7%	16.2%	13.3%	13.5%	18.3%	11.8%	6.0%	5.9%
1160 - 1250 SAT / 24 - 26 ACT	252	15.4%	-	10.4%	25.0%	36.7%	4.7%	24.3%	7.6%	16.2%	21.7%	19.6%	20.7%	6.8%
1260 - 1410 SAT / 27 - 31 ACT	193	11.8%	-	5.6%	0.0%	18.3%	7.0%	5.4%	6.7%	10.8%	8.3%	13.7%	28.4%	5.4%
>= 1440 SAT / >= 32 ACT	103	6.3%	-	1.0%	0.0%	1.7%	4.7%	0.0%	1.0%	0.7%	8.3%	2.0%	30.5%	0.0%

AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program Impact

The 2023-24 academic year marked continued efforts to rebound college enrollments following the COVID-19 pandemic while still facing declining high school graduating classes and continued challenges around perceptions of the value of a college degree and media attention on student loan debt. Overall, fall 2023 enrollment at Illinois public universities was up 0.3 percent year-over-year. First-time, full-time undergraduate enrollment at Illinois' public universities increased by 1.5 percent compared to the fall semester of the 2022-23 academic year. Half of Illinois' 12 public universities, however, reported a decrease in freshmen enrollment.⁴

Each public university was required to provide a statement on the AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program's impact on tuition revenue, enrollment goals, access, and affordability for the fifth year of the Program, academic year 2023-24. The verbatim statements can be found in Table 2 in the Appendix. A variety of comments on the various positive impacts of AIM HIGH in the fifth year of the Program were provided by schools.

- Although one public university mentioned they experienced a decline in new AIM HIGH recipients in AY23-24, 9 of the 12 schools (75%) reported AIM HIGH has been important in recruiting/attracting students as well as increasing enrollments. One of the universities claimed the AIM HIGH program directly contributed to its largest freshman class in 36 years. Two of the 12 schools (17%) specifically indicated they saw increased tuition revenue this past academic year due to AIM HIGH.
- Seventy-five percent (9 schools) indicated that AIM HIGH had a positive impact on student affordability (reduced student loan debt, unmet need, or out-of-pocket costs for students, etc.).
- Seventy-five percent (9 schools) reported that AIM HIGH supported long-term success or improved student retention/persistence.
- Nine of the 12 the public universities (75%) reported that AIM HIGH allowed scholarship expansion that assisted with recruitment of new and/or transfer students overall or of other students they have been trying to attract and/or new groups of students they would like to attract: new students who might have gone to another or out of state school (2 schools), talented/high-achieving/performing students (4 schools, 1 of which coupled this with financial need), students ready for college academically but struggling to afford it (1 school), students who may not have thought attending was possible (1 school), and/or students just above the thresholds for receiving federal and/or state need-based aid (1 school).
- One-third (4 of the 12 schools) indicated AIM HIGH increased access for Illinois students.
- One of the of the 12 public universities indicated that AIM HIGH is the centerpiece of their scholarship budget and plays a major role in their strategic enrollment planning; one reported AIM HIGH is helping to reduce achievement gaps and that their AIM HIGH match-funded programs were specifically focused on diversity, inclusion, and community; and one university indicated AIM HIGH allowed them to provide the full "college experience" to students by assisting with room and board costs.

⁴ See note 1 above.

AIM HIGH Grant Pilot Program Report Appendix

Table 1: AY23-24 AIM HIGH Programs and Criteria

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/Information	Renewal Requirements
Chicago State University https://www.csu.edu/financialaid/AIMHigh.htm					
AIM HIGH Merit Scholarship Funding Source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	2.50+	18+/960+	\$6,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress and good judicial standing
AIM HIGH SUCCESS U Scholarship Funding Source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	Admission to the CSU Success U Program		\$3,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain SAP and good judicial standing
AIM HIGH Honors College Funding Source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	Acceptance into the Honors College		\$6,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain good standing with Honors College
AIM HIGH – Grow Your Own Funding Source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	Receipt of Grow Your Own Scholarship		Online book voucher to cover the costs of books		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued receipt of Grow Your Own Scholarship
AIM HIGH Transfer Scholarship Funding Source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	2.50+		\$6,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have earned a minimum of 24 transfer hours • Effective October 1, 2021, Transfer students who have not completed their degree requirements but meet all other renewal criteria may appeal to receive additional AIM HIGH funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress and good judicial standing

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/ Information	Renewal Requirements
Eastern Illinois University https://www.eiu.edu/aimhigh/					
EIU Local Scholars Program Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.0+ (official transcripts must be submitted by April 1)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family AGI of \$100,000 or less; • Family assets of \$100,000 or less; • Reside in a county within a 30-mile radius of EIU: Clark, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Effingham, Jasper, Moultrie, or Shelby; • Admitted to EIU as full-time incoming freshman (maximum of 15 credit hours) in Fall 2022 or later; • Financial aid packaged and completed by April 1; • Do not have tuition and fees met by other gift aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.0+ GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress; • Students will continue to be eligible in subsequent years even if the family AGI goes above \$100,000
EIU Promise (EPROM) Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.0+		<p>Full cost of tuition & fees up to 15 credit hours per semester, including textbook rental fees, minus other gift aid.</p> <p>Transfer students are eligible for up to 2 years of EIU Promise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family AGI of \$66,000 or less; • Family assets of \$100,000 or less; • Admitted to EIU as full-time incoming freshman (maximum of 15 credit hours); • EIU financial aid packaged and completed by June 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.0+ GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress; • Students will continue to be eligible in subsequent years even if the family AGI goes above \$66,000
EIU Freshman Merit Bonus Scholarship Distinguished Merit High Achieving Merit Academic Merit Funding Source: School matching funds	3.85-4.0 3.60-3.84 3.0-3.59		\$4,000 per year \$3,000 per year \$2,000 per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcripts can be updated through June 1 to qualify for the scholarship or qualify for a higher amount. • If only one semester was taken at a community college or another university, the student may qualify for the freshman merit scholarships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 3.0+ GPA • Maintain 2.75+ GPA • Maintain 2.5+ GPA

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/ Information	Renewal Requirements
				for 4 years (rather than the transfer merit scholarship for 2 years).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous full-time enrollment for all merit scholarships.
EIU Cost Match (EMATCH) Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.3+		Matches the out-of-pocket COA from any public 4-year in the U.S. (outside of IL) that is accredited by one of the six regional accrediting organizations for up to 8 continuous semesters: Higher Learning Commission; Middles States Commission on Higher Education; New England Commission of Higher Education; Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities; Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges; and Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Excludes costs not covered by other federal, state, institutional and private awards including Federal Pell Grant, State of Illinois MAP Program (MAP), Federal Loans and other awards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit financial aid award letter from qualifying institution; • One parent (listed on FAFSA) must be an IL resident; • Athletic scholarships not considered as part of the match; • Enrolled as incoming full-time freshman (12+ credit hours) in Fall 2019 or later; • EIU financial aid packaged and completed by June 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain minimum 2.0 GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress
Freshman Textbook Rental Grant Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.3		\$300/year (for 4 years) The standard textbook rental fee is \$9.95 per hour, so the Textbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enroll as full-time freshman; • EIU financial aid packaged and completed by June 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.0 GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/ Information	Renewal Requirements
			Rental Grant will only cover the full cost of textbooks for one year if you take 15 credit hours or fewer for two semesters. Some classes may also require the purchase of workbooks, which could be an additional cost not covered by the Textbook Rental Grant.	Automatically offered to qualifying students upon admission to EIU. Transfer students are eligible to receive the grant for two years.	
EIU Transfer Academic Excellence Scholarship (MERITT) Tier One Tier Two Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.5-4.0 3.0-3.49		\$2,500 per year \$1,500 per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcripts can be updated through the first day of classes to either qualify or go up a scholarship level. • Must have at least 15 credit hours transferred from an accredited college or university. • Have not had tuition and fees met by other gift aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 3.0+ GPA • Maintain 2.75+ GPA • Continuous full-time enrollment
Governors State University https://www.govst.edu/AimHigh/					
Freshman AIM HIGH Scholarships Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds and school matching funds	3.50+		\$6,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant money can also be used for on-campus housing, meal plans, and books and supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.75+ GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress; • Maintain good standing
	2.75-3.49		\$4,000		
AIM HIGH Transfer Guaranteed Scholarships Funding Source: School matching funds only	3.5+		\$6,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant money can also be used for on-campus housing, meal plans, and books and supplies; • Transfer students from community colleges must have earned an associate degree; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.5+ GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain good standing

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/Information	Renewal Requirements
	2.75-3.40		\$4,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer students w/24+ credit hours from any 4-year school do not require earned Associate degree; • Transfer students w/less than 23 credit hours from 4-year school will be considered for first-Year AIM HIGH awards 	
Illinois State University https://financialaid.illinoisstate.edu/scholarships/aim-high/ https://illinoisstate.edu/admissions/scholarships/					
AIM HIGH Scholarship Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	4.0+		Up to \$2,000 per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference given to students who file FASFA by January 1, 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.75+ GPA; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress.
AIM HIGH Transfer Student Scholarship Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.5+ cumulative transfer GPA		Up to \$1,500 per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed 24+ credit hours at another institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.75+ GPA; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress; • Renewable for 1 year
Redbird Scholarship Funding Source: School matching funds only	3.0+/4.0 scale		\$1,000-5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for admission by priority deadline of November 1st. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.75+ GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment;
Presidential Scholarship Funding Source: School matching funds only	3.75+/4.0 scale		Up to \$12,000 per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for admission by priority deadline of November 1st, and submit ISU scholarship form by December 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 3.0+ GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment
University Scholarship Funding Source: School matching funds only	3.5+/4.0 scale		Minimum of \$10,000 Awarded to traditionally underrepresented or first-generation freshmen students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for admission by priority deadline of November 1st, and submit ISU scholarship form by December 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2.75+ GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/ Information	Renewal Requirements
Northeastern Illinois University https://www.neiu.edu/financial-aid/golden-opportunity-scholarship https://www.neiu.edu/financial-aid/presidential-scholarship-program https://www.neiu.edu/financial-aid/types-grant-assistance https://admissions.neiu.edu/transfer-center/star-scholarship https://www.neiu.edu/financial-aid/neiu-you-scholarship					
Golden Opportunity Scholarship Funding source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.0+	N/A	\$4,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual adjusted gross income of \$75,000 or less; • Enrolled FT in 12+ credit hours • Freshman and transfer students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 3.0+ GPA; • Maintain minimum standards of academic progress
NEIU Presidential Scholarship Funding source: School matching funds only	3.5+	Minimum ACT composite score of 25 (SAT equivalent) or be at top 10% of class	\$15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in the University Honors Program; • Also provides book allowance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 3.50+ GPA; • Maintain full-time enrollment
NEIU Eagle Performance Funding source: School matching funds only	3.0 (cumulative NEIU GPA)	N/A	Up to \$3,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EFC of \$18,000 or less; • Full-time enrollment status (minimum 12 credit hours); • Be ineligible for a MAP Grant 	N/A
NEIU STAR Scholarship (City Colleges of Chicago Scholarship) Funding source: School matching funds only	3.0 CCC transfer GPA		Up to \$5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time enrollment status; • Graduates from one of the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) who participated in the STARS program and graduated with an AA or AS degree; • Complete 30 semester hours per year at NEIU; • Declare a major; • Two-year scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 3.0+ GPA
NEIU for You Scholarship Funding source: School matching funds only	2.0+ (incoming freshmen and transfer students)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family AGI of \$60,000 or less; • Family assets of \$50,000 or less; • Covers four consecutive years of tuition for FT/FT freshmen; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/Information	Renewal Requirements
	The minimum 2.5 GPA admissions requirement is waived for eligible students.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers the cost of one 3-credit hour class for FT/FT transfer students 	
Northern Illinois University https://niu.edu/aimhigh/					
Freshmen Excellence AIM HIGH Scholarship (Cohort 1) Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds and school matching funds	NIU uses an academic index score, computed with the cumulative high school grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) and highest reported SAT (math plus verbal) or composite ACT score.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIU Scholars: \$2,466 Huskie Excellence: \$1,000 Northern Academic: \$1,000 Centennial: \$1,000 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 3.0+ GPA; Continuous full-time enrollment; Maintain satisfactory academic progress. If the student met the full-time and GPA renewal requirements, the student was awarded the same scholarship amount in 2022-23.
Transfer Excellence AIM HIGH Scholarship (Cohort 1) Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.25+ transfer GPA		\$2,500		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 3.25+ GPA; Continuous full-time enrollment; Maintain satisfactory academic progress
Huskie Pledge Program (Cohorts 2, 3, and 4) Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.0		Issued to entering full-time freshman to cover tuition and general fees that aren't met by other financial aid (grants and scholarships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family AGI and family assets of \$75,000 or less; Guarantees tuition and general fees are met with gift aid for at least a student's first year. Priority deadline, February 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewed regardless of increases/decreases to other gift aid, up to four more years.
AIM HIGH Transfer Achievement Award (Cohorts 2, 3, and 4) Funding Source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.0		\$2,000	Receive a Transfer Merit Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewable until student completes degree or reach 135 total earned hours
NIU Partnership Awards			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$3,000 \$3,000 	Freshman: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entering graduates of DeKalb County high schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-year scholarship

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/ Information	Renewal Requirements
Funding Source: School matching funds only	3.0+		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3,000 • \$3,000 • \$2,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entering graduates of all Chicago Public High Schools Transfer students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kishwaukee College Transfer Scholarship; • City College STAR Transfer Scholarship; • Transfer Achievement Award (transfer students who did not meet AIM HIGH criteria) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-year scholarship • One-year scholarship • Two-year scholarship • One-time scholarship All renewal criteria the same as AIM HIGH
Southern Illinois University Carbondale https://fao.siu.edu/types/saluki-commitment.php					
Saluki Commitment (2022-23 incoming freshmen) Funding Source: Aim HIGH State funds and school matching funds	2.75+ GPA		Amount needed to cover tuition and fees, after other aid is applied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family AGI of \$63,575; • Family assets of less than \$50,000; • Can be combined with other merit SIUC aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enroll in a degree program; • Continuous full-time enrollment for 8 semesters; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress
Saluki Transfer Commitment (2022-23 new transfer students) Funding Source: Aim HIGH State funds and school matching funds	2.0+ transfer GPA		Amount needed to cover tuition and fees, after other aid is applied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 or more transferable credits; • Family AGI of \$63,575; • Family assets of less than \$50,000; • Can be combined with other merit SIUC aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enroll in a bachelor degree program; • Continuous full-time enrollment for 4 semesters; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress
AIM HIGH Award (year 2, 3, and 4 students) Funding Source: Aim HIGH State funds only			\$2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be combined with other merit SIUC aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.0 GPA

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/Information	Renewal Requirements
Saluki Scholars Award (year 2, 3, and 4 students) Funding Source: Aim HIGH State funds only			\$2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot be combined with other SIUC merit aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.0 GPA
Transfer Saluki Scholars Award (year 2, 3, and 4 students) Funding Source: Aim HIGH State funds only			\$2,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.0 GPA
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville https://www.sie.edu/financial-aid/types-of-aid/list-feed/aim-high.shtml					
AIM HIGH Grant (Cohorts 3 and 4) Funding source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	2.75+			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority consideration given to students meeting the December 1 scholarship deadline; Does not have a third party pay; Is not a Meridian Scholar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.5+ GPA; Maintain satisfactory academic progress
AIM HIGH Grant – (Cohort 2) Funding source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds (SIUE 2020 Scholarship)	3.0 (for school matching funds)	20+ACT/1030+ SAT	\$2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority consideration given to students meeting the December 1 scholarship deadline; Does not have a third party pay; Is not a Meridian Scholar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.5+ GPA; Maintain satisfactory academic progress
AIM HIGH Grant (Cohort 1) Funding source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	N/A	20+ACT/1030+ SAT	\$2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority consideration given to students meeting the December 1 scholarship deadline; Does not have a third party pay; Is not a Meridian Scholar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.5+ GPA; Maintain satisfactory academic progress
University of Illinois at Chicago http://financialaid.uic.edu/types-of-aid/scholarships/ https://financialaid.uic.edu/types-of-aid/grants/institutional-grants/					
AIM HIGH (Chancellor's Fellows Program) Funding source: AIM HIGH State funds only	Ranked 1 st in graduating class or unweighted 3.8+ GPA	Have at least 10 Honors, Advanced Placement, International	Up to \$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UIC application and FAFSA must be completed by December 1, 2021; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.0 GPA

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/ Information	Renewal Requirements
		Baccalaureate in 11 th and 12 th grades combined in core subject areas (math, science, English/Language Arts, Social Sciences/ Humanities, or Foreign Language) OR 33 ACT/1450 SAT		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total EFC may not exceed \$30,000 	
UIC Opportunity Grant UIC Access to Excellence Grant and UIC Gateway Grant programs have been combined into the UIC Opportunity Grant (some cohort 1 grants were awarded under the UIC Access to Excellence Grant) Funding source: School matching funds only			Up to \$3,700	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$0-9,000 EFC; Submit FAFSA by 2/15 deadline (extended to 9/23/22); Working towards first Bachelor's degree; Submit FASFA by 3/15; Enroll in minimum of 6+ credit hours per semester; Maintain satisfactory academic progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing students who received the UIC Access to Excellence Grant must not have exceeded 8 paid semesters for 1st time students, or 4 paid semesters for transfer students
University of Illinois at Springfield https://www.uis.edu/cost-aid/scholarships/merit-scholarship					
Lincoln AIM HIGH Merit Scholarship Funding source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	4.0+		\$8,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AIM HIGH funds 50% of the scholarship amount, and the other 50% will come from UIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.0+ GPA
	3.8-3.99		\$7,000		

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/Information	Renewal Requirements
	3.6-3.79		\$6,000		
	3.4-3.59		\$4,000		
	3.2-3.39		\$2,000		
	3.0-3.19		\$1,000		
Transfer Student AIM HIGH Merit Scholarship Funding source: Both AIM HIGH State and school matching funds	3.75-4.0		\$3,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have at least 30 transfer hours; • Transfer students enrolled part-time will receive pro-rated scholarship amounts; • AIM HIGH funds 50% of the scholarship amount, and the other 50% will come from UIS 	• 3.0+ GPA
	3.5-3.74		\$2,500		
	3.25-3.49		\$2,000		
	3.0-3.24		\$1,500		
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign https://osfa.illinois.edu/types-of-aid/aim-high-program https://osfa.illinois.edu/illinois-commitment/ https://osfa.illinois.edu/types-of-aid/grants/university-of-illinois-tuition-grant/					
AIM HIGH Grant Program Funding source: AIM HIGH State funds only			\$5,000 to the top 5% of qualifying new in-state freshmen students admitted to each college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can cover any component of the cost of attendance; is not restricted to tuition. • Preference given to students that filed a FAFSA/RISE alternative application by January 6, 2022. • U of I will match the state funding with the IL Tuition Grant and IL Commitment programs; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress; • Not required to complete a FAFSA/RISE application; • Not required to meet income threshold

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/Information	Renewal Requirements
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students awarded the AIM High Grant may also receive Illinois Commitment; • Students may change academic majors and/or colleges, without losing the scholarship. 	
Illinois Commitment Program Funding source: School matching funds only			Provides scholarship and grant funding to cover the full cost of tuition and campus fees not covered by other federal, state, institutional and private awards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family income \$61,700 or less; • Family assets \$50,000 or less; • New freshman or transfer student; • Attended and graduated from IL high school; • Student and both parents must be IL residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable for up to 4 years (8 semesters) for incoming students, or up to 2 years (4 semesters) for transfer students
Illinois Tuition Grant Funding source: School matching funds only			Need-based grant - Awards vary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate student who has not earned a Bachelor's degree; • Student and both parents must be IL residents; • Enrolled full-time 	
Western Illinois University http://www.wiu.edu/student_services/financial_aid/aimhigh/index.php http://www.wiu.edu/student_success/scholarship/westerncommitment.php https://wiu.edu/student_success/scholarship/bookaward.php					
AIM HIGH Grant Funding source: AIM HIGH State funds only	3.4+		\$5,000-\$7,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum \$2,000 EFC and meet income requirements; • WIU will match the state funding with the Western Commitment Scholarship and the Leatherneck Book Award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous full-time enrollment in degree-seeking program; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress
Western Commitment Scholarship Funding source: School matching funds only	3.9+ 3.6+ 3.3+		\$8,000 \$6,000 \$3,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Commitment Scholarships are automatically awarded to incoming freshmen with a 3.3 GPA or higher (on a 4.0 scale) on a sliding scale with a maximum award of \$8,000; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.0+ GPA; • Continuous full-time enrollment; • Maintain satisfactory academic progress

Program Name/Funding Source	HS GPA (unweighted)	Test Score ACT/SAT	Scholarship Amount (per academic year)	Additional Requirements/ Information	Renewal Requirements
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for admission by May 1st 	
Leatherneck (Freshman) Book Award Funding source: School matching funds only			\$1,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be Pell eligible; • Apply for admission by May 1st 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable for an additional 3 years

Table 2: AIM HIGH AY23-24 Statements of Program Impact

Public University

Statement of AIM HIGH Program Impact

CSU

AIM HIGH has had a significant impact on the ability of Chicago State University to award grant funding to residents of the state of Illinois who may not otherwise be eligible. AIM HIGH has also had a direct impact on students with a higher EFC who would typically not be eligible for grants. Because of the income threshold and no EFC requirement, students who would normally receive no grant aid are receiving some assistance in covering the cost of attending CSU.

14% of the students who received AIM High were not eligible for MAP grant. This is a 1% increase over last year.

14% of the students who received AIM High were not eligible for Pell grant.

10% of the students who received AIM HIGH were not eligible for one of the grants, neither Pell nor MAP grant.

In addition, first-time full-time freshmen have been able to receive funding to assist with the cost of food and housing. This has had a significant impact on residents being able to attend college in Illinois while still being able to have the college experience of residing in the residence hall. These students may not have been able to afford the cost of on campus room and board without the monetary assistance of AIM HIGH.

27% of FY24 AIM HIGH recipients lived in on campus housing for the 2023-24 academic year. Living in the residence hall can add an additional \$7,245 per semester (maximum room charge and maximum meal plan) to a student's costs.

Because AIM High funds are not restricted, the ability for students to receive a refund from AIM High has also had a positive impact on award recipients. Inflation and an increase in food and housing security has caused an increased monetary need for students. Those students who do not live in the residence hall are able to receive a refund from AIM High to assist with these costs. This monetary assistance provides some financial relief and AIM High students are able to focus on their studies.

The additional financial assistance has reduced the balances owed to the university for this group of students. AIM High students have significantly lower outstanding balances than those students who were not awarded AIM High. This is most apparent with those students who reside in the residence hall.

The assistance provided to students who complete the alternative application is particularly impactful because the students could possibly have no other source of funding if the EFC/SAI is too high to qualify for MAP. There are two 2024 successful graduates who have been supported with AIM high and MAP funds and would otherwise not have had any source of aid to help support their college costs.

EIU	<p><i>Eastern Illinois University's programs this past year aimed to keep more college-bound students in Illinois with our cost-match program, make college accessible and promote student success for low-income student populations with EIU Promise for new incoming Freshman and Transfer students, serve our local region with Local Scholars, and provide even more value for our most talented college-bound students in Illinois with our Freshman and Transfer textbook rental grant programs.</i></p> <p><i>AIM HIGH programs were a critical component for maintaining stable enrollment in the first year, post-pandemic. AIM HIGH helped reduce the total unmet need of Fall incoming freshmen for the third year in a row, which ultimately contributed to greater access, and will support long-term student success for those students as they continue their education at EIU. This past year the AIM HIGH program continued to serve as a critical component in Eastern Illinois University's continuing efforts to improve enrollment, affordability, and access to the superior undergraduate education Eastern Illinois University has to offer.</i></p>
GSU	<p><i>The State of Illinois AIM HIGH Grant turned out to be an instrumental funding source in the development of GSU grants and scholarships. We were able to reach a broader group of students and generate more incentive for first-time enrollees and transfers. The AIM HIGH grant has become the centerpiece for determining future institutional scholarship budgets and will play a major role in our strategic enrollment planning. It has also greatly increased the affordability for all students but especially our full-time, on-campus students; many of whom are minorities and first-generation college attendees.</i></p>
ISU	<p><i>The state Aim High Program continues to have a positive impact on tuition revenue, enrollment goals, access and affordability. The Aim High Program contributed to our largest freshman class in 36 years. First-time recipients of the Aim High Scholarship program attended at 4 percentage points higher than students without the scholarship. The program also continues to make positive impact on our retention rate as we increased overall retention from 80.3% to 81.3%.</i></p>
NEIU	<p><i>Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) provides Illinois resident students and families with another opportunity to reduce the overall cost of going to college and avert high indebtedness – via accounts receivable and student loans. NEIU continues to increase the institution's visibility to a population who may not have thought attending a four-year university was possible. NEIU students graduate with the lowest loan indebtedness among all four-year public and private institutions of higher learning in Illinois. NEIU continues to implement initiatives with the intent of increasing yield, student persistence, and meeting direct costs. The University experienced a decline in new entry Golden Opportunity scholars for 2023-2024. The University also experienced a decline in retention of first time, full-time Golden Opportunity scholars from Fall, 2022 to Fall, 2023. During the 2023-2024 the University appointed an Interim Associate Vice President for Retention and Student Success to address these concerns.</i></p>
NIU	<p><i>NIU's Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, dubbed "SEM 2.0", for 2022 -2025 includes maintaining stable undergraduate enrollment. Attracting Illinois students who would otherwise migrate to higher education institutions in other states is a critical piece to achieving this goal in light of the declining demographics for new Illinois college bound and transfer students.</i></p> <p><i>Strategies within the SEM 2.0 Plan include a focus on improving undergraduate retention and student success, reducing achievement gaps, and new approaches to financial aid and scholarships. The AIM HIGH program was a component of each of these strategies with criteria for State funds tied to merit and institutional new matching programs focused on diversity, inclusion and community.</i></p>

“Guided by our multi-year planning efforts, we have removed barriers to a high-quality college education and are attracting robust numbers of talented freshmen who reflect the diversity of our region,” NIU President Dr. Lisa C. Freeman said. Additionally, more Huskies are choosing to live on campus, adding to our community’s vibrancy.” AIM HIGH program statistics continue to tell a story of students who were able to overcome barriers to achieve their dream of obtaining a college degree.

- In Fall 2024, 866 incoming freshmen were eligible for AIM HIGH Huskie Pledge Grant and paid zero out-of-pocket expenses for tuition and fees.*
- In addition to other forms of financial aid and scholarships, 124 of the 866 AIM HIGH eligible students, 124 students received a Huskie Pledge Grant as part of the AIM HIGH program to fill their gap between aid from existing programs and tuition and fee expenses.*
- Nearly 2/3 (65%) of all AIM HIGH recipients were students of color.*
- Just under 60% of AIM HIGH recipients were female.*
- The average Huskie Pledge Grant amount was \$2,863.00 in 2023-24*
- More than 74% of all new students who received an AIM HIGH for Fall 2023 were also eligible for MAP. Our Huskie Pledge program combines AIM HIGH with MAP and Pell to give students a consistent aid package year after year.*
- The average High School GPA of new student AIM HIGH recipients was 3.50.*

SIUC *SIUC is using AIM High to recruit high-achieving students by awarding funds to cover any gap in tuition and fees for students who meet the criteria. The awards are for four-years as long as the recipient maintains full time status and a 2.0 SIU GPA. SIU offered 1611 AIM HIGH awards with a total of \$5,317,003.75, but only 689 accepted. Matching funds we offered 986 totaling \$3,240,882.29 and only 685 accepted.*

SIUE *With a high population of students who are Illinois residents, programs like AIM High are vital to the academic success of those we recruit. By relieving some of the financial burden, high-achieving students are more likely to start college, and more importantly, can finish and obtain a degree in their chosen field. AIM High helps our University achieve enrollment goals set for Illinois students who are often from lower and middle-income families. Affordability is often a roadblock for many of these students, and this award allows them to achieve their educational goals while reducing student debt.*

UIC *UIC has effectively used its AIM HIGH allocation to recruit, attract, and retain high performing students by offering a sizeable financial award and admission to the Honors College. The program has allowed the university to recruit these high performing students all of whom have demonstrated financial need and offer them a place at an R1 institution with as little debt as possible upon graduation. It is the university’s hope that Illinois General Assembly continues to support this program, so as to retain within Illinois this population of high performers.*

UIS *The AIM HIGH program helps UIS attract and enroll new freshmen and transfer students, with an institutional scholarship program. The impact is an increase in undergraduate tuition revenue, with the help of this state funding. UIS uses the funding to award additional scholarships to attract IL resident students who might have been ready for college, but may have struggled to pay for it. The AIM HIGH program contributes to students’ access to college and success.*

UIUC *The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is charged by our state to enhance the lives of citizens in Illinois, across the nation and around the world through our leadership in learning, discovery, engagement, and economic development. The Office of Student*

Financial Aid administers financial aid programs and services to students and their families, striving to increase affordability and enhance student enrollment and graduation.

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign implemented the AIM High Pilot Program as part of the university's strategic enrollment plan, targeting Illinois resident, first-year students. Students awarded were identified as high achieving, academically talented, and financially needy. Beginning with the 2019-20 award year, the AIM HIGH Grant program has provided merit-based awards to undergraduate students. The award is designed to encourage Illinois students to attend an in-state university, improve college affordability, and reduce student loan debt. It is the university's goal that providing this new opportunity will increase enrollment, as well as retention, for Illinois resident students. An AIM HIGH award improves an Illinois resident student's ability to access, afford and attend a premier institution, where they are receiving a world-class education and world-class services across all academic colleges and majors within the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

WIU

Western Illinois University appreciates the State's support of promoting access and affordability on behalf of students through its mission of the AIM High program. This demonstrates the State's knowledge of the value higher education provides to the State and its residents. The allocation awarded to the University has allowed WIU to expand its scholarship offerings to help with recruitment efforts. WIU has experienced high retention rates of its AIM High recipients.

ISAC Overview

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission is a state agency with a mission to provide Illinois students with information and assistance to help make education beyond high school accessible and affordable. Unaffiliated with any school or sector, ISAC provides objective and comprehensive information to help students and families make informed choices about postsecondary education. Then, through the Monetary Award Program and other scholarship and grant programs ISAC administers, ISAC can help students make those choices a reality. Since 1957, ISAC has assisted Illinois families by providing nearly 5.7 million awards, totaling almost \$11.9 billion in grants, scholarships, and non-loan aid.

In the 14 years since ISAC launched its ISACorps outreach program, the ISACorps have held more than 45,000 college and financial aid outreach events, interacted with more than 1.3 million students and parents, and provided one-on-one assistance to more than 67,000 students.

For Additional Information

ISAC can create tables, charts, or other information products for the programs it administers, or for higher education issues in general, including data by school and cost information. If there is something you would like to see, please ask!

ISAC State Relations:
Katharine Gricevich
(217) 785-9278
katharine.gricevich@illinois.gov



1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL

500 W Monroe
Springfield, IL



800-899-ISAC (4722)
isac.studentservices@illinois.gov
www.isac.org